The probability, prospect and efficacy of Heutagogy in distance learning for lifelong and continuing education in Nigeria

by

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Abstract

There is a pressing need to use teaching/learning methods that fit the requirements of the noughties. This is autodidactic learning that is suited to the distance mode of learning and is meant to produce learners who will be self-directing and master the use of technology in a bid to fit better into the global learning community, and be lifelong learners. The study was a survey to explore the efficacy of the use of Heutagogical principles in the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute. Six Research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. Four hundred students were selected using proportionate and stratified random sampling techniques, and a duly validated 21-item questionnaire, with a reliability coefficient of .86 obtained, using test-retest method; along with Key Informant Interview sessions with Lecturers and Administrative staff to corroborate, showed that Heutagogical principles were being observed, but only to a certain degree. The hypothesis, with a calculated $\chi^2$ value of 70.94, which is greater than the table value of 5.99, given 2 degrees of freedom, at 0.05 level of significance, was rejected. The study found evidence of use of Heutagogical principles in the management of DLI students. However, the extent of compliance was found to be generally low, and inconsistent with the desired method of learning in this technological age. It was thus suggested that more elements of Heutagogy be incorporated into the method of teaching and learning in the Distance Learning Institute for national development and global compliance.

Key words: Heutagogy, Method, Web 2.0, Andragogy, Social Media, Lifelong learning.

Background to the study

Learning is through life, as recommended to UNESCO (1996) by the Delors et al Report. This is regardless of whether it is as an imperative for democracy, skill competence, learning for self-development or for harmonious living. The paradigm shift in the 21st Century approach to education by Millenials has called for a new mode of learning that gives ultimate power to the learner, and this is why a new method is advocated. Heutagogy puts the responsibility of learning more firmly in the court of the learner, such that he determines what he wishes to learn and how he achieves this; but more importantly, it focuses more on the acquisition of the skill of actually learning to learn, and becoming a lifelong learner by default, which is what is required for survival nowadays.
Self-directed learning, which may be largely autodidactic (or self-managed learning), as well as Heutagogic in nature, is about using all available resources and tools to enrich and improve one’s life. Thus learning must go on through life with constant improvement in one’s knowledge, skills and abilities, so that one can fit in, adapt and cope with life in general. Autodidactic or self-determined learning is enhanced in the 21st Century by assistive technology, as well as the amount of information that is available at the touch of a button for those with access to a Computer and the Internet. Most forms of education that previously necessitated schooling can now be accessed easily, freely and conveniently from almost any location, along with many other skills that hitherto were learnt exclusively under academic settings only, with Diplomas attached. The new orientation has thus changed the dynamics of what is learned and how it is learnt, apart from encouraging continuing and lifelong learning.

Heutagogy

According to Bull (2013), Heutagogy is a holistic, digital-friendly, self-determined and learner-centered approach to teaching/learning in different situations. It is rooted in humanistic and constructivist principles, combining threads of several learning theories into a composite picture of learning that is suitable and necessary for today’s educational systems. Heutagogy is suggested to be a modern approach to learning (Hase and Kenyon, 2007), as different from the traditional pedagogic relationship between the teacher and the learner, and it is closer to Andragogy. The attention to Heutagogy started at the turn of the new millennium when Hase and Kenyon coined the term in 2000 to describe the type of learning that will fit 21st century requirements and available technology. Heutagogy is thus seen as a new terminology applied to learning that is self-driven. It encourages the development of people, such that they can cope with a rapidly changing world, a flexible workplace and even unforeseen circumstances. Ultimately, Heutagogy fosters people who can be independent, critical and proactive, not reactive thinkers, as well as involved citizens.

Three terminologies are commonly used to describe methods in teaching/learning. First was the advent of Pedagogy, which was seen as the art and science of teaching and learning, but directed more towards children. Next came Andragogy, the art and science of helping adults to learn, and it is often contrasted to Pedagogy, although the former places more focus on the learner. While Pedagogy is seen as a method involving the content, method and evaluation in learning,
Andragogy focuses more on parlaying the characteristics of the adult learner into the method used. Heutagogy however stresses the importance of developing self-determined learning and the skills necessary to learn on one’s own, especially learning how to learn. Lifelong learning dictates that learning should no longer be limited to the formal and classroom-bound variety that occurs in childhood, but that it takes place through all of life’s developmental stages and is tailored to meet the needs of the mature learner. Kearsley (2010) and Pappas (2013) have further equated Andragogy with adult learning, espousing Knowles’ (1970) assumptions about adult learners, seeing Andragogy as a principle, theory and a method. More current is Heutagogy, the relatively newer terminology, as a natural progression from the concept of Andragogy; where, even though the learner remains the centre of attention, there is the new element on the skill set of learning independently. This element is crucial to people who will continue to learn through their lifetime. It has even been argued that Andragogy has become outmoded, given the current rapid development in new teaching methods, learning resources, and digital media (Wheeler, 2011). Even teachers are also targeted, as they are expected to engage learners in how they are to teach themselves (Kamenetz, 2010). Heutagogy as an alternative approach to Andragogy also challenges teachers to think more about the process rather than the content of learning.

The University of Western Sydney in New South Wales Australia has successfully implemented the Heutagogical approach into Course design, development and delivery, in its Teacher Education programme, where redesigned programmes integrated learner-directedness with blended learning. This has helped to improve teachers’ overall outcomes in their preparedness, capability, increased confidence in perception, and general competence in engagement. It has also been reported by Canning and Callan (2010) that three Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom have tried the Heutagogical approach. Their finding revealed that Heutagogical approach supports learner-controlled learning, collaborative reflection, learners’ self-perception, critical thinking and reflection, as well as professional development. Cooper (2003) further observed that even University lecturers no longer guide their students' learning to the same extent. It is now believed that the learner is expected to be independent and capable of organizing himself, and managing his own learning in a manner that will render him capable of applying the knowledge to effectively function in his chosen profession. However, the notion that people have a natural inclination to learn through life, has been found to merely
acknowledge the human penchant to grow. This is because possessing the ability to regulate one’s own learning must be learnt, as it is not necessarily a natural human tendency (Iran-Nejad & Chissom - 1992). Heutagogical principles can be summarized under three broad categories - use of social media and world wide web on the Internet; the role of the teacher, and also the learner’s level of independent learning.

**The Facilitator**

Where education was traditionally seen as a pedagogic relationship between the teacher and the learner; the teacher being in total control and management of the education; new research into knowledge has precipitated a re-examination of the nature of teaching/learning and how knowledge can be attained. The learner now takes more active responsibility in the learning process and objective, and teacher merely guides and provides resources (Hase & Kenyon, 2000). It is believed that the older one gets, the more matured of a learner he becomes, jettisoning the constant help from teachers, and charting his own course in learning, lending further credence to autodidactism. Therefore, while the learner is ‘spoon-fed’ in Pedagogy, Andragogy relies more on the adult, drawing from his experience as resource, along with collaboration with others; and Heutagogy has the teacher providing some of the resource, while the learner determines the path of learning. Owusu-Mensah, Anyan & Denkyi (2015), in their study on the staff development practices in the Open Distance Learning Institute, Ghana, found that the re-training of teachers in distance education imperative, as they themselves had most likely received their own education through the conventional face-to-face mode, and may not necessarily be automatically equipped to handle a different mode of education. Therefore there is the need for them to be specifically trained to handle this mode of education, and manage the Heutagogical approach to learning.

**Distance Education**

Distance Education is usually to complement conventional educational provisions. It is the type of learning that is characterized by the inherent separation between the learner and teacher, different from the usual face-to-face classroom-based encounter experienced in regular formal and conventional education. Thus, its content and instructional delivery methods also call for alternative means and use of varied media like Print and Information Communication
Technologies. This is because the essence of distance learning is to take the distance out of the equation. Distance learning already places the bulk of the initiative and responsibility on the learner, as it is more learner-centered and self-directing; and thus, Andragogical principles are naturally embedded in distance education already. However, it is necessary to examine the possibility of taking it a step further with Heutagogy and dilute the power of, if not totally remove teacher input. Heutagogy is especially suitable as a framework for teaching/learning in the digital age (Wheeler, 2011) and is almost custom-made for distance education. Learners are no longer seen as passive recipients as is characterized by child learning. Distance learning continues to be one of the more viable Adult Education outlets in Nigeria. It has become even more popular, in view of the obvious gap it has been able to fill in terms of better access opportunities to higher education. As noted by Bakare (2012), it has come to plug ‘leaks’ in the Nigerian education system. However, it is still modeled against the more formal mode in regular, full time University education. The University of Lagos’ Distance Learning Institute (DLI) has three Departments, and efforts are ongoing to further ensure that the Institute is operated in full distance learning mode. One way of ensuring this is to use tools like the Web 2.0.

The advent of the world wide web has been heralded as the third wave in the world, after the Agricultural and Industrial revolutions. It has proved useful for education, as well as social interaction. The term Web 2.0 itself was first coined by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 to describe the way web pages are now designed and used, involving the building of applications on the web. It is the new, easy and accessible tool for independent learning, through collaboration and user-generated and managed contents online. This can be done using different Software such as Wiki, Moodle, u-Tube, Podcasts and Social Media. The concept of "Web 2.0" began to gain currency when O'Reilly and Dougherty noted after a Conference brainstorming session that the web has become more important and relevant to learning. They stressed the active participation and interaction of users in a more dynamic way, as different from the previous Web 1.0, which was mainly for passive consumption of content. Using the web 2.0 as the technological framework of support, Heutagogy can be used to encourage self-directedness, such that learners can learn on their own and even personalize their learning paths, according to their desire (Kuit & Fell – 2010). All that is required is digital literacy. Digital literacy is the ability to understand information and, more importantly, to evaluate and integrate it in multiple formats using the
computer. Glister (1997) describes Digital Literacy as the comprehension and usage of information in the digital age, and even adds that familiarity with digital technologies is an essential life skill. The skill of digital literacy is imperative in order to be able to function in the DLI mode of education and in modern society in general. Only basic digital skills are required to function, along with capable communication skills. Thus, even a non-literate person can possess certain skills that can be deemed adequate for digital literacy. In Nigeria where the conventional literacy level is still low, the question is whether, even with the proliferation of easier access to, and affordability of technology, non-literate can use technology to learn? The beauty of technology (Smartphones, Computers, etc) lies in the ability that it is not limited in use to only literates. The question then arises whether Heutagogy can be used in DLI, and the resounding answer is YES; but what is the current status, and can it fit into the present mode of running the Institute?

**Problem of the study**

Every human can learn in one form or the other, barring disabilities, and DLI provides one of such. However, the inability to consider individual differences in the way learning is achieved has distorted the level of learners’ capabilities, especially in a developing nation like Nigeria where other debilitating factors may also come into play. It is necessary to focus on engendering learning skills that will enable people to learn effectively, but independently, academically, in the world of work, and in life generally, which is the focus of lifelong and continuing education. With the rapid change in the dynamics of learning and developing technologies, coupled with the necessary dependence on technology for managing distance education, one wonders how current academic programmes can be tailored towards further developing self-directed learners, using Heutagological principles to produce learners who will be empowered to function in a global knowledge economy. This will be occasioned by their capacity to fit their competencies and skills into different situations, in order to cope with an increasingly complex world (Kuit & Fell, 2010). Because of the inherent similarities in the concept of Heutagogy and distance learning, DL is expected to naturally support Heutagogy. There is however scant research yet on the use of Heutagogy in higher education. In fact, Blachske (2010) calls for more research into examining the level to which Web 2.0 and the Social Media can support Heutagogical approach to learning. She calls for the investigation into the effectiveness of Heutagogical approach in higher education and in creating lifelong learners who are able to effectively and successfully translate competencies into capabilities in real world situations. There is also not much in terms
of research into how Social Media can help self-directed learning. Technology has been found to aid self-directed learning, especially when the facilitator also has access to, or can host virtual space, where learners can interact and experience other forms of self-education. However, there is not enough exploration yet into the plausibility of utilizing Heutagogical principles in distance education in Nigeria, which was the focus of this research.

**Purpose of the study**

This study focused on how, and the extent to which Heutagogical principles are embraced in the context of distance education. The study thus set out to note the elements that are subsumed in Heutagogy, and to see how this applies to distance education in the case of University of Lagos DLI. Specifically the study was to investigate whether:

- a) Heutagogical principles are being applied
- b) there is technological infrastructure in place to enable self-directed learning,
- c) the extent of teacher involvement with student learning is measurable, or if teachers are largely in control, and
- d) it is possible to document the level and use of Social Media and the internet to support independent learning

**Research Questions**

1. Are students and the institution equipped to handle world wide web and Social Media learning?
2. Are there courses included in the teaching strategies used in the Distance Learning Institute to enhance self-determined learning by the students?
3. What is the extent of students’ involvement in the system planning and administration?
4. What is the level of teacher involvement and control of student learning?
5. How are the social media and the world-wide-web employed in learning in distance education and used to enhance independent study?
6. Are students familiar with the Web 2.0 as a tool and platform for practicing Heutagogy, along with the use of social media?

**Hypothesis**

1. Heutagogical principles are not observed in the teaching/learning methods adopted in the Distance Learning Institute.

**Significance of the study**

The DLI can learn the importance of incorporating the teaching of the skill of how students can become more independent learners by widening their resource base through the use of technology like Mobile Phone, Social Media, and other relevant technologies, along with student/teacher training to sensitize them into handling teaching/learning, using Heutagogical
principles. The study is limited to distance education only and the use of the concept of Heutagogy.

**Methodology**

The study was a descriptive survey. **Sampling technique and sample size:** The population included students in distance education in Lagos State and the Unilag DLI was the focus of the study. The University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute (DLI) had a total of 13,229 students in 2015/16 session (DLI records). The Institute’s three Departments - Accounting/Business Administration; Economics/Public Administration and Education (Science) had students in years 1 to 6. Multi-stage sampling technique was used. The Institute was stratified into Departments and Years and sample was proportionately selected. This was further broken down into the years 1 and 2 combined, 3 and 4 as well as 5 and 6 together, from where participants were randomly selected, making a total of 400 participants as indicated in table 1:

Table 1: Sampling for the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting &amp; Business Administration</td>
<td>1576</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>1431</td>
<td>2316</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7090</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics/Public Administration</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>1246</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5359</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (Science)</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3678</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3237</td>
<td>2804</td>
<td>3294</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>13229</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>3752</td>
<td>6041</td>
<td>3436</td>
<td>13229</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample</strong></td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DLI Records

**Key:** The Departments are A = Accounting/Business Administration; B = Economics/Public Administration, and C = Education (Science).

Four variables were specifically selected to represent the presence and use of Heutagogical principles. They are:

- level of Facilitator involvement
- Student independent learning activities
- Use of social media and internet
- Student involvement in management activities
**Instrumentation:** Main instrument was a structured questionnaire on Heutagogy for students (QHS), along with a Key Informant Interview (KII) with the Lecturers and Administrative staff in charge of the Learning Management System (LMS) and use of technology in the Institute. The questionnaire had a section on background information and another section containing a rating scale of 21 items with three options. The interview was semi-structured and open ended, aided by a 5-item checklist. These were duly validated. The reliability of the two instruments (questionnaire and key informant interviews) were established using test-retest at four weeks interval and the Crombach Alpha yielded a reliability quotient of .67 and .79 respectively to establish their appropriateness. The instrument had been pilot-tested on 20 students from the National Open University of Nigeria, who were not part of the main study. **Analysis:** Data collected were analyzed using Frequency counts and Percentages. The hypothesis was tested using Chi-Square.

**Findings**

**Research Question 1:** Are students and the institution equipped to handle Internet and Social Media learning? This is indicated by measuring the access to, and use of Personal Computer, Smart Phones and the Internet.

Table 2: Access to and use of Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>180 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>160 (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>400 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: figures in parentheses are percentages*

Respondents were found to be familiar with, and use the Social Media like Twitter and Facebook often. Up to a combined total of 48 (12%) across the Departments, however, still make use of Cyber Cafes and other available outlets for access to technology. The Key Informant Interviews (KII) also revealed that the Institute has an e-Library that is open for students’ use, but the Library had only 20 Computer units with internet connectivity, which may prove to be inadequate to serve the 13,000-strong student populace.
Research question 2: Are there courses included in the teaching strategies used in DLI to enhance self-determined learning?

From the interview responses given by the lecturers in charge, the only course available was the Application Induction Course to introduce students to computer use and the School Portal during their orientation. DLI does not teach learning skills to students as part of the curriculum. Facilitators’ claim that they post information and assignments on the Website where students are supposed to access their Modules to study along with other pertinent information (most of the postings were on the general compulsory GST courses). However this does not consider those who are not able to comfortably or successfully use the internet with the necessary proficiency, or those without direct access, who then rely on others to do things for them in Internet Cafes. There were no Chat Rooms created for the purpose of online discussions or group assignments.

Research question 3: According to the KII response to questions on the extent of students’ involvement, it was found that students were not involved in formulating the Institute policies, drawing up the curriculum, the content, or the evaluation process in teaching and learning.

Research question 4: What is the level of facilitator involvement and control of student learning? This was partially answered during the interview sessions and others through questionnaire items.

Lecturers were still present and some were more comfortable with only the traditional face-to-face teaching mode. The Institute organizes extra face-to-face classes from time to time to cover more of the syllabus and supplement the study regime. Unfortunately, this seems to be the only method that some students rely on for learning as they are still not familiar with the DLI mode of learning independently, and thus find it a bit challenging to cope with. Some still expect, or model their learning against the regular University mode, with its daily classes and more teacher/learner contact hours. Part of the interviews also revealed that classes in DLI were held on weekends, although efforts are ongoing to ensure that contact hours do not exceed the National Universities Commission’s stipulated 30 hours per session. There were no specific courses to help them sever ties with the facilitator. The institution has recently recruited e-tutors to move them closer to reducing the need for face-to-face classroom encounters of teachers and students, and hopefully, get them more comfortable with internet use. Generally, the level of teachers direct involvement with learners is reduced (at least compared to that of regular university institution), though not completely removed.
**Research Question 5:** How are the Social Media and world wide web employed in learning in distance education and used to enhance independent study? In response to students’ familiarity with and use of internet for independent work, the chart below indicates their responses.

Table 3: Students’ familiarity with the world wide web and Social Media for independent study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENTS</th>
<th>Years 1 &amp; 2</th>
<th>Years 3 &amp; 4</th>
<th>Years 5 &amp; 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes %</td>
<td>No %</td>
<td>Yes %</td>
<td>No %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>16 (4)</td>
<td>34 (8.5)</td>
<td>35 (8.75)</td>
<td>35 (8.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>27 (6.75)</td>
<td>33 (8.25)</td>
<td>32 (8)</td>
<td>28 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
<td>12 (3)</td>
<td>11 (2.75)</td>
<td>9 (2.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>51 (12.75)</td>
<td>79 (19.75)</td>
<td>78 (19.50)</td>
<td>72 (18.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: figures in parentheses are percentages

The highest percentages in overall responses (19.75% and 18.00%) were negative, which suggests that students do not optimize the www for educational purposes. Responses in the positive (19.50%) were lower. Students also tended to use the media for social rather than academic purposes. There was also scant evidence that students used the internet more over the years progressively.

**Research question 6:** Are students familiar with the Web 2.0 as a tool and platform for practicing Heutagogy?

Majority, 356 (89%) of the total participants agreed that they were not familiar with the terminology ´Web 2.0´ as a platform, and only 44 (11%) said they were. Responses showed that the students were merely not familiar with the name as they already use some of its versions. Additional responses indicated that even though 260 (65%) said that they can learn on their own without the help of the lecturer, 184 (45%) believed they learn best during the six-week compulsory residential face-to-face classes arranged before their examinations. Furthermore, 144 (36%) reported that what they were learning was useful in their places of work. Two hundred and twenty eight, (56%) of the participants indicated that they learnt best when they use their textbooks and lecturers teach. One hundred and four participants (26%) claimed to have received and responded to assignments posted on their designated Student Website by their lecturers through Blogs (this was however found to be mainly on the compulsory General Studies courses for all students). This is the same Portal where their learning Modules were
uploaded for their use on the Institution´s Learning Platform. It is however not usual for students to engage in online discussions or use Chat Rooms for group assignments, etc. Also, majority of the participants, 302 (75.5%), used the Social Media and WWW resources (mostly Twitter, Facebook and Whatsapp) largely for non-academic communication with their fellow students. The forum is usually used for sending information for class meetings or to pass on assignments (this was found to be what students referred to when they claimed that they used internet for academic purposes). The Web 2.0 learning platform, which is Heutagogy-based, can help students become more independent learners.

Report on the Key Informant Interview sessions

Interview schedules with the administrative staff and designated lecturers corroborated some of the participants´ assertions. The Institute introduces new students to how to use the learning Management Systems (LMS) as the mode of contact with their lecturers in one lesson during their orientation period; it is on this platform that students will access information and instructions posted on their Website, including their Modules. This however is apparently the only course for this purpose, as students are left to their own devices after this one time. There is currently no particular course to help them with how to learn independently or maximize internet use for academic purposes. Additional information from the KII is stated below:

- The Institute has tried to reduce teacher interaction with students through face-to-face contact by adhering to the National Universities Commission (NUC) stipulated maximum of 30 contact hours per session. This is along with the scheduled six weeks of revision and examination period at the end of each Session. Efforts are ongoing to establish full internet interaction with students as the ultimate goal of DLI.
- There is an e-learning Centre and it is fully accessible for students use to encourage self-discovery. The facility has 20 pieces of computers with internet capability. Another challenge will be the provision of electricity and student availability, given that many are full time workers.
- The Institute’s management is currently recruiting e-tutors to facilitate the conformity with the distance learning mode.
- The Institute uses social media for communication, along with different versions of the Web 2.0. like Moodle, Blog, Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp, etc).
- At present, all the Modules for learning in each subject are fully uploaded into the meeting sites and hard copies can also be obtained. The Institute is also in the process of creating Audio CDs for learners´ convenience and use on the different subjects. There will also be Videos for dealing with the more technical topics. Furthermore, the Mobile Phone is also often utilized to disseminate information. Social media use is thus largely limited to communication purposes and not for academic activities.
Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis: There will be no evidence of use of Heutagogical principles in the management of DLI students

Table 4: Chi square of observation of Heutagogical principles by all participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heutagogical principles</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>(\chi^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Internet and social media are used for academic work</td>
<td>64 (16)</td>
<td>144 (36)</td>
<td>192 (48)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Students learn on their own without the lecturer presence</td>
<td>96 (24)</td>
<td>176 (44)</td>
<td>128 (32)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Students are involved in decisions on curriculum, method and evaluation processes</td>
<td>16 (4)</td>
<td>68 (17)</td>
<td>316 (79)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>313.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Lecturers involvement with students is reduced</td>
<td>72 (18)</td>
<td>144 (36)</td>
<td>224 (56)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>491.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Students do a lot of their own academic work independently</td>
<td>128 (32)</td>
<td>140 (35)</td>
<td>132 (33)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: figures in parentheses are percentages

Evidence from table 4 shows a calculated \(\chi^2\) of 70.94, which is greater than the theoretical value of 5.99, given 2 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This means that the hypothesis that states that there will be no evidence of use of Heutagogical principles in the management of DLI students was rejected and the alternative upheld. This suggests that there is evidence of use of Heutagogical principles. Table 4 indicates that majority of the participants, 192 (48%), chose ‘never’. This shows that they ‘never’ use social media for academic work, as against 144 (36%) who claimed to use the internet for academic work ‘sometimes’, and 64 (16%) who do so always. The table further shows that most of the participants, 176 (44%), chose ‘sometimes’. This means that students only learn on their own infrequently, without the lecturers’ presence. On item 3, the overwhelming majority of 316 (79%) saying ‘never’ suggests that the students are not involved in decisions taken by the institution on curriculum, method and evaluation processes. Majority of the participants, 224 (56%), also selected ‘never’ for item 4, which suggests that Lecturers’ involvement with students were not visibly reduced. One hundred and fourty (35%) responding ‘sometimes’ on the last item meant that students only sometimes do their academic work independently.

Even though the preponderance of evidence is that Heutagogical principles were evident, a closer scrutiny will reveal that three of the five items were high for NEVER, while the other two were high for SOMETIMES. This suggests that the level of use of Heutagogical principles generally was not high, meaning that participants were not involved in method, curriculum and evaluation processes and interaction. Furthermore, teachers could do with a bit more leveraging their
control to help students build more self-confidence and support to learn on their own. Also, the internet was largely not used for academic work; neither were students engaged in independent studies confidently on their own. Generally, all the calculated $\chi^2$ were significant and greater than the table value of 5.99.

**Discussion of Findings**

There was evidence of access to the technological tools, though not enough in terms of how to use the technology. It was however noted that students’ physical presence in school premises may not be necessary, but the ability to be able to log into a functioning central hub that is properly hosted along with the desired avenue created to enable collaborative academic work. The study aligns with the findings of Blaschke, Porto & Kurtz (2010) that the active (rather than the passive) use of Social Media and the development of learner-generated content supports cognitive and metacognitive skill development. It may be generally challenging to fully incorporate Heutagogical elements, given our socio-academic background of dependency on pedagogical methods. It is also improbable because of the nature of the education, which is formal (has a curriculum, is examined with certificates awarded, etc). This finding is corroborated by McAuliffe et al (2008) who submit that Heutagogy is impractical in a credentialing institution. The lecturers’ role within the application of Heutagogy also needs subtle adjustment, as, by virtue of the learning approach, the learner is already self-directing, to some extent; and the teacher becomes more of a guide on the side, who gets more invisible as the learner’s confidence in his own ability increases. Joshua (2017) urges teachers to embrace and become more familiar with the Web 2.0 as a platform themselves (whether or not they make use of it) to help learners to become more independent.

The big questions is can Heutagogy be successfully utilized in the context of DLI? Maybe it can even be argued that independent learning is not part of our culture. We still struggle, even in higher education (which better adapts to Pedagogy and Andragogy) where it is expected, and especially in distance learning mode, where it is called for. The Social Media is meant to support Heutagogy, thus, not embracing it does not augur well for autodidaxy.

Challenges abound in the adoption of the Heutagogical approach into learning in DLI. One of such set-backs is the financial commitment necessary to acquire and maintain the necessary technological infrastructure to manage Heutagogy by both learners and Institution. This is all the
more so in a developing economy such as Nigeria, where the lack of basic amenities remain a challenge (lack of constant supply of electricity, coupled with the expense of getting necessary hardware and software). This is not forgetting the dearth of teachers who are specifically trained to use this approach. Most teachers are more grounded in the Pedagogical approach and, even using Andragogy still posed a problem, not to talk of the teacher substantially relinquishing control, especially in distance education. This newer approach (Heutagogy) needs both teacher and learner to be re-oriented and re-trained. Also, involving learners in management processes more will further create learner-commitment, more impetus to learn and continue to do so through life, out of personal interest.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Students still show evidence of timidity in the use of internet for independent study. Currently, the Internet and social media were found to be used more for other purposes than academic, and for passive and less dynamic engagement, which is not likely to advance their self-directedness. Understandably, students do not participate in planning the curriculum or in the evaluation of their programmes because of the formality required. Social Media is now more pervasive than the traditional paper-based media which tended to be from one source to a multiple audience. This is information-sharing from multiple sources to multiple receivers, a strong basis for educational collaborations. DLI’s current integration of computers and web 2.0 into education, as well as uploading course materials online is a first step in the right direction. However, lecturers must be digitally literate. The digital divide may be another source of challenge, but Institutional support can help bridge this gap. The nature of this divide transcends affordability to encompass the difference between digital natives (the generation born in the era) and digital immigrants (adults learning to embrace the new era). Ultimately, computers and internet should be seen as supplemental tools for learning, as they cannot fully be substituted for solid basic education, no matter the dexterity with the use of technology. The finding that only a small percentage is already digitally literate further necessitates the inclusion of digital literacy into curriculums, along with learning the protocol of internet use.

The following were therefore recommended:

- It is not enough to recruit e-tutors based on their knowledge of computers, there is also the need to re-orientate all lecturers to be able to sever attachment to the traditional face-to-face classroom-based type of teaching and learning and rely more on virtual
interactions through web hosting etc., thus staff development programmes are of utmost importance.

- Students should be equipped with tools to practice Heutagogy
  a. More computers with internet connectivity should be made available in the e-library for students’ use.
  b. incorporate related courses into the curriculum
  c. re-orientate and train the students and lecturers on the utilization of Heutagogy

- Independent study courses should be included in the curriculum so that students can learn to depend more on self-directed learning by using the internet as a resource and as a platform for collaborative work with peers. Ultimately students should be more comfortable with technology as resource and gradually jettison the traditional dependence on teachers and books alone for learning. Sequel to this, courses that will thoroughly ground the learners in the different uses of the WWW, along with recognizing and obeying internet protocols should be incorporated into the curriculum to encourage ubiquitous computing.

Ultimately, it must be ensured that opportunities presented by Heutagogy are properly harnessed for human development. The Nigerian higher education system must continue to improve and embrace Heutagogical principles for global compliance.

References


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