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Lecturers' Perception on The Use of Blended Learning Strategy in University of Ilorin, Nigeria

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Abstract: Blended learning strategy is an education strategy that involves multiple teaching methods to help students learn more effectively, it combines a mix of face-to-face classroom instruction and online instructional approaches. Despite the importance of blended learning strategy, it has not been fully adopted by university lecturers. Hence, this study investigated Lectures' Perception on the use of Blended Learning Strategy in University of Ilorin Nigeria. This study adopted a descriptive research design of the survey type, and employed four sectioned researcher-designed questionnaires to elicit information from the respondents.150 lecturers across seven faculties in University of Ilorin were randomly sampled for the study. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to answer and test the formulated hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study were: (i) The lecturers' perception on the usefulness of blended learning strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin is positive (3.49>2.44); (ii) The lecturers' perception on the ease of use of blended learning strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin is positive (3.35>2.44); (iii) The lecturers are facing challenges in using blended learning strategy for instruction (3.20>2.44); (iv) There was no significance difference on lecturers' perceived usefulness of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization (p=.060>0.05); (v) There was significance difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization (p=.049<0.05) and (vi) There was no significant difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blended learning strategy based on gender (p=.851> 0.05).

Based on the findings of the study, it was revealed that blended learning is an effective strategy for quality teaching and learning. Though there are challenges affecting the proper implementation of this strategy. The study therefore recommended that seminar and workshop should be organized for lecturers to further their knowledge on the uses of blended learning strategy for instruction.

Keywords: Blended Learning Strategy, Conventional Classroom, Lecturer Perception, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use

INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and habits. Quality education specifically entails issues such as appropriate skills development, gender parity, provision of relevant school infrastructure, equipment, educational materials and resource (UNESCO, 2021). Educational methods include teaching, training, storytelling, discussion, directed research and learning. Learning is the relatively permanent change in a person's knowledge or behavior due to experience (Hunt, 2003). Learning is the acquisition of knowledge, skills

through study. Learning involves physical changes in the nervous system, such as strengthening of synapses, the activation of neutral pathways, or the pruning of neural pathways. Mode at which students learn differs, as there are visual, auditory, reading and kinesthetic learners.

Learning mode is the chief atmosphere (pedagogical or andragogical) in which students learn. Mode of learning are set of guidelines that describe the method humans use to acquire, process and maintain knowledge (Harada, 2019). There are five flexible learning mode for the new normal which include; modular distance learning, online distance learning, television and radio-based learning, blended learning and home schooling (Raymundo, 2020). Online distance learning where teachers will be responsible for facilitating synchronous sessions to students with a stable internet connection through the use of either video or audio communication channels Modular distance learning is a mode of learning where students are given the option to use self-learning modules in physical form which could be delivered by school personnel to their stakeholders' homes.

Technological tools have been deployed, and lecturers were exclusively reliant on computers, iPads, and blogs to make traditional teaching and learning more efficient. Those who were completely reliant on technological tools to help teacher-centred delivery decided to implement physical and virtual techniques with the advent of blended learning. Proponents believed that this strategy had the potential to create a productive and flexible teaching and learning approach for future generations. Blended learning has succeeded to establish itself as one of the techniques that educators like to rely on since the inception of this strategy. This is due to the increased access to information; the lecturer can present a range of in-class activities and assignments before the class begins, and students can study and prepare at their own pace without feeling rushed (Zarei & Kaur, 2019).

While preparing classroom, lecturers have many options at their disposal of how to present material. One learning material delivery option, electronic, comes in a variety of forms and each teacher decides, from the resources available, which to include and which not to include. Collectively these electronic learning materials is an aspect of educational technology. Personal and professional experiences of the lecturers have the greatest influence on their perceived usefulness of the resources, hence the decision to implement educational technology resources (Nikolopoulou & Gialamas, 2016).

An example of the experience influencing the lecturer is previous use of learning technology and the extent to which the lecturer's professional development prepared the lecturer for technology use in the classroom (Archambault et al., 2016). There are several challenges facing lecturers that influence their decision on whether or not to adopt technology. These are, availability of support from administrators, the information technology (IT) department, or from fellow educators (Cochrane, 2014). From simple technology like calculators, to advanced technology like virtual reality viewers, teachers are expected to know what is best for their classes and each student (Liu et al., 2017).

An example of pedagogy that involves the merging of electronic technology with typical classroom lecturer facilitation is blended learning. Blended learning as any instruction where the student is in a school location with supervision and receiving a portion or his or her entire curriculum through an online resource, has provided many opportunities for students to access course information that is typically more current and relevant to his or her learning needs (Oliver & Stalling, 2014). Lecturers' perceptions based on previous technology use, experience of the teacher, and to what extent that experience influences the teacher's decision to implement blended learning style curriculum in his or her classroom at the high school education level.

By understanding a lecturer's perceptions and what motivates lecturers' decision to implement blended learning, administrators and other decision-making personnel can design implementation protocols, which maximize positive lecturers' perceptions and blended learning pedagogy implementation. Lecturer's decision to employ blended learning, can lead to higher usage of educational technology and improved student learning outcomes in the high school setting (Claro et al., 2017). Blended learning technology integration by lecturer is influenced by a number

of factors and is not simply a matter of following the dictate an administrator or supervisor (Archambault et al., 2016).

A lecturer's perceptions, which are based on the experiences of the individual, have a direct impact on his or her decision to implement classroom technology. Qualitative study of higher education blended learning implementation found that blended learning pedagogy research indicated an improvement of student learning. It was stated that scant information is available describing lecturers' perceptions and how these perceptions relate to blended learning classroom technology integration and how having a better understanding can inform decision makers on how best to implement blended learning technology initiatives (Porter & Graham, 2016).

Blended learning strategy is an educational approach which comprises of multiple teaching methods to help students learn more effectively. Blended learning is a teaching and learning strategy in which students get instruction via electronic and online media in addition to traditional face-to-face instruction. Instead of learning just from their teacher and interacting simply with their peers, students use technology to achieve their educational objectives (Gradecam, 2020). Blended learning strategy is significant for instructional purpose and it makes easy to access resources, live feedback in the classroom. Also, blended learning strategy enhances Flexible lesson and with blended learning no need of large buildings or classroom (Muxtorjonovna, 2020).

Blended learning is a combination of face to face and online learning. Where most learning activities may be done by using online platforms, while discussions may be held during periodic physical interactions in school. There are several challenges faced by university lecturers using blended learning strategy. Technology is Expensive Many traditional classrooms have a computer present for student and teacher use. Some traditional classrooms have even more than one computer, depending on school budgets (Schissel, 2021).

Blended learning usually requires that all students and teachers have a computer, tablet, or laptop. Needless to say, this is expensive to implement and maintain. Inadequate Training; mentioned the expense related to providing adequate technology for the implementation of blended learning in schools. Training is important as well yet very expensive to take on, thus may be overlooked. For example, blended learning assumes that students and teachers have a reasonable level of competence with computers. Anyone who does not have adequate computer skills will more than likely struggle with blended learning models. Also, lecturers who have never taught in an online capacity may be lacking in the skills necessary to effectively do so. However, inadequate training of teachers and students can quickly derail a blended learning model (Dance, 2021).

Blended learning requires possession of at least some basic computer knowledge. Unfortunately, many students do not have sufficient knowledge and skills like MS Word, MS Excel, and PowerPoint. Lack of computer knowledge may make it hard for learners to use communication-related apps, appropriate icons, and study materials. Lack of motivation and support; Physical learning creates an environment for continuous learning through students' support from their tutors and peers. Students who do not understand or misunderstand a concept during live online classes may find it hard to seek clarification as they are detached from the instructor. Students may also lack the motivation for their coursework due to a lack of a physical campus or their peers (Center, 2021).

A factor that plays a role in developing lecturers' perceptions of blended learning is professional development. In a quantitative study analysis of over 5,900 teacher surveys, argued that an internal factor of the teacher is confidence in utilizing technology. Professional development opportunities to practice using technology greatly enhance perceived usefulness, and in turn the likelihood to implement the technology (Hsu, 2017). While some educational technologist argued that lecturers' preparation courses must include blended learning strategy, especially in the areas of instruction and technology hardware.

In addition, implementation strategies and a variety of tools on blended learning strategy would positively impact perceived usefulness of blended learning strategy and therefore the likelihood of the decision to implement. A lack of understanding of lecturer's perceptions of

blended learning and how those perceptions influence his or her decision to implement the pedagogy is repeated throughout the available literature. This study contributes to the identified gap by providing knowledge on how the lecturer's decision to implement blended learning strategy is made and what factors, internal or external, have contributed to that decision.

The qualitative research shows that blended learning improved students' perceptions of the course slightly, and the lecturer's response reveals that they are eager to continue using blended learning strategy because it gave them more opportunity to deal with students individually. While there was no substantial difference in average cohort exam performance, fewer students in the blended classroom received excellent points. As a result, practitioners who want to blend their classroom should pay equal attention to student performance and perception. Area of specialization means body of knowledge or expertise attained through experience and training in profession (Lawinside, 2019). does have significance on lecturers' perception on the use of blended learning strategy.

Gender is considered a cornerstone to explain the inequalities and identities in modern society. In the background of adoption of information technologies, and particularly from the theoretical perspective of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the literature recognizes that gender is a key element to understand the differences in perceptions of usefulness and ease of use as determinants of technology adoption. But with regard to blended learning strategy. Gender affect how college students adopt information technology to provide learning solutions efficiently and effectively. However, the effect of gender roles on lecturers' perception on the use of blended learning has been scarcely research, even less in relation to blended learning strategy. And as manifest, evidence on the effect of gender is far from conclusive. This lack of findings justifies the purpose of this work. The main objective of this study is to explore gender differences on lecturers' perception on the use of blended learning.

Furthermore, this study intends to prove three hypothesizes as below:

1. There is no significance difference on lecturers' perceived usefulness of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization.
2. There is no significance difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization.
3. There is no significant difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blended learning strategy based on gender.

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design of the survey type. This is because descriptive research design of the survey type involves collection of information from a defined population in order to describe the characteristics of members of the population based on the phenomenon under consideration without involving any external manipulations. Therefore, the survey type enables the researcher to generate relevant information from the lecturers on their perception towards the use of blended learning strategy for instruction in university of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The population for this study comprised of all lecturers in university of Ilorin. The target population was lecturers in seven faculties in university of Ilorin (faculty of Education, Engineering and Technology, Agriculture, Management Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, Physical Science and Social Sciences). Multistage sampling technique was used to select the samples for this study. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select the respondents across the selected faculties. From the selected faculties, simple random sampling techniques was used to select lecturers that participated in this study. 146 lecturers which amount to 20% of the total population of the lecturers in selected faculties formed the sample size for this study.

Research Instruments

Researchers-designed questionnaire titled "Lecturers Perception on the use of Blended Learning Strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin" was used for data collection in this study. The questionnaire therefore consists of four major sections: section A-D, Section A with the respondents' demographic data which include lecturers' area of specialization and gender. Section B was designed to seek information from the respondents on perceived usefulness of blended learning strategy. Section C includes items designed to elicit information on the respondent's perceived ease of use of blended learning strategy, Section D includes items designed to elicit information on the challenges faced by the respondents on the uses of blended learning strategy. Section B, C &D were rated on the response mode of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Table 1. List of Selected Faculties in University of Ilorin and Population of the Lecturers

S/N	Faculty	Male	Female	Total
1	Education	121	59	180
2	Engineering and Technology	106	16	122
3	Agriculture	59	41	100
4	Management Sciences	49	13	62
5	Social Science	72	16	88
6	Veterinary Medicine	41	12	53
7	Physical Sciences	99	28	127
	Total	547	185	732

Source: DVC Academics University of Ilorin, 2023

Data Analysis Techniques

Data obtained from the respondents through the questionnaire was subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean, percentage and frequency were used to answer research questions. Hypothesis 1 and 2 was tested using ANOVA while t-test was used to test hypothesis 3 at 0.05 level of significance using statistical package (SPSS) version 20.0.

RESULTS

Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 2 shows that the total number of Undegraduates that participated in this study was 150. Out of these 150 lecturers, 109(72.7%) were male while 41(27.3%) were female. The result from this table shows that male lecturers participated more than female lecturers in the study. The figure below further presents the reuslt in pie chart.

Table 2. Distribution of the Paticipants Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Male	109	72.7	72.7
Female	41	27.3	100.0
Total	**150**	**100.0**	

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the respondents across the sampled faculties. The total number of the Lecturers that participated in this study was 150 of which Education 37(24.7%), Physical Science 26(17.3%), Engineering 25(16.7%), Agriculture 20(13.3%), Social Science 18(12.0%), Management 13(8.7%) and Veterinary Med 11(7.3%) respectively. The figure 1 further presents the distribution in pie chart.

Lecturers' Perception on The Usefulness of Blended Learning Strategy

Table 3 shows the lecturers' perception on the usefulness of blended learning strategy in university of Ilorin. The extent to which the lecturers agreed on the items is as follow: Blended learning strategy enhances performance during instruction ($\bar{x}$ = 3.55), Blended learning strategy enables students' satisfaction and engagement in the instruction ($\bar{x}$ = 3.53), Blended learning strategy improve students learning as it gives opportunity to access learning content at anywhere, anytime ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63), Blended learning strategy provides opportunities to participate a high number of students without classroom space ($\bar{x}$ = 3.55), Blended learning strategy restructures and replaces traditional class contact hours ($\bar{x}$ = 3.47), Blended learning makes teaching and learning interesting ($\bar{x}$ = 3.46), Blended learning strategy is important in my discipline ($\bar{x}$ = 3.38), Blended learning strategy support lecturers to clear out doubt by incorporating technology into instruction ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51).

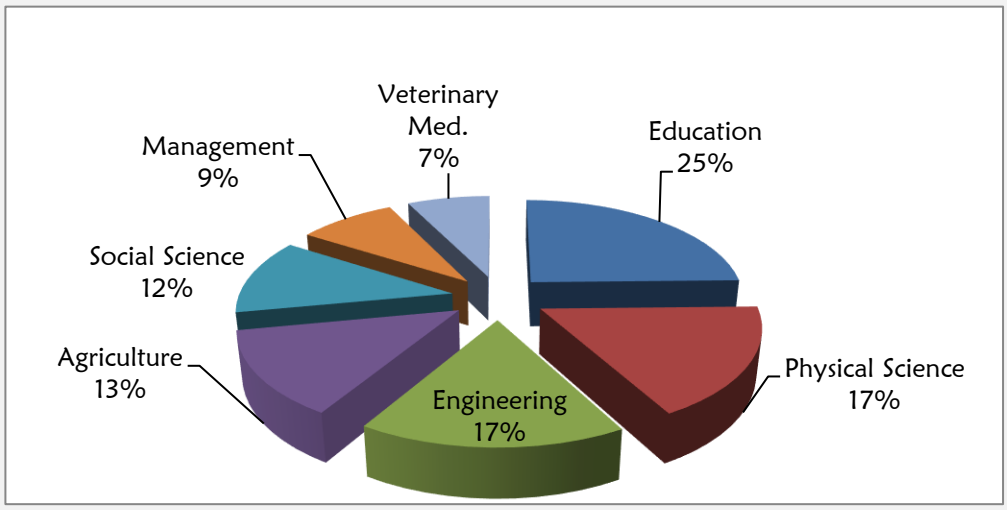

Figure 1. Distribution of the Participants Based on Area of Specialization

Blended learning enhances effectively and efficient teaching ($\bar{x}$ = 3.34), and Blended learning strategy provides access too valuable online resources which helps to provide quality knowledge to the students ($\bar{x}$ = 3.45) respectively. Meanwhile based on the value of the Grand Mean (3. 49 out of 4.00 maximum values obtainable) which falls, within the decision value for ***positive***, it can be inferred that the lecturers' perception on the usefulness of blended learning strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin is positive.

Table 3. Frequency and Mean Score of the Lecturers' Perception on the Usefulness of Blended Learning Strategy

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. D
1.	Blended learning strategy enhances performance during instruction.	85	63	1	1	3.55	.55
2.	Blended learning strategy enables students' satisfaction and engagement in the instruction.	81	67	2	0	3.53	.55
3.	Blended learning strategy improve students learning as it gives opportunity to access learning content at anywhere, anytime.	96	52	2	0	3.63	.51

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. D
4.	Blended learning strategy provides opportunities to participate a high number of students without classroom space.	91	52	6	1	3.55	,61
5.	Blended learning strategy restructures and replaces traditional class contact hours.	81	61	6	2	3.47	.64
6.	Blended learning makes teaching and learning interesting.	75	69	6	0	3.46	.57
7.	Blended learning strategy is important in my discipline	62	83	5	0	3.38	.55
8.	Blended learning strategy support lecturers to clear out doubt by incorporating technology into instruction.	82	63	5	0	3.51	.56
9.	Blended learning enhances effectively and efficient teaching	57	87	6	0	3.34	.55
10.	Blended learning strategy provides access too valuable online resources which helps to provide quality knowledge to the students.	72	74	3	1	3.45	.57
	Grand Mean					**3.49**	

***Key: SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D**= Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree*
***Decision Value: Negative**=0.00-2.44, **Positive** = 2.45-4.00*

Lecturer's Perception on The Ease of Use of Blended Learning Strategy

Table 4 shows the lecturers' perception on the ease of use of blended learning strategy for instruction in university of Ilorin. The extent to which the lecturers agreed to the listed items is as follow: Using blended learning strategy makes it easy to disseminate instruction ($\bar{x}$ = 3.37), Blended learning strategy enables easy access to course contents ($\bar{x}$ = 3.41), I feel that blended learning is more ideal for students with special needs ($\bar{x}$ = 3.45), I perceived that blended learning strategy enhances learning at individual's pace ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50), I would be concerned to use blended learning strategy assist my teaching and learning process ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51), I consider blended learning strategy user friendly ($\bar{x}$ = 3.38), Blended learning strategy helps to meet clear objectives ($\bar{x}$ = 3.30), I consider blended learning highly interactive ($\bar{x}$ = 3.33), I feel that I have the knowledge necessary to implement blended learning for my teaching ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50), and I perceive that blended learning strategy could hinder efficient use of lecture ($\bar{x}$ = 2.77) respectively.

Meanwhile based on the value of the Grand Mean (3.35 out of 4.00 maximum values obtainable) which falls, within the decision value for ***positive***, it can be inferred that the lecturer's perception on the ease of use of blended learning strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin is positive.

Table 4. Frequency and Mean Score of the Lecturers' Perception on the Ease of Use of Blended Learning Strategy

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.D
1.	Using blended learning strategy makes it easy to disseminate instruction.	60	86	4	0	3.37	.54
2.	Blended learning strategy enables easy access to course contents.	63	86	1	0	3.41	.50
3.	I feel that blended learning is more ideal for students with special needs.	75	68	6	1	3.45	.61

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.D
4.	I perceived that blended learning strategy enhances learning at individual's pace.	78	69	3	0	3.50	.54
5.	I would be concerned to use blended learning strategy assist my teaching and learning process.	85	57	8	0	3.51	.60
6.	I consider blended learning strategy user friendly.	62	83	5	0	3.38	.55
7.	Blended learning strategy helps to meet clear objectives.	55	85	10	0	3.30	.59
8.	I consider blended learning highly interactive.	59	82	8	1	3.33	.61
9.	I feel that I have the knowledge necessary to implement blended learning for my teaching.	77	71	2	0	3.50	.53
10	I perceive that blended learning strategy could hinder efficient use of lecture.	44	46	42	18	2.77	1.00
	Grand Mean					**3.35**	

***Key: SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D**= Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree*
***Decision Value: Negative**=0.00-2.44, **Positive** = 2.45-4.00*

The Challenges Lecturers Are Facing When Using Blended Learning Strategy

Table 5 shows the challenges lecturers are facing when using blended learning strategy for instruction in university of Ilorin. The extent to which the lecturers agreed to the listed challenges is as follow: I find it hard to set up the internal structure needed to implement blended learning strategy ($\bar{x}$ = 2.99), There is not enough professional development to support blended learning strategy ($\bar{x}$ = 3.25), It is difficult for me to manage time alongside meeting teaching requirements when engage in blended learning ($\bar{x}$ = 3.03), There is lack of motivation in learners while using blended learning strategy ($\bar{x}$ = 3.24), There is usually technical difficulties with online teaching tools ($\bar{x}$ = 3.27), I sometimes have problems with poor internet connection ($\bar{x}$ = 3.46), I didn't have access to adequate training on how to use blended learning strategy for teaching ($\bar{x}$ = 3.08), It is difficult to adopt blended learning strategy because technology is expensive to maintain ($\bar{x}$ = 3.39).

The relationship between lecturers and students is weakened using blended learning strategy ($\bar{x}$ = 3.09), and while implementing blended strategy I experience credibility problem ($\bar{x}$ = 3.16) respectively. Meanwhile based on the value of the Grand Mean (3.20 out of 4.00 maximum values obtainable) which falls, within the decision value for ***positive***, it can be inferred that the lecturers in University of Ilorin are facing challenges while using blended learning strategy for instruction.

Table 5. Frequency and Mean Score of the Challenges Lecturers are Facing When Using Blended Learning Strategy

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.D
1.	I find it hard to set up the internal structure needed to implement blended learning strategy.	48	57	41	4	2.99	.84
2.	There is not enough professional development to support blended learning strategy.	52	84	13	1	3.25	.63
3.	It is difficult for me to manage time alongside meeting teaching requirements when engage in blended learning.	42	77	25	6	3.03	.79

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.D
4.	There is lack of motivation in learners while using blended learning strategy.	72	51	18	9	3.24	.59
5.	There are usually technical difficulties with online teaching tools.	57	80	10	3	3.27	.67
6.	I sometimes have problems with poor internet connection.	77	69	0	4	3.46	.64
7.	I didn't have access to adequate training on how to use blended learning strategy for teaching.	55	59	29	7	3.08	.86
8.	It is difficult to adopt blended learning strategy because technology is expensive to maintain.	80	54	11	5	3.39	.77
9.	The relationship between lecturers and students is weakened using blended learning strategy.	48	73	24	5	3.09	.78
10	While implementing blended strategy I experience credibility problem.	50	79	16	5	3.16	.74
	Grand Mean					**3.20**	

***Key: SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D**= Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree*
***Decision Value: Negative**=0.00-2.44, **Positive** = 2.45-4.00*

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significance difference on lecturers' perceived usefulness of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization.

Table 6. The ANOVA of University Lecturers' Perceived Usefulness of Blending Learning Strategy Based on the Area of Specialization

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	74.736	6	12.46	2.08	.060	Not Rejected
Within Groups	858.598	143	6.00			
Total	**933.333**	**149**				

Table 6 shows no significant difference in the university lecturers perceived usefulness of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization due to [F (6,143) = 2.08 P= .060] which was greater than 0.05 Alpha value. This implies that the null hypothesis formulated is established as there is no significance difference on lecturers' perceived usefulness of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significance difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization.

Table 7. The ANOVA of University Lecturers' Perceived Ease of Use of Blending Learning Strategy Based on the Area of Specialization

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	78.48	6	13.08	2.17	.049	Rejected
Within Groups	860.91	143	6.02			
Total	**939.39**	**149**				

Table 7 result indicates a significant difference in the university lecturers perceived ease of use of blending learning strategy for instruction based on area of specialization, this is as a result of [F(6,143) = 2.17, P= .049] which is less than 0.05 Alpha value. This meant that the null hypothesis formulated was rejected as there was significance difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blended learning strategy based on gender.

Table 8. t-test of Male and Female Lecturers' Perceived Ease of Use of Blended Learning Strategy Based on the Area of Specialization

Gender	N	X	SD	Df	T	Sig.(2-tailed)	Remark
Male	109	33.55	2.24	148	.189	.851	Not rejected
Female	41	33.46	3.16				
Total	**150**						

Table 8 indicates that [df (148), t=.189 p=.851. This means that the null hypothesis was not rejected. This was as a result of the t-value .189 resulting in .851 significance value which was greater than 0.05 alpha value. Thus, the stated null hypothesis was established: There is no significant difference on lecturers' perceived ease of use of blended learning strategy based on gender. Also, the values of the mean scores do not reveal any appreciable difference.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated lecturers' perception on the use of blended learning strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The researchers gained insight into the perceptions of the individual lecturer on their experience regarding the adoption of blended learning strategy for instruction. Six research purposes were generated, while three research questions were answered and three research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Finding one revealed that lecturers' perception on the usefulness of blended learning strategy for instruction in University of Ilorin is positive. This finding aligns with the findings of Claro et. al (2017) who concluded in their study that lecturer's perceptions toward the adoption of blended learning approach is positive. Lecturer's decision to employ blended learning, can lead to higher usage of educational technology and improved student learning outcomes in the high school setting.

Finding two shows that lecturers' perception on the ease of use of blended learning strategy is positive. That is, lecturers perceived the ease of use of blended learning strategy for instruction positively. This finding agreed with Davis (1985) finding in his technology acceptance model of perceived ease of use had positive theme indicating lecturers' prospect to adopt technology in blended learning classroom. This finding also supports the findings of Stödberg & Håkansson L. (2017) who stated that ease of use was a major contributing factor in the lecturers' decision to implement technology into the classroom. a lecturer's positive perception of the ease of use of educational technology is likely to lead to adoption of blended learning pedagogy. Ease of use had a more practical meaning, in that consideration was given to the level of difficulty the lecturer perceived in operating the technology or delivering the technology-based content.

Finding three found that lecturers are facing challenges in using blended learning strategy for instruction. This finding supports the finding of Zehra (2016) who stated that lack of technology was one of the most dominant external barriers to technology integration in education. Tshabalala et al. (2014) constructed a list of challenges that add to the constraints in the implementation of blended learning: lack of policy, lack of faculty support, lack of technological skills and computer skills, large class sizes, and inadequate technological resources.

Finding four found no significance difference in lecturers' perceived usefulness of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization. That is, lecturers' area of specialization doesn't influence their perception on the usefulness of blended learning strategy for instruction. This finding against the finding of Blazar (2015) who concluded that area of specialization of the lecturers can determine their intention for the adoption of blended learning strategy during instructional process. Finding five found significance difference in lecturers' perceived ease of use of blending learning strategy based on the area of specialization. That is, lecturers' area of specialization influences their ease of use of blended learning strategy for instruction. Lecturers whose specialization is not in line with using blended learning tools or technology might encounter troubles in managing wider ranges of content preparation which hampers blended learning strategy effectiveness (Bastian & Janda, 2018).

Finding six found no significant difference in lecturers' perceived ease of use of blended learning strategy based on gender. This finding aligns with the findings of Nistor (2013) who reported that no significant gender differences were revealed in blended learning adoption because males are more stable in attitude while females perform well in engagement. However, the effect of gender roles on lecturers' perception on the use of blended learning strategy has been scarcely research, even less in relation to blended learning strategy. And as manifest, evidence on the effect of gender is far from conclusion.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was revealed that blended learning is an effective strategy for quality teaching and learning. Though there are challenges affecting the proper implementation of this strategy. The study therefore recommended that seminar and workshop should be organized for lecturers to further their knowledge on the uses of blended learning strategy for instruction and if these challenges are not giving proper attention, effective teaching and learning using blended learning strategy is not guarantee.

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