

Needs for E-Supervision in Kwara State Universities

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Abstract

In current Era, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have become cheaper and affordable for almost every organisation for effective and efficient smooth running of every activity of the organisation. This paper discussed the need for e-supervision in Kwara State universities. University education, concept of e-supervision, as well as justification and effectiveness of e-supervision were discussed. The types of e-supervision, challenges and solutions to the challenges were elucidated. On this note, it was concluded that e-supervision has great impact on both the supervisor and the supervisee and the institution itself. The paper suggested that institutions should adopt a multi-layered investment and partnership strategy. Governments and university management should priorities funding for ICT through dedicated budget lines and TETFund interventions. Institutions should establish centralised ICT hubs with stable broadband, solar-powered backup systems to mitigate unreliable electricity, and campus-wide Wi-Fi access. Partnerships with telecom providers (e.g., subsidised educational data bundles) can improve connectivity.

Keywords: E-supervision, Universities, Kwara State, Information and Communication Technologies

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Introduction

The need for education in every nation, is to achieve educational objectives which involves transmission of information, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to the young ones that cares for it. The demand for university education is grossly increasing globally as millions of students were seeking for higher education so as to improve themselves and to meet up with their contemporary around the world. E-supervision is an interactive structure with electronic gadgets to transmit between the supervisee and the supervisor (Fasasi, et. al, 2020). According to Onah et al (2024), e-supervision's potential lies in its ability to overcome physical barriers and create a dynamic and supportive environment for students conducting research projects in Nigerian universities.

E-supervision is an innovation evolved in the teaching and learning process in most educational institutions at all levels. The gadgets include visual and audio contact between supervisees and supervisors such as closed-circuit television system that uses fiber optics, microwave, phone lines and a digital satellite to deliver and oversee educational information on line (Olowa, et. al, 2021). The use of e-supervision is no more a news in promoting education through supervision mostly in many advanced nations. Many developed nations of the world have in recent times, applied the use of mobile learning and supervision which means the use of wireless electronic technology to deliver, receive knowledge and access skill (Fulton, 2019).

However, Nigeria universities can be said to be behind in the adaptation of these technologies as there is evidently an extremely usage of physical supervision among Nigeria universities (Olashehinde-williams, 2020). Perhaps, there is the need for e-supervision among Kwara state universities due to various factors such as the increase in demand for remote learning, the need to overcome geographical barriers in supervision and the potential for enhancing the efficiency of innovation in academic supervision processes. E-supervision can facilitate more flexible interactions between supervisors and students, enabling them to overcome limitations imposed by physical distance. Additionally, it could lead to more streamlined communication channels and easier access to resources, ultimately enhancing the quality of supervision and academic outcomes.

University Education in Nigeria

Nigeria as a nation of the world have encourages various forms of education at all levels over some decade. Formal education has been accepted and in existence during the colonia era just to develop the growth of the citizen, society and the country at large. Considering the importance of education to the growth of the nation, huge in resources in various capacity have always been put in place to compliment the education sector by the government of Nigeria (Ajape, et. al, 2023). Evidently, the educational industry is always being considered as one of the most essential sectors out of all sectors in the yearly budgetary presentation (Olokooba, 2020).

University education in Nigeria is posed to be the source of developing and sustaining the socio-economic that will invariably develop the nation. According Okoli (2019), university education is there to develop the human resources which are the tools to develop a nation through other sectors, and is the highest level in the learning process, also a critical component of human development worldwide. Ajape et. al. (2021) postulated that university education in Nigeria is the education that prepares the youths for future. It is also the key to the realisation of the social, economic sustainability and technological advancement of a country. The Nigerian university system is the largest in Africa and according to the National Universities Commission, the total number of universities in Nigeria is 309 which comprises 74 federal universities, 67 state universities and 168 private universities (National Universities Commission, 2026)

On the other hand, Kwara state universities are eleven in number with one Federal, two State- owned and nine Private universities (Kwara State, 2026) University education is an advanced education that develops the manpower of the country through teaching, supervision, researching and providing community services in order to develop and sustain the society. University education is the most advanced and acceptable education that has and gives the highest certificate to career development. Therefore, efficient and effective university education system could be considered as one of the best assets a nation can have and to invest on.

The Concept of E-Supervision

Supervision is the collection of elements of direction, guidance, oversight and coordination of the activities of the students. According to Olashehinde-

Williams (2020), e-supervision means practicing supervisory methods through using modern technology and communication to develop competences among the learners and the supervisors. E-supervision can also be considered as virtual activities as supervisors are virtually connected to the scattered supervisees (Ogunode, 20201). Jegede (2021) asserted that e-learning is a crucial element that provides an opportunity to enhanced collaboration between the supervisors, teachers, students and their schools. In addition, Fasasi (2018) described e-supervision as the process of learning, cognition and understanding. It gives new perspectives for acting as a professional.

E-Supervision system simply means a web-based system using multi-agents' technologies with client/server approach to access and receive information from databases to help teachers, facilitators, lecturers, supervisors and supervisees in their activities (Akande, 2019).

Justifications for E-Supervision

According to Frederick et. al. (2016), Innovative Educational Technologies (ICTs) enable qualified academics to supervise from anywhere in the world with the relevant technical infrastructure. Also, to save time and cost, removing geographical limitations, tracking corrections made by students, promoting efficiency and effectiveness in research supervision, bridging communication gap between supervisors and supervisees among others. These features can also be considered as justification for e-supervision:

- I. Savings on: travelling expenses, printing and collating, time spent on the road and less stress.
- II. Automatic: electronic record keeping, backups, and filing. Ease of electronic acceptance or rejection of supervisor's recommendations. Automatically generated electronic notes provided for all recommendations made by Supervisor.
- III. Minimizing face-to-face consultations, and
- IV. Reducing Phobia among others.

Effectiveness of E-Supervision

E-supervision is regarded as an online activity which requires at least basic knowledge and skills in computer usage. Awodiji et al. (2020) describes requirements of effective online supervision in perspective of supervisor and supervisee as follows, must have/be able to:

- I. skill in navigating online.
- II. basic typing and spelling skills.
- III. excellent communication skills.
- IV. express self in the written word.
- V. express concepts/ideas without the use of non-verbal cues.

Type of E-Supervision

Fasasi (2018) discussed on the following gadgets as various facilities to use for e-supervision, thus as follows:

- I. **Computer-Assisted Live Supervision:** Live supervision has become a rarely used but potentially powerful tool in the supervisory activities. Live supervision differs from live observation in that during live supervision, immediate feedback can be offered. Both the supervisor and supervisee can receive feedback and suggestions within session so that they can have immediate support. Live supervision has been seldom used because it is time consuming, and often is filled with distractions. While helpful it can be disruptive and cause a hierarchy problem since it defined the trainee as not in charge and needing an expert,
- II. **Web-Pages:** Web page to facilitate instruction and communication between the supervisor and supervisee. Web page make it ease of accessing material, clarity of presentation, as well as providing the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback to individuals and entire groups. Most supervisory centers have internet assignments built into their requirements, so the need to be proficient with technology is supported through hands on experiences. Web page is a day-to-day activities with the use of e-mail and computers.

- III. Videoconferencing: of these, the single and most palpable enhancement achieved through videoconferencing is simultaneous face-to-face interaction at a distance. Supervisee can link with the supervisors elsewhere nationally or internationally, exchange information, and develop their supervising competencies. The use of videoconferencing and E-mail enables supervisors to provide supervisees with a relevant and realistic outcome for the purposeful communication. It develops essential organizational and management skills - and provides a unique opportunity for communication at a distance with fellow teachers and supervisors, and consequent development of their critical professionalism. The technology will also permit the use of software applications such as Power Point for additional polish of presentation, rather than overhead transparencies.
- IV. Electronic Mail: an E-mail is an electronic mail i.e. sending message by electronic means. E-mail is another great machine of the modern ICT for teaching, learning, research and supervision. It is easy to use, very fast and allows sharing of or collaboration on documents. It can widely be used by teachers for debate, discussion, disseminating information, surveys and questionnaires, locating colleagues and even electronic meetings. E-mail can be used for a wider variety of functions. E-mail can be used as an educational tool which supervision is among and as well as a social communicator. The introduction of E-mail has made the supervision process easier as it allows for regular contact between the supervisors and supervisee. Individuals involved in the supervision of practicum and internship teachers can converse regularly without the constraints of physical proximity. This allows for a more continuous supervisory experience for the supervisee.
- V. Chat rooms and Real-Time Communication: similar to the concept of E-mail is that of chat rooms and real-time communication. These options allow individuals to post comments and questions to others in a group and receive feedback or suggestions. The improvement over E-mail is that the communication between the group is in real-time. Questions can be answered instantly and a discussion can follow. Supervisors can establish a listing of all group members and their assigned/chosen screen names. If using a chat room, all individuals who want to participate in the supervision can meet in a designated

room. Current chat room technology allows for secure and private rooms where access is restricted to only those who are part of the supervision group. A real-time discussion forum can take place between supervisor and supervisees. Supervisees are also able to communicate with one another.

- VI. **Cyber Supervision:** cyber supervision provides supervisors with the most flexibility in working with their supervisees. With the proper equipment, a supervisor can interact with supervisees at various locations with real time video and audio capabilities. More importantly, the supervisees are also able to communicate with one another as well. This approach is modeled closely after the distance learning technology that is becoming more prevalent in higher education settings. The key element in cyber supervision, is more secure than E-mail or chat room transcripts that are considered public record and are used extensively in counselor supervision. Cyber supervision has many benefits as a supervisory approach. It has the flexibility to allow group participants to either share their communication with the whole supervision group or privately with another group participant without involving the whole group. The audio-visual format also provides supervisors with a better sense of the teachers' concerns. They are able to monitor for verbal and nonverbal behaviors and obtain a clearer understanding of the skills and capabilities of individuals. To use the cyber supervision approach, specific hardware is needed to achieve the desired results. (Fasasi, et al, 2018)

Needs for E-Supervision

Remarkable improvements in Information and Communication Technology have presently enhanced the adoption of innovative educational technologies for electronic supervision of students' research projects in universities across the globe (Onah et. Al.2024). Computer-based approaches appear to have many benefits to both supervisee and supervisor.

- I. **Accessibility:** E-supervision can improve access to academic supervision for students who may face challenges in physically attending supervisory meetings due to factors such as disabilities, health issues, or transportation constraints.

- II. Scalability: With e-supervision platforms, Kwara State Universities can potentially scale up its supervision capacity to accommodate a larger number of students without being limited by physical space or time constraints.
- III. Cost-effectiveness: Implementing e-supervision could lead to cost savings for both students and the university by reducing the need for travel expenses and other associated costs related to in-person supervision meetings.
- IV. Technological Infrastructure: If Kwara State Universities already has robust technological infrastructure in place, including internet connectivity and digital platforms, transitioning to e-supervision will/may be more feasible and efficient.
- V. Globalization of Education: In an increasingly interconnected world, e-supervision can facilitate collaborations and academic exchanges with institutions and scholars from around the globe, enriching the academic experiences like supervision for students, supervisor, faculty and alike.
- VI. Student Preferences: Some students may prefer e-supervision over traditional in-person meetings due to factors such as convenience, flexibility, and comfort with digital communication tools.
- VII. Emergency Preparedness: E-supervision can serve as a valuable contingency plan during emergencies such as pandemics, natural disasters, or political unrest, ensuring continuity in academic supervision despite external disruptions.
- VIII. Flexibility: Explore how e-supervision offers flexibility in scheduling supervisory meetings and interactions, accommodating diverse student needs and preferences.
- IX. Efficiency: Highlight the potential for e-supervision to streamline communication channels, facilitate document sharing, and increase productivity in the supervision process.
- X. Innovation: Discuss how e-supervision platforms can enable the integration of innovative tools and technologies to enhance the quality of supervision and academic outcomes.

These factors collectively underscore the importance of considering e-supervision as a viable option for enhancing academic supervision practices within Kwara State Universities.

Challenges of E-Supervision

In the developing countries like Nigeria, e-supervision is challenged with the problem of the new technology in terms of availability and use of the multimedia system and courseware, digital classrooms, videophone system among others by the students (Olowa et al. 2021). As much as e-supervision has many benefits to both the supervisor, school and supervisee, logically, challenges are there to/may hinder the aforementioned benefits, these includes:

- I. **Technological Infrastructure:** without infrastructure technological facilities like reliable internet connectivity, regular power supply, digital gadgets, ICT centers and other technological infrastructure resources, effective e-supervision cannot be in use.
- II. **Digital Divide:** in-ability to have equal opportunity to digital environment is a factor against online-supervision, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may lack access to necessary technology or resources, mostly from remote ends
- III. **Communication and Relationship Building:** supervisor-supervisee communication relationship can be posed as a problem. In the sense that if there are no basic knowledge and skill of digital gadget, typing, fluent in speaking, and good relationship, e-supervision can be obstructed.
- IV. **Academic Integrity:** this is another factor as a challenge of E-supervision, though e-supervision is an innovation in academic setting, but also at-risk considering malpractice or plagiarism as against the legal and ethical conduct guiding the exercise. However, the risk can tarnish the integrity of the institution.
- V. **Cost implication:** most importantly is the cost associated with many of these systems. Purchasing and installing the equipment needed to provide these various forms of supervision can be expensive.

Solutions to the challenges of e-Supervision

Joseph (2020) proposed the following as the possible solutions to some identified problems of e-supervision activities:

- I. Institutions should adopt a multi-layered investment and partnership strategy. Governments and university management should priorities funding for ICT through dedicated budget lines and TET Fund interventions. Institutions should establish centralized ICT hubs with stable broadband, solar-powered backup systems to mitigate unreliable electricity, and campus-wide Wi-Fi access. Partnerships with telecom providers (e.g., subsidized educational data bundles) can improve connectivity.
- II. Institutions can implement device loan schemes (laptops/tablets) and provide subsidized or free internet access for disadvantaged students. Establishing community digital access centers in remote areas and leveraging mobile-friendly platforms ensures inclusiveness. Training programmed should be organized to improve digital literacy, especially for students from underserved backgrounds. Policymakers should also promote inclusive ICT policies that priorities rural connectivity and marginalized groups.
- III. Institutions should organize digital communication training covering typing skills, virtual etiquette and the effective use of platforms (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, LMS tools). Supervisors should adopt blended communication strategies, combining synchronous (video meetings) and asynchronous (emails, recorded feedback) methods. Establishing clear communication guidelines, regular check-ins, and feedback timelines strengthens relationships. Encouraging informal virtual interactions can also foster trust and reduce psychological distance.
- IV. To safeguard integrity in e-supervision, institutions should implement robust monitoring and ethical frameworks. The use of plagiarism detection tools such as Turnitin and Grammarly helps ensure originality. Institutions should enforce strict academic integrity policies, including penalties for misconduct. Training students on research ethics, citation practices, and originality is essential. Supervisors can also adopt process-based assessment (e.g., drafts,

progress reports, oral defenses) rather than relying solely on final submissions, making malpractice more difficult.

- V. To manage high costs, institutions should pursue cost-sharing and resource optimisation strategies. Governments and private sector partners should provide grants, while institutions can adopt open-source platforms (e.g., Moodle) to reduce software expenses. Bulk procurement of devices and infrastructure lowers costs through economies of scale.

Conclusion

The e-supervision initiated as a major tool for increasing the distance learning and use of technologies in productive manner. Therefore, there is more to guns on better education in future with the use of e-supervision in Kwara state universities. In order to continue in the use and developing electronic learning and supervision, there is the need to address the challenges, huge investment on technological infrastructure is necessary which this paper discussed. Training, support and development of the key human resources involved is important so that the primary objective of effective and efficient e-supervision will be achieved. The need for equal opportunity to the less privilege ones, mostly dwellers of the rural areas for digital environment to enable them have access to facilities is also an important aspect discussed in this paper.

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