



## Lived Experiences of E-Tutors of Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria on the Use of Moodle E-Learning Platform

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### Abstract

**Keywords:** Lived Experiences, E-Tutors, Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Use of Moodle E-Learning Platform

**Introduction:** This study explores the experiences of e-tutors at the Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, regarding their use of the Moodle e-learning platform. The research question guiding the study is: "What are the experiences of e-tutors at the Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in using the Moodle e-learning platform?"

**Method:** The study employed a qualitative research methodology with a phenomenological research design grounded in the interpretive paradigm. The population consisted of 665 e-tutors at the Distance Learning Centre, and a purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 9 participants, ensuring data saturation. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, and data analysis was carried out using interpretive phenomenological analysis.

**Results/Findings:** The findings revealed three main themes: flexible and convenient for teaching and learning, overcoming barriers and enhancing learning, and easy for teaching and assessment. These findings provide valuable understanding regarding the experiences of e-tutors using Moodle at the Distance Learning Centre.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that the Moodle e-learning platform offers significant benefits for teaching and learning while also presenting certain challenges.

**Recommendations:** The study recommends advocating for flexibility, addressing barriers through robust support systems, promoting ongoing professional development, and fostering an innovative culture in teaching and learning.



## Introduction

E-learning is the process of delivering education through electronic formats via the internet network or the intranet, using a management system for education. E-learning platforms foster a new paradigm in teaching and learning. These platforms have recently been used to compensate for educational activities that have been interrupted around the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (Erol, 2021). E-learning platforms are an integrated set of interactive online services that provide trainers, learners, and others involved in education with information, tools, and resources to support and enhance educational delivery and management. Kanobana (2020) suggests that e-learning platforms minimize access barriers, enhance student participation, and potentially improve students' course completion rates by providing instruction and instructional materials online, allowing for continuous learning even during times of crisis and pandemic.

As a result of the inherent benefits associated with e-learning platforms, they have become the preferred platform to learn during global pandemic periods such as COVID-19, when movement is restricted (Adeoye, Adanikin, & Adanikin, 2020). One of the most popular e-learning platforms used by tertiary institutions in developed countries is the Moodle e-learning platform (MEP).

Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is an e-learning software program platform developed to allow educators to create online courses that encourage interaction and collaborative production of learning content (Amandu, Muliira, & Fronda, 2013).

It offers numerous benefits, as it allows users the opportunity for self-directed participation and independent learning, which can be

challenging for many instructors in teaching and learning. That is why Barabasi (2002) explains that interactive digital learning systems are a valuable tool for "shy" students who prefer to express their views away from the "prying eyes of their classmates." Moodle e-learning platform provides students with the opportunity to assess their level of proficiency. As an open online system, Moodle e-learning platform is constantly updated due to the collective efforts of educators and experts. Therefore, the utilization of Moodle is effective in promoting learner autonomy, as well as supporting collaboration and a learner-centered learning environment. With the Moodle e-learning platform, teachers also use various technology-driven teaching techniques to engage their students in a variety of learning content. However, Moodle is primarily used as an essential component of blended-learning courses or mainly incorporated into traditional offline classes (Gudkova, Reznikova, Samoletova, & Sytnikova, 2021).

Despite the slow adoption of Moodle e-learning platform (MEP) in some academic institutions, the advantages of online education, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, have become apparent. In Nigeria, for instance, the Federal Ministry of Education directed all educational institutions to lockdown as part of the pandemic prevention protocol, resulting in some students losing an entire academic session due to the inability to conduct physical lectures. As a result, educational institutions had to reassess and redefine all academic activities in accordance with the virus prevention guidelines. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly influenced the education sector, leading to a shift from traditional face-to-face education to a technologically-oriented approach, affecting 1.5 billion students and 63 million educators worldwide (Rodrigues, Almeida, Figueiredo, & Lopes, 2019; UNESCO, 2020; Valverde-



Berrocoso, Garrido-Arroyo, Burgos-Videla & Morales-Cevallos, 2020).

Universities in developed countries such as the United States of America (USA), China, South Korea, Europe, and France, among others, have adopted e-learning technologies to enable effective teaching and learning even before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The seamless synchronization of these e-learning systems with the Internet has provided alternative options to face-to-face education because it allows for the provision of information platforms tailored to students' academic needs in real-time and remotely (Saleem, Al-Saqri, & Ahmad, 2016). Unfortunately, some universities in Nigeria shut down for an entire academic session during the global pandemic in 2020 (Jacob, Abigea, & Lydia, 2020).

The researchers observed that some universities, such as Alhikmah University in Ilorin, Kwara State; Crescent University in Abeokuta, Ogun State; Kaduna State University; Baze University in Abuja; and Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti, immediately switched to e-learning to adapt to the new normal. However, the researchers noted that most first-generation universities, such as Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Kaduna State; Bayero University in Kano State; and the University of Jos in Plateau State, did not transition to e-learning during this period, even though the Nigerian government mandated that universities continue classes online. One of the issues raised by the Academic Staff Union of Universities against the adoption and use of online learning is the lack of technological knowledge on how to operate this platform (Ezema, Nworgu, Ebem, & Echezona, 2021).

Similarly, studies on the adoption and use of e-learning have emphasized the critical need for

knowledge of e-learning in order to use these technologies (Eze, Chinedu-Eze, & Bello, 2018; Adeoye, Adanikin, & Adanikin, 2020). However, despite the importance attached to the adoption and use of e-learning platforms, especially during pandemics like COVID-19, most tertiary institutions in Nigeria have not yet adopted e-learning platforms such as the Moodle e-learning platform for teaching in their respective institutions. Despite the shift towards online education and the adoption of the Moodle e-learning platform, progress has been slow (O'Doherty, Dromey, Lougheed, Hannigan, Last, & McGrath et al., 2018), despite the benefits of using the Moodle e-learning platform for online education, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Academic institutions in some developing countries faced significant setbacks.

For example, in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education directed all educational institutions to close down in accordance with the pandemic prevention protocols (Jacob, Abigea, & Lydia, 2020). This caused students in some institutions in the country to lose an entire academic session because physical lectures could not take place. As a result, educational institutions were forced to reassess and redefine all academic activities in line with the virus prevention protocols.

The main factor contributing to the limited use of the e-learning platform at Ahmadu Bello University is the lack of knowledge of the platform (Mohammed & Quadir, 2020). However, the Distance Learning Centre at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, did not lose a year, and the mode of teaching and learning was through the Moodle platform. Therefore, in order for faculty members in other institutions of higher learning to adopt and effectively use the Moodle learning platform, it is necessary to explore the experiences of e-tutors in the Distance Learning Centre at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, who have



used and are still using the Moodle learning platform for teaching. To understand their experiences, it is critically important to explore the knowledge of e-tutors from a phenomenological perspective.

Phenomenological perspectives seek knowledge from individuals who have firsthand experience. These lived experiences have characteristics that are commonly perceived by individuals who have encountered the phenomenon. These commonly perceived characteristics, or universal essences, can be identified in order to develop a general description and understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Neubauer et al., 2019).

Phenomenological perspectives seek to gather knowledge from individuals who have directly experienced a specific phenomenon. These experiences possess commonly observed characteristics among those who have encountered the phenomenon. By identifying these universally observed features, or universal essences, researchers can construct a thorough description and understanding of the phenomenon being examined (Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019)

### Research Question

What are the lived experiences of e-tutors of Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in the use of Moodle e-learning platform?

### Literature Review;

The studies reviewed in this section are phenomenological studies that focused on the e-learning experiences of e-tutors, teachers, and students. These studies were selected for review based on their methodology and their focus on the phenomenon of e-learning. The study conducted by Islam, Nur, and Talukder

(2021) aimed to provide a descriptive yet critical exploration of teachers' experiences with e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researchers formulated four research questions to guide their study: How did the universities studied respond to the need for e-learning during the pandemic? Were the universities prepared, both institutionally and technically, to face the challenges posed by the pandemic? What were the experiences of university teachers when using e-learning in their own contexts? What challenges did they encounter during the initial phase of using e-learning? Using a qualitative phenomenological research approach, the study explored the firsthand experiences of three university teachers from Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia.

The study identified the acceptance, struggles, and negotiations that occurred at both the macro level of policy and decision-making and the micro level of online classroom practices. Based on the findings, the study recommended the development of robust policy planning for e-learning and the implementation of effective monitoring systems for e-learning practices in Saudi Arabia, which is technologically advanced. The researchers argued for the creation of a context-based, inclusive, and appropriate e-learning policy guideline that could be utilized during emergencies and in the future.

In the study conducted by Khatoon, Akhter, and Talib (2021), the authors investigated the challenges faced by university teachers in Pakistan with regard to online teaching. The study focused on five research questions: How do university teachers respond to the transition from face-to-face teaching to online teaching? What challenges do university teachers encounter during the transition? What are university teachers' experiences with institutional support and infrastructure during the transition period? What are university





teachers' views on the capabilities and platforms of students for online learning?

What are university teachers' perceptions of the prerequisites for quality online education programs? The research utilized a qualitative and post-ex facto research methodology, and data were collected through open-ended questions sent to teachers with relevant experience in teaching online classes during the pandemic. The study included a sample of 39 university teachers who voluntarily shared their experiences and opinions in the context of online teaching scenarios.

The data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the theoretical framework and following the procedure of IPA. The findings of the study indicate that the majority of university teachers were open to transitioning to a new teaching paradigm. However, they expressed stress due to a lack of practical training in online teaching. Teachers were dissatisfied with the training provided by universities and the quality of infrastructure necessary for online teaching. They observed that many students, especially those residing in remote areas, lacked access to the internet and electricity, which are prerequisites for online learning. The study suggests that a needs assessment is necessary to understand the realities of each region before implementing online education programs.

In their study, Shahalizadeh and Musavi (2021) aimed to explore the perspective of e-learning in Iran and globally. They investigated the goals, strategies, obstacles, enablers, and innovations of e-learning in higher education systems. The study addressed two research questions:

1. What is the perspective of e-learning in Iran's higher education?

2. What is the perspective of e-learning in higher education worldwide?

They conducted a systematic literature review using PRISMA guidelines and performed a comparative data analysis using Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM). The findings revealed that the main goals of e-learning were quality, cost reduction, and educational equity. The strategies included instructional design, needs assessment, suitable multimedia, and blended learning. The study also identified Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as a significant innovation.

Regarding international databases, the research showed that the primary goal of e-learning was to provide instruction and learning anytime, anywhere, with a focus on innovation. The mentioned strategies were instructional design, evaluation of educational systems, and an interdisciplinary approach to e-learning. The study discussed other research findings as well.

When discussing domestic sources, the authors categorized them into 20 subcategories based on goals, obstacles, enablers, strategies, and innovations. International studies were divided into 21 subcategories using the same factors. The study suggests that decision-makers should consider these elements when formulating policies for e-learning in higher education.

Alharthi, Yamani, and Elsigini (2021) conducted a study to investigate gender differences in the evaluation of students and faculty members regarding the services provided by the Deanship of e-Learning and Distance Education at Umm Al-Qura University. The study aimed to answer five research questions:

1. What is the level of student satisfaction with the services?



2. Does the evaluation of the services differ based on gender (male/female)?

3. What is the level of faculty satisfaction with the services?

4. How does the evaluation of students differ from faculty members' evaluation of the services?

The researchers used a descriptive analysis methodology and collected data from a sample of 1357 students (704 male and 653 female) and 372 faculty members (208 male and 164 female) at Umm AlQura University during the 2020-2021 academic year. Participants completed a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, and the validity and reliability of the data were assessed.

The findings revealed a high level of satisfaction among both students and faculty members with the services provided by the Deanship of e-Learning and Distance Education. Based on these findings, the study made several recommendations: 1. Conduct regular and periodic studies to assess beneficiary satisfaction with the services.

2. Conduct a study on the role of digital media services in promoting awareness of e-learning at Umm Al-Qura University.

3. Increase cultural awareness among students and faculty members about the services offered by e-learning deanships in Saudi universities, and provide training courses and workshops on how to benefit from them.

Giannoulas et al. (2021) investigated the major issues that created obstacles for students during the lockdown period. These issues included technical barriers that hindered communication and teaching/learning challenges resulting from emerging trends. Recognizing these problems is essential for better communication in the future of distance education. The study developed two categories

of research questions: closed-ended and open-ended. The closed-ended questions focused on problems that arose during online education due to technology and communication tools, while the open-ended questions addressed the educational process and pedagogical challenges. The research results indicated that most students attended synchronous communication online classes (both theoretical and practical) to replace face-to-face lessons. However, students also identified negative aspects of online education, such as technical difficulties, poorly organized classes, and a lack of communication between students and teachers. Despite these challenges, most students expressed an interest in continuing online learning alongside traditional classroom courses. Overall, this study has provided valuable insights.

### Methodology

Qualitative research Methodology and Phenomenological Research Design was adopted for this study. Qualitative research is a research enquiry method that is geared towards understanding, describing, and exploring the meaning of naturally occurring social phenomena (Van 1979). The study equally used the interpretive paradigm for the exploration of the lived experiences of the subjects for the study. Population of this study consists of 665 e-tutors at the Distance learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting 9 sample size for this study upon attaining data saturation. A semi-structured interview was used for data collection and data collected was analyzed using interpretive phenomenological data.



### Data Presentation and Result

This section consists of the data presentation and analysis of the data in alignment with the objectives of the study;

#### Lived experiences of e-tutors in Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in the use of Moodle e-learning platform

This objective sought to determine the lived experiences of e-tutors of distance learning centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria on the use of Moodle e-learning platform. Three themes emerged through the analysis of the data collected on the lived experiences of the participants in the study setting. These themes are presented in table 1

**Table 1- Lived experiences of e-tutors in distance learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in the use of Moodle e-learning platform**

Research Questions	Themes	Sub- Themes
RQ1: What are the lived experiences of e-tutors in distance learning centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in the use of Moodle e-learning platform?	1. Flexible and convenient for teaching and learning	1.1 Easy access 1.2 Flexible 1.3 Convenience 1.4 Access to a larger audience 1.5 Proximity 1.6 Opportunity to watch and re-watch online lectures
	2. Overcoming Barriers and Enhancing learning	2.1 Eliminates phobia and intimidation 2.2 Error identification
	3. Easy for Teaching and Assessment	3.1 Creation of quizzes and assignments 3.2 Online grading

### Source- Interview Analysis, 2023

The emergent themes are discussed as follows starting with flexibility and convenience

#### Theme one: Flexibility and Convenience

This theme comprised of the narratives of the participants about the platform been flexible and convenient to use for teaching and learning. This theme is made up of six sub-themes: easy access, flexibility, convenience, access to a larger audience, proximity and opportunity to watch and re-watch online lectures. These sub-themes are explained as follows:

**Easy Access:** This sub-theme consists of the narratives of the participants about the Moodle e-learning platform creating easy access to resources and the learners. The researcher got

informed by the participants' in this study setting that using the Moodle e-learning platform made it easy to facilitate classes and resources. Narratives of participants in relation to this theme are reflected as follows;

*"..So far the best part of Moodle e-learning is that, students can access the resources at anytime and anywhere ... "* participant 1.

*"...as far as I know you can be anywhere in the world and can still have access to the class room..."* participant 2.

*"...using Moodle e-learning mobile app to access course materials and communicate on the go facilitates*



*teaching and learning with less stress...” participant 9.*

**Flexibility:** This sub-theme encompasses the narratives of participants' experiences with the Moodle e-learning platform, particularly highlighting its flexibility. This flexibility enabled learners to independently access course materials, engage in discussions, and fulfill assignments according to their own schedules. It affords the learners the freedom to select when and where they wish to study, accommodating a diverse range of schedules and learning preferences. The narratives of participants within this context are represented as follows:

*“...so far the use of the Moodle e-learning platform has been very flexible ...” participant 1.*

**Convenient:** Resources can be accessed at convenience and assignments can be submitted by students without the requirement of physical presence. This allowed doing things at ones' convenience by individuals with packed schedules, jobs, or other obligations. This sub-theme underscores the impact of technology in enhancing the convenience and accessibility of education. The narratives of participants in connection with this topic are depicted as follows:

*“...it is convenient you get to set time when you are comfortable with the agreement within the students without moving anywhere and the other component such as using the forum discussion ...” participant 5.*

*“...You can set time for the class interactions to take place and also set out your ending time for the interaction without going out*

*of your convenience...” participant 8.*

**Access to larger Audience:** this sub-theme comprised of the narratives of participants regarding the Moodle e-learning platform and its capacity to reach a broader audience. Moodle e-learning breaks through geographical limitations, enabling educational institutions to connect with a more extensive and diverse audience. Individuals from various corners of the globe can enroll in courses and access educational resources. The narratives of participants related to this sub-theme are portrayed as follows:

*“...you can reach out to so many people at the same time, all you need is just to have an internet access...” participant 8.*

**Proximity:** The sub-theme arose from the accounts shared by the participants in this study setting concerning their real-life experiences with the Moodle e-learning platform. In the realm of e-learning, proximity denotes the nearness of educational resources to the learners. Moodle e-learning effectively shortens the gap between students and educational content; making it readily accessible. This notion of proximity holds significance as it streamlines the process of reaching educational materials, thereby enhancing the overall learning journey. The narratives of participants in connection with this sub-theme are depicted as follows:

*“...Furthermore, proximity allows individuals from diverse geographic locations to enroll in courses and engage in online learning, fostering inclusivity and diversity in the realm of education. ...” participant 2.*





*“...Moreover, proximity facilitates learners in interacting with course materials at their preferred speed and according to their personal timetable, offering particular advantages to those with hectic schedules, employment, or other obligations. ...” participant 1.*

**Opportunity to watch and re-watch missed classes:** The emergence of the sub-theme arose from the narratives provided by the e-tutors in relation to their experiences on the use of Moodle e-learning platform. This sub-theme underscores how technology plays a pivotal role in enriching the learning process by providing students the chance to solidify grasp of course materials. Notably, the presence of recorded lectures stands out as a valuable feature that permits students to both watch and re-watch these sessions. This sub-theme holds significant value, as it underscores the capacity to review and revisit course content, ultimately enhancing comprehension and retention. The narratives of the e-tutors and their experiences with this theme can be illustrated as follows:

*“...Students can have that Opportunity to even watch and re-watch a Lecture they missed ....” Participant 4.*

**Theme two: Overcoming Barriers and enhancing Learning**

This theme comprised the narrative of the participants as lived experiences in the use of Moodle e-learning platform. This theme is made up of the two sub-themes. These are it eliminates phobia and intimidation; and error identification. The sub-themes are discussed as follows:

**Eliminates phobia and intimidation:** This sub-theme delves into the narratives of the participants that e-learning possess the

interface to mitigate or eliminate apprehensions or intimidation that some learners may associate with traditional classroom environments. It focuses on how the flexibility and user-friendly interface of Moodle make learning less daunting, particularly for individuals who usually feel anxious in the conventional classroom settings. Through personalized, online interactions and the ability to progress at one's own pace, students may find it easier to engage with course materials, reducing the barriers related to intimidation or fear. Narratives of some of the participants are captured as expressed:

*“...Student asks questions freely without any fear or bias of mind without any form intimidation...” participant 2.*

*“..My students don't have any fear in asking questions using the module platform they are very free in asking their questions...” participant 4*

*“.. With the platform introvert student express themselves freely without any intimidation or fear of other class mate...” participant 9*

**Error Identification:** This sub-theme emerged from the narratives of participants in relation to Lived experiences on the use of Moodle e-learning platform. Error Identification sub-theme centres on how Moodle assists in identifying and correcting errors or misconceptions in the learning process. This includes aspects like automated assessment and feedback systems within Moodle, which help learners, understand their mistakes and improve their understanding. Identifying errors and addressing them is an



integral part of the learning process, and Moodle's tools and features may provide valuable assistance in this regard. The assertion of the participants on this goes thus:

*“...the more you teach them the more you are able to point out where there are errors or anything in the courses or in the materials and you can fix them and then in the next semester you can effect that change immediately and everybody will have access to the new change that have been effected..” participant 1*

### **Theme three: Easy teaching and Assessment tools**

This theme originated through the personal narratives and real experiences shared by participants who have engaged with the Moodle e-learning platform. Within this theme, two sub-themes emerged, each playing a pivotal role in making teaching and assessment more efficient and accessible. The sub-themes are discussed as follows:

**Creation of quizzes and assignments:** This sub-theme sheds light on the participants' experiences in using Moodle to simplify the process of crafting quizzes and assignments for learners. Through interviews and interactions with the study participants, it became evident that Moodle offers a user-friendly environment for creating diverse types of quizzes and assignments. This functionality is invaluable for educators as it streamlines the process of designing assessments that cater to various learning objectives and styles. The narration in relation to this sub-theme is reflected as expressed in the following sentences;

*“...I also use Moodle e-learning platform to create quizzes and*

*assignments with various question types ...” Participant 9*

*“...with the use of Moodle e-learning platform I create series of quizzes and assignments through my question bank ...” Participant 7*

**Online grading:** this sub-theme explained the lived experiences of the participant in the study settings about how the use of the Moodle e-learning platform had simplified Online grading for the e-tutors. The researcher got informed about these through the interview sessions held with the participants in this study session. The narration in relation to this sub-theme are reflected as expressed in the following sentences;

*“...I grade my student's assignments with ease and students will be able to view the assignments that have been graded on the module immediately without moving around...” Participant 4.*

*“Using Moodle grading of assignments, forum, quizzes etc., is convenient, easy and comfortably done without having to move around with lots of sheets/books for marking...” Participant 8.*

### **Discussion of Findings**

#### **Lived experiences of e-tutors of Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in the use of Moodle E-learning platform**

The lived experiences of e-tutors in Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria are flexibility and convenience, overcoming barriers and enhancing learning; and experiences on easy teaching and assessment tool. The finding for this research



objectives are discussed as follows starting with flexibility and convenience.

### **Experiences on the Flexibility and convenience**

Flexibility and convenience is increasingly becoming the cornerstone of modern education, facilitated by technological advancements. Online learning interfaces have revolutionized the learning experience by allowing individuals to address educational matters at their own convenience. This flexibility empowers both learners and tutors to tailor their learning experiences according to their preferences and schedules. Students can access course materials whenever they choose, at their own pace, and from the comfort of their preferred environment. The ability of e-learning modules to transcend geographical barriers is particularly noteworthy, creating a virtual space that encourages global collaboration and connectivity. This offers students the freedom to balance their studies with other commitments and interests, enhancing satisfaction and overall educational outcomes.

The responses collected from study participants further underscored the lived experiences associated with flexibility and convenience in utilizing Moodle e-learning. The platform's features enable seamless access to resources anytime and anywhere, offering a personalized learning journey aligned with individual preferences. Moreover, participants emphasized the capacity to connect with a diverse audience effortlessly, enhancing global educational connectivity.

Numerous studies have highlighted the positive experiences of tutors in terms of convenience and flexibility. For example, Ulanday, Centeno, Bayla, & Callanta (2021) describe flexible learning as a blend of digital and non-digital technologies that ensure inclusive and accessible education through

various teaching modes. Similarly, utilizing Moodle allows students to actively engage in their education, offering learning opportunities regardless of circumstances. Educations.com (2022) notes that the platform enables personalized learning paces and flexible scheduling, promoting a work-life-study balance. Particularly beneficial for students in rural areas, those with health concerns, or frequent travelers, online learning enhances convenience.

These findings underscore the firsthand experiences associated with the flexibility and convenience of using Moodle in e-learning. The platform's attributes, including unrestricted access, global connectivity, on-demand learning opportunities, and effective knowledge dissemination, contribute to cultivating a dynamic educational environment. This transformative potential of e-learning platforms like Moodle actively shapes the contemporary educational landscape. However, challenges such as time management may arise, especially for students juggling multiple responsibilities. Nonetheless, the flexibility and convenience offered by online learning remain a significant driving force behind its adoption.

### **Overcoming Barriers and enhancing learning**

Overcoming barriers and enhancing learning involves identifying, addressing, and removing obstacles to learning while implementing strategies to optimize educational experiences. These obstacles may include tight schedules, excessive workload, limited resources or technologies, emotional factors, or fixed mindsets, hindering full engagement in the learning process. It encompasses addressing challenges that impede learning while concurrently implementing methods to improve learning outcomes. This approach aims to transcend barriers that hinder effective education, creating a more enriching learning



environment. Through innovative strategies, technology integration, and fostering inclusivity, educators can elevate the overall learning experience, making it accessible, engaging, and effective for diverse learners.

The experiences of e-tutors at the Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, underscored the challenges initially faced in adapting to Moodle's technological aspects. Despite initial difficulties in navigating the platform, understanding its features, and troubleshooting technical issues, e-tutors developed technological proficiency over time. They discovered innovative ways to utilize Moodle, leveraging its features to create engaging content, interactive assessments, and collaborative learning spaces. This aligns with Croft's notion that barriers to learning impede effective education. These barriers can manifest in various forms, including socioeconomic factors, cultural disparities, learning disabilities, and resource constraints.

This is in agreement with Croft (2013) who stated that barrier to learning is anything that stands in the way of a child being able to learn effectively. Studies have repeatedly admitted the experiences of tutors as doing things at Overcoming Barriers and Enhancing learning. For instance, Tomlinson (2000) added that learner may experience one or more barriers to learning throughout his or her education. Barriers to learning can manifest in various forms, such as socioeconomic factors, cultural differences, learning disabilities, lack of resources, and more.

E-tutors at Ahmadu Bello University utilized communication tools within Moodle, such as forums, messaging, and real-time chat, to provide regular feedback and foster a sense of community among learners. This proactive approach to overcoming barriers and enhancing learning highlights the transformative potential of technology in education.

## Experiences on easy Teaching and Assessment tool

An easy teaching and assessment tool refers to software or platforms designed to simplify and enhance teaching and student evaluation processes in educational settings. These tools offer user-friendly interfaces, streamline instructional tasks, and provide effective assessment capabilities, aiming to facilitate teaching and assessment activities for educators.

The experiences shared by study participants underscored the benefits of using Moodle as an easy teaching and assessment tool in e-learning. Educators can easily design courses, organize diverse content, and incorporate multimedia elements to create engaging learning materials. Additionally, Moodle streamlines assignment workflows, allowing educators to create tasks with clear instructions and deadlines. The platform's electronic submission feature benefits students, while instructors can provide feedback and allocate grades directly within Moodle, contributing to a centralized grading system.

Furthermore, Moodle's quiz enhances assessment versatility, enabling instructors to create various question types to align with different learning objectives. This flexibility ensures a comprehensive evaluation approach. Additionally, Moodle facilitates timely and targeted feedback from educators to students, complemented by analytics tools that enable instructors to monitor student progress comprehensively.

Several studies have highlighted Moodle's effectiveness as an open-source e-learning platform for course creation and management. According to Costa, Alvelos & Teixeira (2012) Moodle represents one of the most widely used open-source e-learning platforms that enables the creation of a course website ensuring their access only to enrolled students.





This platform allows the exchange of information among users geographically dispersed, through mechanisms of synchronous (chats) and asynchronous communication (discussion forums) (Cole & Foster, 2008).

### Conclusions and recommendations

Moodle serves as an accessible and versatile teaching and assessment tool, offering features that simplify instructional tasks, enhance student engagement, and facilitate comprehensive assessment processes in e-learning environments.

Based on the findings, the study concluded that e-learning platforms have emerged as a thriving and popular method for both learning and teaching in the contemporary era, driven by technological innovations and advancements. Embracing knowledge and utilizing e-learning platforms alleviates the challenge of navigating physical learning spaces and accessing traditional learning resources. The study recommends advocating for the flexibility of the Moodle e-learning platform to accommodate various teaching methodologies, addressing barriers through robust support systems, and promoting continuous professional development for e-tutors. Additionally, e-tutors at Ahmadu Bello University's Distance Learning Centre should enhance their utilization of the Moodle e-learning platform by leveraging digital platforms for collaborative knowledge exchange and engaging in comprehensive training programs with multimedia resources and regular workshops, thus fostering a self-motivated and well-supported learning environment.

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