

ONLINE MUSIC LEARNING AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF IGNATIUS AJURU UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION PORTHARCOURT

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Introduction

COVID-19 is a novel virus. Coronavirus is largely a family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. On 13th December, 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) was informed about the emergence in Wuhan City, China of a disease called pneumonia agent is unknown. Covid-19 was later declared as an outbreak of a pandemic on 12th March, 2020 by WHO. Over 20,000 confirmed cases and almost 1,000 deaths were recorded in Europe region (UNESCO, 2020).

The emergence of Covid-19 pandemic has led to the disruption of business, governance, and to a large extent has affected the smooth running of education among the League of Nations. The outbreak led to unscheduled closure of Schools across the comity of nations. The abrupt effect this brought on the academic calendar has compelled educators, policy makers, and students to devise other means of salvaging the educational sector from total collapse via online schooling in a world that is prone to COVID-19 disaster.

The first confirmed case of Covid-19 in Nigeria was announced on 27th February, 2020 by the Federal Ministry of Health. The case was that of an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria and returned from Milan, Italy to Lagos on 25th February, 2020. The Nigerian government later announced partial national lockdown in two states Lagos, Ogun and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) on 30th March 2020. Citizens were to stay at home for two weeks. Travels within

these states including going to schools and offices were restricted during this period in order to curtail the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Rivers State Government announced measures to curb Covid-19 pandemic by imposing Total lockdown on the 4th of May, 2020 in the state. Alongside this directive, residents of the state must abide by the compulsory wearing of face-masks in vehicles and public places, closure of open markets and schools, (Davidson and Ernest ,2020). The closure of schools from primary to tertiary institutions in the state led to the closure of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE). This made the school management introduced online learning on the 1st of May 2020 and made it compulsory for all lecturers to teach via online Platforms so that lecturing and learning may take place despite the lockdown. The IAUE Music Department as asserted by Adeogun (2018: 419) is the only University of Education offering Music in Nigeria. It was established in the year 2010 and has never been left behind in the new normal as the students and lecturers actively participated in the online learning. Several online platforms were adopted. Some of these were: Zoom, WhatsApp, Google class, YouTube, Skype, etc.

The National Policy on Education (2004:17) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria further asserts the importance and roles of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

In recognition of the prominent role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in advanced knowledge and skills necessary for effective functioning in the modern world, there is urgent need to integrate ICT into education in Nigeria. Government shall provide necessary infrastructure and training for the integration of ICT in the school system in recognition of ICT in advancing knowledge and skills in the modern world.

The introduction of online Music learning is in line with the National Policy on Education.

The study adopted the qualitative descriptive method. Data was collected through questionnaire using purposeful sampling technique while the t-test and regression analyses were employed. The 2019/2020 crop of eighty-three (83) post

graduate and undergraduate students of IAUE, Music Department formed the population of the study.

However, the sudden and unprepared transmission from the traditional mode of teaching to virtual or online learning as a result of the pandemic was accompanied with its own challenges. The solutions and recommendations provided by the researcher will improve the online music learning, particularly in IAUE Music Department and other Departments of Music in Nigerian universities in general.

Statement of Objectives

The overall aim of this paper is to explore the experiences of the Music students of IAUE in online learning as organized by the school during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify the pros and cons of online Music learning.
2. Enumerate the challenges faced by the students during the online learning.
3. Provide solutions to the problems encountered in the process of the online learning during the lockdown.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is Disruptive Innovative Theory propounded by Clayton Christensen. He developed the concept of disruptive innovations which are technological innovations, products, services, processes, or concepts that disrupts the status quo (Christensen, 1997).

The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria challenged the status quo and disrupts existing models of teaching and learning. Meyer (2010) also asserts, that disruptive innovations forces new thinking and new approaches to ensuring students learning in higher education. The migration from face-to-face method of learning to online learning has contributed greatly to the learning experiences of the teachers and learners at IAUE.

Online Music Learning

Online learning is the newest and most popular form of distance education in the present days where social distances must be strictly observed in order to curb the spread of Covid-19. Stern, (ND) asserts that:

Online learning is education that takes place over the internet. It is often referred to as e-learning among other terms. However, online learning is just one type of distance learning, the umbrella term for any learning that takes place across distance and not in a traditional classroom.

Music teachers and learners need to embrace online learning in order to foster the development of Music education in Nigeria.

The Objectives of Online or E-Education in Nigeria.

FME (2004) stated the major objectives of e-education in Nigeria as follows:

1. **Enhancing access to quality education:** E – education has potentials of reaching out to so many learners and offering education whose quality is not compromised. The large number of pupils for basic education in Nigeria can be trained more effectively by using e–education protocols. This is also applicable to Music education.
2. **Improve the education delivery system:** ICT tools aid both teachers and students in teaching–learning process. Self–learning capabilities of ICT enabled education will enhance mastery of school subjects by Nigerian students as well as aid teachers in the Nigerian schools. This assistance will in turn be evident in the improved performance in school and public examination. Thus, ICT could as well enhance good learning capabilities and mastery of Music subjects by Music students and also aid Music teachers in the Nigerian schools.
3. **Ensure optimal utilization of existing ICT resources:** A cursory look at the school system in Nigeria will reveal series of efforts at the three levels of government (Local, State and Federal) at implementing some forms of ICT enable delivery. This demands that all states of the federations have some forms of computer education programs such as tech net, digital library, poly

net, etc. These bring lots of duplication under e-education framework resources to be pooled and optimally utilized.

4. **Ensure a global competitive education system:** When a global adoption of e-education as a delivery is achieved, any nation or educational system that does not conform will produce graduates that are not globally acceptable. With the adoption of e-education in Nigeria therefore, the nation will be on the right course of global competitiveness. In fact, through e-education most Music teachers/educators have studied various universities abroad.
5. **Reduce or eliminate anti-social activities in the school system:** The two counterproductive phenomena (examination malpractices and cultism) which have strangulated the educational system are caused by a host of factors including poor academic preparation of students. Since e-education has the potential of evaluating students' performance and reducing the incidence of the vice, the elimination of examination malpractices and cultism subsequently make learning and teaching more effective. Adherence to the above stated objectives of e-education in Nigeria by FME (2004) will, to a large extent, enhance good standard of teaching/learning of Music education in Nigeria.

Challenges of Online Music Learning in Nigeria

Online Music Learning is still confronted with pockets of challenges in Nigerian Universities especially during the pandemic as this is the only medium available for learning. Adeoye, Adenikin & Adenikin (2020) asserted that one of these challenges is epileptic power supply in urban and rural area of Nigeria.

Another major obstacle to online Music learning is limited internet connectivity. The internet service required to connect learners with teachers is somehow inadequate although this is being vigorously pursued in Nigeria. Ohibusuyi (2008) in Ibidun (2010) opined that internet connectivity in some higher institutions in Nigeria is only restricted to the library and ICT Department. Inadequate internet service is indeed an obstacle to online learning in Nigeria.

The attitude of teachers to online learning in Music education posed a challenge on online Music learning in Nigeria. Ikibe, 2020 averred that training and retraining of Music educators should be carried out on regular basis in workshop

and conference outlets. Beyond publishing to get promoted, Music educators need to get involved in equipping themselves on the nitty-gritty of whatever recent technological and research outfits that are available.

Prospects of Online Music Learning in Nigeria

Despite the challenges in place, embracing online learning in Nigeria and IAUE in particular has become the most preferred platform for learning as the Covid-19 pandemic lasts. The adoption of online learning for IAUE has enhanced the efficiency of knowledge as both students and lecturers have access to a large amount of information within the global village.

Online Music Learning provides a platform for students to interact despite the pandemic. It allows effective communication and eliminates the barrier of participation. It is also cost effective as it reduces travel time and infrastructural development in terms of buildings. Guragain (2016) posits that the value of face-to-face class contact content development, distribution and maintenance cost exclusively high as compared to e-learning which is of lower cost.

The adoption of Online Music Learning tends to solve educational challenges especially at a time such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

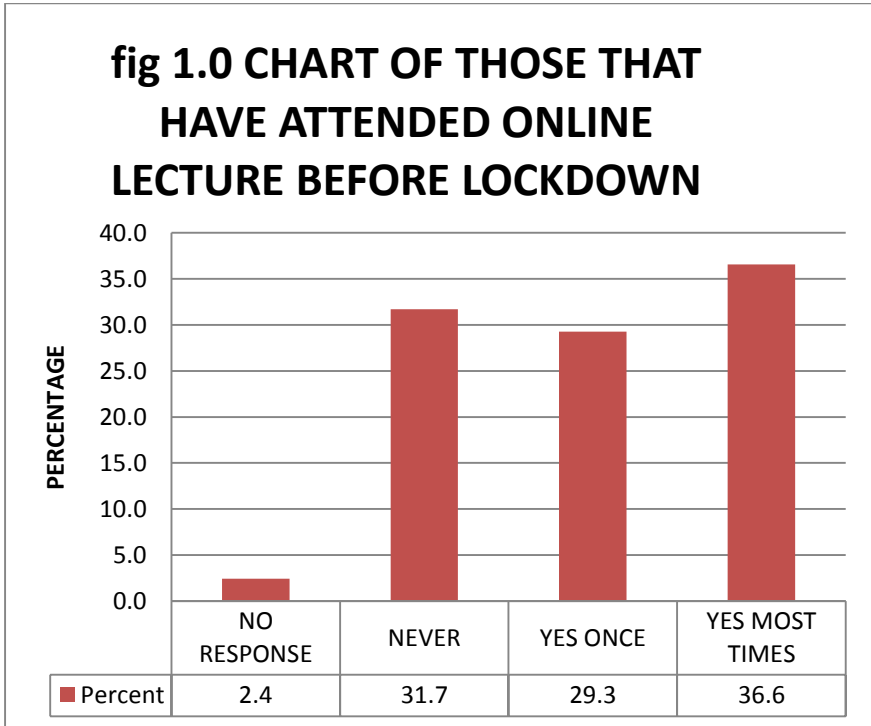
Methodology

This study adopted the qualitative descriptive survey to assess the experience of the Music students in IAUE during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Data was collected through questionnaire using purposive sampling technique and was analyzed using t-test and regression analyses. The population of the study were the 2019/2020, 14 post graduates and 68 under graduate students of Music Department, IAUE.

Findings:

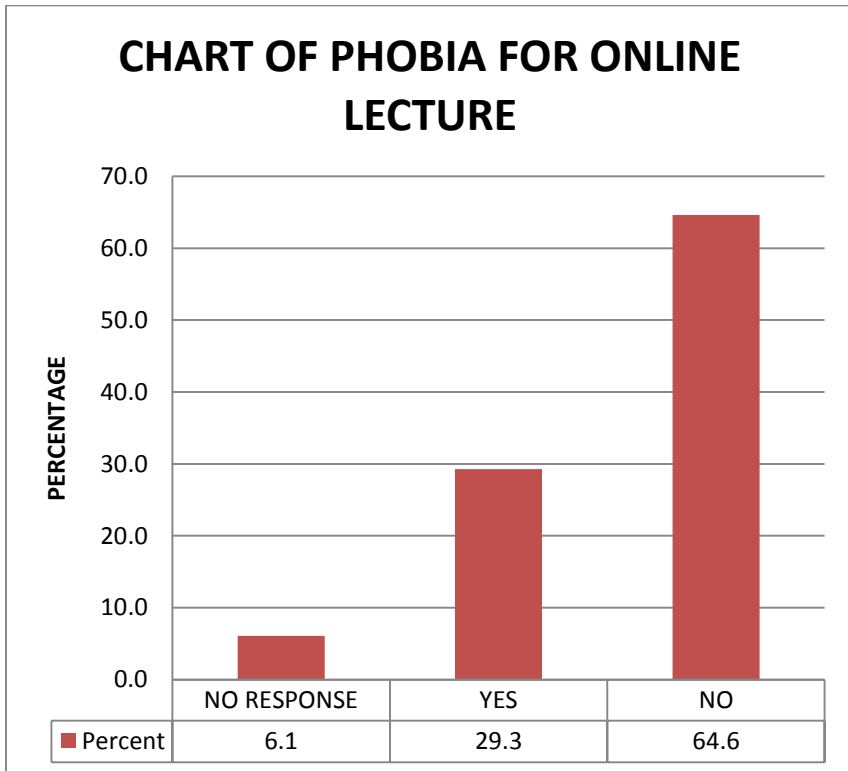
Charts of Section One

Fig 1.0



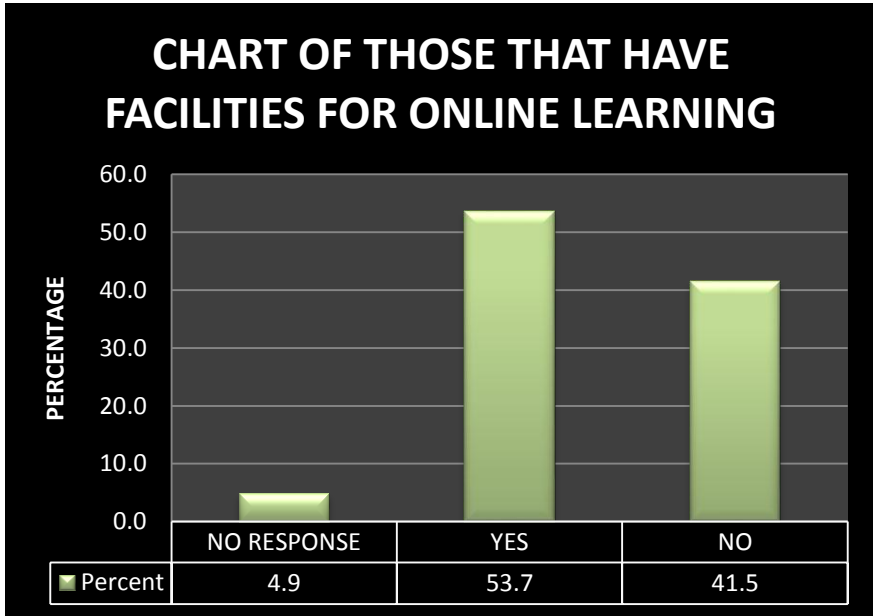
From the chart above, 2.4 percent of the population that answered the questionnaire didn't respond to this question. 31.7 percent of the population had never attended online lecture before the lockdown. 29.3 percent and 36.6 percent had positive responses of 'YES ONCE' and "YES MOST TIMES" indicating that they had attended online lectures or were involved in online lectures before the lockdown.

Fig 1.1



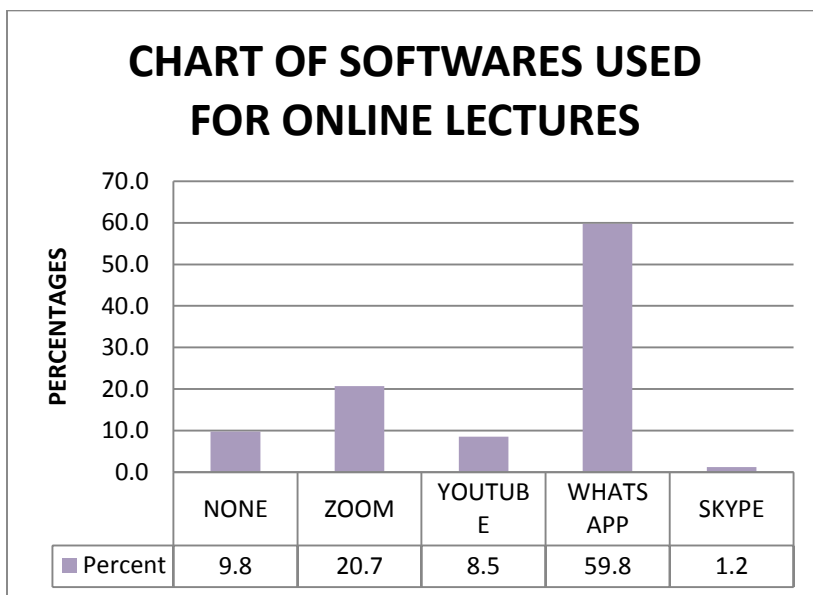
From the chart above, 6.1 percent of the population that answered the questionnaire didn't respond to this question, 29.3 percent of the population answered 'YES' meaning they have Phobia for attending online lectures while 64.6percent answered 'NO' indicating that they do not have Phobia for attending online lectures and are very comfortable with attending lectures online.

Fig 1.2



From the chart above, 4.9 percent of the population that answered the questionnaire didn't respond to this question, 53.7 percent of the population answered 'YES' meaning they have sufficient equipment and facility to participate in an online lecture, while 41.5 percent answered 'NO' indicating that they do not have sufficient equipment and facility to participate in an online lecture.

Fig 1.3



From the chart above 9.8 percent of the population that answered this question have never used any of the listed software to attend any online lecture before, 20.7 percent have used Zoom to attend online lectures, 8.5 have used YouTube to access online lecture, 59.8 have used the WhatsApp platform to attend online lecture and 1.2 percent have used Skype to access online lecture. We can conclude from the respondents that WhatsApp platform had the highest number of respondents who are familiar with it and have used it for online lecture followed by the Zoom software then YouTube and Skype with the least.

Fig. 2.0
Section B

S/ N	Questions	Agree	Some -what Agree	Dis- agree	Mea n	Stand. Deviatn (SD)
		Frequency and Percentage (%)				
1	You have sufficient computer knowledge and IT skills to manage online learning	19	12	51	2.40	.829
		23%	15%	62%		
2	Guidelines are provided before starting the online lectures by your lecturer	15	16	51	2.44	.787
		18%	20%	62%		
3	Happy about the online teaching methods and lecture materials	44	17	21	1.70	.870
		54%	20%	26%		
4	Online Music lectures are effective than face to face classroom lectures	70	6	5	1.18	.547
		85%	9%	6%		
5	Online lessons facilitate new musical skills	54	13	15	1.50	.850
		66%	16%	18%		
6	Online lectures are ineffective in learning	23	13	46	2.26	.914
		28%	16%	56%		

	practical skills on Musical instruments and voice					
7	Inconsistent, poor network/contact and communication with the lecturers during the online lectures	10	12	60	2.61	.914
		12%	15%	73%		
8	Do you have any online assessment during the online lesson?	35	12	34	1.96	.949
		43%	15%	41%		
9	Home environment is suitable for participating online lectures	28	23	31	2.04	.853
		34%	28%	38%		
10	Will you like to participate in online Music lectures with conventional lectures after Covid-19 pandemic?	49	15	18	1.62	.826
		60%	18%	22%		

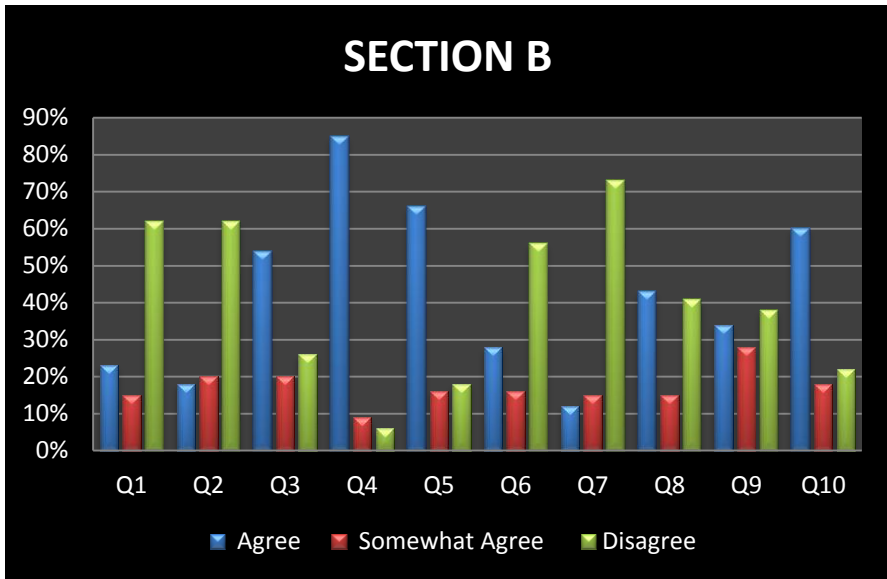
Fig. 2.1

Fig 2.0 and 2.1 show the experience of the respondents during the lockdown. 62% of Music students did not have sufficient computer knowledge in IT skills to manage online Music learning. The study revealed that there were no guidelines before the commencement of the online learning; however, 54% of respondents were happy about the new development. 85% agreed that online Music learning is effective than face-to-face classroom method of teaching. New musical skills were facilitated by online Music lecture, although 56% disagreed that online Music learning are ineffective in learning practical skill on musical instruments and voice.

However, 12% of the respondents attested to the fact that in the online Music learning, poor network connection was experienced during the lockdown. 60% of the respondents would like to participate in online Music lectures alongside with the conventional lectures after the covid-19 pandemic.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that thirty-one 31.7 percent of the population had never attended online lecture before the lockdown, the introduction of online learning by the school was made it possible for them to experience online learning for the first time. 29.3 percent and 36.6 percent had positive responses of 'yes once' and "yes most times" indicating that they had attended online lectures or were involved in online lectures before the lockdown.

Moreover, the findings showed that only 29.3% of the population had phobia for attending online lectures while 64.6% did not have phobia for attending online lectures and were comfortable with online music learning. It was also gathered that 41.5% of the population had insufficient equipment and facilities (Android phones, Computers, etc..) that could aid their participation in the online learning.

However, 9.8% of the population that had never use any software to attend online lecture before the lockdown, 20.7% have used Zoom to attend online lectures, 8.5% have used YouTube to access online lecture, 59.8% have used the WhatsApp platform to attend online lecture and 1.2% have used Skype to access online lecture. It was glaring that WhatsApp platform had the highest number of respondents who were familiar with it and have used it for online lecture followed by the Zoom software then YouTube and Skype with the least.

The findings from this study further revealed that 62% of the population did not have sufficient IT skill needed to manage online learning while 54% of the respondents were happy about the introduction of the online music learning.

85% agreed that online Music learning is effective than face-to-face classroom method of teaching and new musical skills were facilitated by online Music lecture, although 56% disagreed that online Music learning are ineffective in learning practical skill on musical instruments and voice. 12% of the respondents attested to the fact that in the online Music learning, poor network connection was experienced during the lockdown, while 60% of the respondents would like to participate in online Music lectures alongside with the conventional (face to face) lecture method after the covid-19 pandemic.

Recommendations

1. Music teachers and learners should transit and utilize the online platform for teaching and learning.
2. IAUE should develop e-learning policies and work assiduously towards implementing them in order to fit into the education of the future.
3. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) should offer necessary support to both lecturers and students to optimize the gains of online teaching and learning.
4. IAUE should collaborate with leading IT giants like Google and Microsoft with a view to bridging the extant digital divide between Nigeria institutions and their counterparts in other part of the world.

Conclusion

Covid-19 pandemic offers an opportunity for Music students of IAUE to experience emergency online Music learning during the lockdown. This should be sustained and improved on. Emergency online teaching on its own is not enough and sustainable. Relevant infrastructure (and in-service training for academic staff in the Department of Music) that facilitates the development of relevant materials that support online teaching and learning should be put in place by the school management. The study shows that 60% of Music students are ready to subscribe to online Music learning even at the end of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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