

## Bringing Relevance to eLearning – A Gender Perspective

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### Abstract

In this paper, we discuss the importance of relevance in the provision of eLearning for the pursuit of higher education (HE). In particular, we argue how the extant literature focuses on quality and security in the design of eLearning platforms, but pays scant attention to how relevant the platform and the programme contents are to the needs of contemporary adult learners. We studied this topic from a gender perspective and identified the different imperatives and constraints pertaining to men and women seeking personal and career development through HE. Recommendations are made for HE institutions to pay particular attention to the role that relevance plays in eLearning.

**Keywords:** eLearning, gender, quality, higher education, relevance.

## Introduction

With the development of the digital economy, education delivery, particularly higher education (HE), has gone through profound transformation. HE Institutions (HEIs) have taken advantage of the advanced features of digital technologies for improved interactivity between educators and students by implementing new eLearning initiatives, including the MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), ALISON (Advanced Learning Interactive Systems Online) LMOOC (Language MOOC), OPEN2STUDY as well as the ‘Flipped Classroom’ and ‘Blended Learning’ (Liyanagunawardena et al., 2015; Doherty et al., 2015). With an increasing number of eLearning initiatives, we seek in this article, to explore their relevance to student populations and in doing so, a gender perspective is adopted.

Current literature on eLearning in HE pays particular attention to the quality of design and platform features. These have been subjected to quality assurance metrics so as to ensure their technological efficacy (Nguyen, et al., 2014; Nawaz and Khan, 2012; Kidwell and Kent, 2008). Security is an unquestioned feature in digital transactions and HE through the Internet has received ample attention in this area (Nawaz and Khan, 2012). This is particularly heightened when dealing with online examinations and grading. Despite subscribing to the importance of quality and security in eLearning, in this article our position is that robustness of security and currency of content are futile in terms of value, if the target users are absent. As this form of learning using technology has taken root in the HE arena, (Mouyabi, 2011), we consider it important, to understand what attracts people to eLearning and how it serves their needs. The users we focus on in this study comprise the working adult men and women who seek to pursue HE through eLearning.

In the absence of extant literature, this article uses a mixed methods approach to study the relevance of eLearning to adult working men and women to determine why more of the latter are using this method of learning. The findings show that the choice to engage in eLearning is made by men and women for reasons that are primarily related to their gender. Moreover, our study extends theory on eLearning, bringing relevance into the study of it in HE. This, as we discuss, has both theoretical and practical implications for the HE sector. The existing literature on the topic is first covered. We then present the approach we have taken to arrive at our findings and move on to a discussion of these and their implications for HEIs.

## **Theoretical Foundations**

'Elearning' can be considered a ubiquitous 'catch-all' term for describing learning with the use of technology. Web 2.0 facilitates the engagement of technology in dynamic ways that enables HEIs to supplement teaching or to use it as the sole educating mechanism. It also allows corporations to provide training and development to their staff. The idea of eLearning is principally to get knowledge (through education and/or training) to people who are not confined to a single physical location and who, in many cases, are geographically dispersed. Cross (2004) describes eLearning as learning that is facilitated by networks (ibid). However, in this study, we adopt the more encompassing definition put forward by Nichols (2003, p2), who defines it as: "The use of various technological tools that are either Web-based, Web-distributed or Web-capable."

Elearning has contributed to a dramatic shift in the paradigm of education delivery and is described by Bulfin et al. (2014) as 'disruptive' technology. In making particular reference to MOOCs, they highlight that these have increased public discussion of online education and eLearning. Named for their outreach potential, MOOCs are able to touch vast numbers of learners simultaneously through the same channel – the Internet. The New York Times declared 2012 the year of the MOOC (White, 2014), highlighting the implications of the 'Massive' aspect.

## **Quality**

The issue of quality is salient regarding eLearning programmes (Nawaz & Khan, 2012; Al-Saif & Anandhavalli, 2013). It pertains to the content of the programme, the human resources engaged in the delivery and to the technological facilities (hardware and software including the Internet). Quality has also been established as a critical measure by which to assess the value that eLearning brings to the learner. The word quality is applied to the learners themselves and the outcome of the eLearning process for those learners. Lecturers and content are all scrutinized under the microscope of quality (ibid).

## **Security**

Security is important when eLearning is used as an in-house corporate tool for staff training in order to protect trade secrets and other proprietary material. It is also necessary to protect student grades when eLearning forms part of a university programme and where official grading is performed on line. This is with respect to protection from intruders as

well as from manipulation by students themselves (Graf, 2002). Security, therefore, is a vital component in the creation, delivery and management of eLearning programmes. It follows that the implementation of an eLearning system must be accompanied by security features to protect it from external and internal threats.

### Relevance

A third area of importance in eLearning is relevance. This appears to be the least represented in the literature. By definition, it is “the bearing on or having reference to the matter in hand” (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990). Drawing on this and in the context of this study, relevance refers to the degree to which what is offered has a bearing on those to whom it is offered. Relevance in eLearning relates to whether the designers are cognisant of the goals, abilities and proclivities of the users. In the context of HE, regarding the relevance of eLearning programmes, they need to take into account the diverse groups of users who become engaged in this form of learning. In particular, of interest in the current study are the varying requirements of the different genders.

There has been some implicit reference to the need for relevance in HE. Dias (1992) in discussing the need for policy reforms that will improve the quality and pertinence of HE systems, posits that relevance concerns the role of HE within the wider social system including the development and democratisation of work. The concept of relevance in HE, which has received some attention in this context, has not been adequately extended to eLearning for HE purposes or with respect to gender. Martinez et al. (2012), when considering the training of instructional design professionals, draw attention to the need for relevance in how these technologists are trained in what they need to do, namely, design instructional programmes in educational technology. Tarus and Gichoya (2015) consider the slow growth of eLearning in Africa, highlighting the challenge of adapting imported eLearning policies from developed countries with different cultures. Clearly, relevance to the audience is an issue in that study, but the authors pay little attention to it, preferring to focus on the quality of the technological infrastructure. The importance of John Keller’s (1987) ARCS Model (Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction) is identified by Jones (2010) as motivating learners for in-house organisational training. However, in the model the concept of relevance is restricted to the narrow context of training within an organisation. In this study, we examine the importance of relevance through a gender lens

by identifying the roles this plays in the choice regarding eLearning in the pursuit of HE. In the following section eLearning from a gender perspective is discussed.

### **E**Learning: a gender perspective

The need to discuss eLearning from a gender perspective is derived from the viewpoint that all spaces are gendered. As a point of departure for this section, we draw on Barriteau's (2001, p.30) opinion that: "Gender ideologies reveal what is appropriate or expected of the socially constituted beings 'women' and 'men'". As such, these ideologies expose how individuals create gender identities. The social expectations and the personal constructions of gender identities form the core of gender ideologies within a particular society. These ideologies establish the sexually-differentiated, socially-constructed boundaries for 'males' and 'females'. We discuss gender in this study not as a power dynamic, which it might or might not be the case, as this belongs in a different discourse, but rather as a socially-constructed driver of what is right and expected for each gender within the context of HE.

Literature on gender in eLearning is limited. Arroyo et al. (2013) examine the effect of the use of advanced learning technologies for mathematics on male and female junior, middle school and high school students. They tested the pre and post-test abilities as well as the dispositions of the students to see how the use of specific mathematical software (Wayang Outpost Tutor) affected the genders. Similarly, Ding et al. (2011) report on a study on gender and gender pairing for students in computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL). While both these studies revealed some gender disparities and similarities under various circumstances in relation to the use of technology, they are specific to school children and those taking STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects. Lin et al. (2012) examine gender bias in virtual learning environments in relation to Taiwanese school children finding disparities and similarities in the use of technology. These studies on gender are different from our study in that they do not address the variables that affect adult males and females in educational pursuits.

In this study, we examine the constraints experienced by working adults owing to their gender identity and issues arising from this, which affect their pursuit of HE through eLearning. We will draw on findings from both genders to illustrate the importance of

relevance to eLearning platform design and treat the issue as one pertinent to the working adult student population as a whole.

### **Research Site and Methods**

This research relied on data gathered from a university in the Caribbean, identified here for confidentiality reasons as Alpha University (AU). The university was established in the late 1940s and is one of the largest in the region with over 44,000 students at present. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate diplomas as well as degree options in engineering, humanities and education, law, medical sciences, pure and applied sciences, science and agriculture, along with social sciences. Using an idiographic approach we focused on a specific eLearning programme within AU, which offers HE through an online platform to graduates and undergraduates, being chosen because only working adults can enrol on it.

### **Data collection process and tools**

The data collection process involved a three-stage approach. First, focus groups were organised into sessions including past and current users of eLearning as well as those who had expressed an interest. Owing to the geographical dispersion of the participants, four of the seven focus groups were virtual and were carried out via a video link. These groups were single sex in their make up, ranging from between 75 minutes and 2.5 hours in duration and were recorded and later transcribed. The purpose was to get a gender perspective on the use of eLearning for HE. The first author facilitated the discussion by encouraging members to speak in response to each other's comments. The discussions were free-flowing, thus enabling the individuals to reflect on their lives and situations as they made their contributions.

Following the focus groups, semi-structured interviews with 23 participants were conducted - 15 women and eight men. The purpose was to capture the perspectives of individuals based on their views without the influence of their peers, as could be the case in group discussions. Depending on their relationship to eLearning, as explained above, they were asked a set of open ended questions. For example, *'Is there something particular in your life that caused you to choose to study on line?'* or *'Why have you not done any studies on line?'* Further, they were asked to explain the value to them of using eLearning, if they were

already engaged on the course. They were also asked about their technological capability and its influence on their choice.

Lastly, based on the findings from the focus groups and interviews, a Likert-scale survey instrument was created and disseminated to a population of users and non-users of eLearning. The questions were similar to the ones asked in the interviews and focus groups. For example, the instrument gave the following statement requiring a 'yes' or 'no' answer: *'I would like to study via online learning'*. If yes, the follow up questions sought to identify the reasons, being provided these options: *'it is convenient for my family needs; it does not affect my job needs; it is easy to use; it allows me more time to think about responses; it allows me more time to research the material being discussed.'* If no, the subsequent choices were: *'I am not comfortable with using the computer; I am not comfortable with technology; I need to see my lecturer; I need to see my peers; I do not study well on my own; I never thought about it before'*. The survey was distributed to 210 working adults including graduates of AU as well as members of the business community. The responses received comprised a total of 99 of which 76 came from female. As can be seen, we used mixed methods for the data collection in order to ensure their robustness, validity and reliability (Blaikie, 2010).

The focus group participants totalled 49 in seven groups, coming from a range of backgrounds (see Table 1), with there being 32 females and 17 males in the segregated forums. The first author invited potential participants through e-mail and telephone, using contact information extracted primarily from the AU's database. Table 1 provides details of the data collected by each tool. Some of the focus group attendees were included in the one-to-one interviews and some were targeted in the survey.

*Insert Table 1 about here*

The data analysis involved triangulation in order to enhance credibility and trustworthiness (Yin, 2011). For the analysis we adopted Yin's five phases model (2011), which involved: compiling, disassembling, interpreting and reassembling the data in an iterative process before the final stage of drawing conclusions. During this process, the data were reviewed repeatedly initially by the first author and then by the second in order to extract common themes. One key theme that emerged from the research is the gendered difference regarding how female and male working adults viewed elearning. This outcome was then linked to the wider body of knowledge on elearning to support the need for relevance.

### **Findings**

At an early stage of the data collection power we became aware that a significant disparity exists between female and male working adults attending eLearning programmes. According to official AU documents, over a six-year period, eLearning attendance by working adults at the university consisted of 79.52% women and 20.48% men. The survey undertaken as part of this study indicated that 72.31% of the participants believed that they had the necessary technological skills to pursue an online educational programme. whilst factors that were identified as obstacles to pursuing an elearning programme were family responsibilities and work commitments (Table 2). Paradoxically, the same factors, as we will show in this section, were also the main reasons that the female working adults mentioned for pursuing HE through eLearning.

*Insert Table 2 about here*



### Female working adults and eLearning use

The research revealed that for a number of reasons, eLearning is considered by both male and female participants an indispensable tool for female working adults. The ease of access, particularly the asynchronous method, allows females to fulfil multiple roles in their lives. The findings point to eLearning being a female-friendly activity. There are two main reasons for this, notably flexibility and career development, whilst other reasons mentioned were safety and financial considerations.

*Flexibility:* It transpired that many of the women were either primary or secondary bread-winners, which made it imperative for them to retain full-time employment while seeking to improve their educational status. A female focus group attendee said *“Right now, as I am pursuing this online program, it really puts a lot of pressure on me, at having to multi-task in studying and taking care of the family. Domestic duties must be done and children have to be assisted with school assignments. This I know most women, inclusive of many of my other female cohorts have to battle with. However, having to achieve this goal for success amidst these challenging circumstances, demands increased performance which will then result in success.”*

*Women can carry as many as six jobs so they have less time to maximize their advancement. Women hold a full time job, want to be good mothers and good wives. Women will naturally explore the easiest opportunities for themselves. Women are challenged for time. They choose the options that are less complex, less time consuming. (Female, focus group)*

*I totally expect more women than men to pursue online learning. When you think of women’s life, the flexibility that is built into online learning means that it ....because women tend to want to continue to do all of the things that they are doing in terms of their family, their job responsibilities, their children, their relationship. They want to service that and if you pursue a degree on line you have a certain amount of control of your access to the studying in that sense (Female, interview).*

These data show that eLearning was favoured mainly by women, because it gave them the opportunity to pursue HE, for if they were to attend an institution, this would mean having to juggle with the various demands of their domestic lives in order to succeed:

*I think that women are jugglers a lot more, so I think the flexibility of it appeals to women more. - I think [in] the ability to manage their time and the discipline. Women are focused; they are disciplined and can get on with the job. This makes the online forum something that women gravitate to (Male, interview)*

**Career development:** Following flexibility, the second most cited reason for pursuing HE through eLearning was in order to enhance career development. The research demonstrated that women were eager to enhance their prospects in the workplace and were looking for opportunities to gain skills to support their employability and to advance their careers:

*E-learning has the potential to bring more women in developing countries to the discussion table of business and of government, because it affords them a manageable opportunity to attain the level of education that will earn them a seat. (Female, interview)*

*Many women are pursuing online courses to fulfil their need for self-actualization. (Female, focus group)*

However, ever present in the research was the primacy of the needs of the family for women.

One Interviewee summed it up this way “What I would say ... is that [elearning] makes perfect sense to me because women look for things that would not disrupt what they have accepted as their core set of responsibilities [i.e. domestic] ... If they are professional, they hold down good jobs and they have some kind of relationship, they will be much more reluctant to disrupt that for the face-to-face classroom for set periods of study”.(Female interview)

**Safety and Financial Reasons:** Further to flexibility and career development, other reasons identified for women’s pursuit of eLearning included safety and financial issues. Working

adult learners often attend education after normal working hours, thereby presenting the female with a security risk. This was conveyed in some of the comments presented. The data reflected that women are better off studying online from the comfort of their homes than being out at night facing lonely car parks or bus stops.

The comment from an interviewee that *“A lot of them sign in late at night – after the family has gone to bed”*, suggests that women are at home and not only are they themselves safe, but their family is taken care of and by extension, safe while they study. *“My concern is safety, for women leaving class at night. Therefore, online use for women is something that can be explored”*. (Male, interview)

E-Learning provides women with personal safety while studying. Both men and women posited that women are protected if they stay indoors and study on line. Notably, no males spoke about safety for themselves.

In addition, the implications of seeking to conduct activity outside of the home by a caregiver include financial concerns. The example below refers to the costs and logistics of babysitting

*“I would like to avoid the extra hassle and stress of traffic up and down the highway and having to find parking, and extra costs associated with babysitters”* (Female, survey).

It follows that female working adults have a goal or set of goals to achieve and find ICT through eLearning to be a convenient vehicle for attaining a higher education qualification. The women participants showed confidence in using eLearning technology, but for most, their preference for this mode of study was influenced by the necessity that their career goals and their family responsibilities had to be met simultaneously. One male interviewee pointed out:

*“We are living in an era of independent women who have rightfully gained their positions. They are using the online education to get ahead”* (Male interview)

### **Male Working Adults and E-learning use**

The nature and content of the online programmes have been found to be factors in adult male participation. A participant in one *Focus Group* contended that *“The nature of the online programme will determine how many men are attracted to the programme.*

*Programmes geared towards engineering are more attractive than a programme geared to ethics or HR. In the back of the psyche of males is the desire to do a masculine subject area.”*  
(Male focus group)

*Maybe the programmes should be more hands-on and more interactive to attract the male.*  
(Female, interview)

*The reason for men not being online has nothing to do with the technology, it is to do with the subject matter. (Male, interview))*

*To bring men to the online environment, perhaps we should be looking at what their interests are. (Male, interviewee)*

*Men are less attracted to the online programmes because of the nature of the programmes being offered. Men prefer more hands-on topics. Courses that allow men to create are more likely to attract them. (Male, interview)*

*If there were construction-type courses or mechanical courses, it is likely there will be more men wanting to access them. It is not the technology, but the types of courses. (Male, interview)*

*Regardless of the type of programme, I still think of online learning as too static. I cannot sit in one place; I cannot sit at my desk for too long. (Male, interview)*

All of the above comments reveal not only what is on offer through the eLearning platform, but also how it is offered plays a role in men’s decision to pursue HE through this mode of study. Men expect HE to challenge them, to offer them opportunities for creativity and hands-on activities. For them, therefore, courses in social sciences and humanities subjects and other non-technological areas, which tend to be the dominant offerings by AU, our case study university, do not provide that type of engagement. In other words, if the eLearning exposure involves something technological, it would appeal to men.

Accordingly, the findings presented in this section demonstrate that men and women have different reasons for pursuing eLearning programmes. In particular, for women, it provides opportunities for developing their career without the onerous situation of having to spend precious time travelling to an institution and hence, losing time for running their household.

In contrast, men would seem to pay more attention to the design, nature and content of the online programmes. In what follows, we discuss the findings of the study and identify implications for HEI in terms of the development of eLearning programmes.

## Discussion

There is a dearth of literature on eLearning in pursuit of HE by gender. In this study, the intersection of HE and eLearning is revealed as we strive to address the research question: **How is the choice of eLearning in HE institutions affected by gender?** It is within the perspective of gender that the importance of relevance comes to the fore. Figure 1 below presents the theoretical model derived from the study.

*Insert Figure 1 about here*

The model in Figure 1 indicates that the issue of relevance in eLearning for HE is embedded in the gender discourse, for different reasons. That is, women select eLearning out of need whereas men select it by choice. It also depicts that eLearning must be relevant to the labour market so as to increase users' employability and to enhance career prospects. The challenges of the adult working students are social and economic. Richardson, (1994) finds that mature students are more likely to have non-academic responsibilities in the form of families or part-time employment. While, as stated earlier, the genders have different concerns, they culminate in one essential problem – the relevance of HE through eLearning. The literature points to the critical importance of HE for the development of the individual with the redounding effects to the nation state and beyond. The literature also points to the use of eLearning in HE with particular emphasis on its quality (Al-Saif and Anandhavalli, 2013) and on security (Graf, 2002). However, the gathered data speak to an aspect of the eLearning design not previously addressed, namely, relevance. The intersection of HE and eLearning depends on its relevance to the market it serves, for its success.

Our research has revealed that the issue of relevance applies to two main categories of stakeholder in the eLearning HE environment, the learners and the employers who provide revenue, generating work for them. Regarding the training of people in the instructional design profession, Martinez et al. (2012) raise a number of questions about the relevance of

how instructional designers are trained to use educational technology to design programmes that hold the interest of the learners. They highlight the importance of designers having an awareness of learning theory to help them to build features into the eLearning experience so as to help the users of the facility. They point to other areas in which educational technology programmes can be adapted to current labour needs that can make graduates better equipped to have successful careers in the targeted markets. However, Martinez et al. (ibid) were speaking strictly about the training of instructional designers. We found that the same thought process is necessary for any discipline being offered through eLearning. Its design needs to be conducive to learning and its use must imbue the learners with confidence, skills and knowledge so that they can engage in the labour market. In sum, we believe that market-readiness must be an integral part of the design of eLearning for HE purposes (Krause, 2014).

Nevertheless, the most important stakeholder remains the learner. The purpose of pursuing HE for both adult males and adult females is to enhance prospects in employment and career. Consequently, they will gravitate towards a learning environment that addresses their needs and surmounts their constraints. We submit that the eLearning graduate must be work-ready' (Krause, 2014). Having considered the research question from the perspective of working adults, we are agreed that the option of blended and distance learning is more suited to those seeking to enhance their qualifications than learning in an HE institution (Erichsen et al., 2014). In particular, we found that this category of learner perceives learning in HE through the lens of their social responsibility as well as their life experience and skills. If properly addressed, the factors can be a bonus to the learning process and if not they can prove to be obstacles. The learning experience must be relevant to what they know and own already and what they are experiencing in the real world of work. Erichsen et al. (2004) raise the question as to whether the level of satisfaction found in eLearning doctoral students is related to same sex selection of the supervisor and student. This raises another potential aspect of relevance that deserves further attention and suggests that there are other issues regarding this that have yet to be uncovered. The satisfaction of the modern learner through the incorporation of the concept of relevance in eLearning, that is to say, all things relevant to the needs, expectations and proclivities of the learner, is fundamental to eLearning's success.

The research has revealed that there is a preference for eLearning when opting for HE among working adults. However, working adult males and females have different imperatives for seeking to or not to pursue HE and different reasons for choosing or not choosing eLearning. Morris et al. (2005) find that men have a greater sense of entitlement than women. This is consistent with our study, where we found that the men's stronger sense of entitlement informs their sense of choice, thus making them more selective in the type of HE they aspire to and the method by which they wish to pursue it. In contrast, women are prepared to work with whatever tools will serve to facilitate their goals, regardless of societal and family hurdles, because they need HE qualifications to advance in the workplace. They do not want to disrupt their families, so the flexibility of eLearning is attractive to them regardless of the design.

The foregoing evidence demonstrates relevance is of prime importance to the focal learners and for many is of equal salience as such matters as theoretical robustness, quality assurance and technological security. The issue in this article was examined based on a sample of mature learners in the English-speaking Caribbean. However, we take the position that its value pertains to all societies where there are working adults in need of access to continuing education.

### **Implications for HEIs**

HEIs need to take on board relevance of what they provide for online courses, just as they have those issues raised in the previous paragraph. We posit that if the eLearning platforms are state-of-the-art and allow learners to be co-constructors of the learning resources, the education process will be two-fold: the knowledge of the specific discipline will be absorbed; and the learner will develop skills in the manipulation of the technology for application of subject-specific knowledge. Such an approach will provide a built-in practical element to the learning process; fusing relevant knowledge and skills. Finally, we submit that the success of eLearning for the pursuit of HE by gender will rest on the relevance of eLearning platforms to the needs of the learners and the labour market, the two main beneficiaries of such programmes.



## Conclusion

Gender related factors have been found in our study to influence the pursuit of HE through eLearning. Under the concept of relevance, the perceptions of the use of eLearning for the attainment of HE have been found to reflect different foci for men and women. This paper highlights the importance of attention to relevance in eLearning for HE purposes. We suggest that the success and sustainability of eLearning programmes by HEIs will rest on the alignment of the programmes with what is relevant to potential users. Consequently, without derogating the importance of quality, technical robustness and security features, we posit that relevance should be brought to the fore when designing eLearning programmes. Further study is needed in other regions and countries to test the applicability of research beyond the sample we used.

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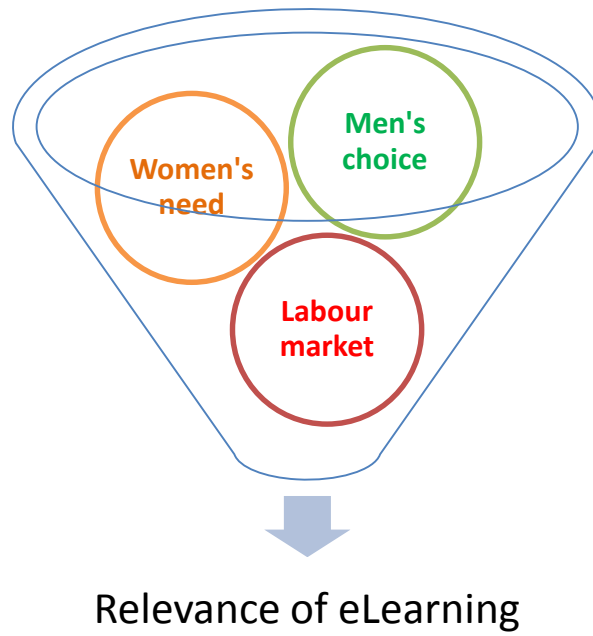
**Table 1: Number of participants and demographic characteristics**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Focus Groups</b>	<b>One-to-one Interviews</b>	<b>Questionnaire</b>
No. of participants	49	22	210
No. of groups	7	n/a	n/a
No. of responses	100%	100%	47%
Female	32 (4 groups)	15	76
Male	17 (3 groups)	8	23
Professions represented	ICT specialists, education administrators, business administrators, lawyers, senior civil servants, graphic designers, entrepreneurs, insurance administrators, CEOs, journalists and bank clerks.		

**Table 2: Significance of obstacles to pursuing eLearning - overall**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Family commitments	20.90% 14	11.94% 8	10.45% 7	28.36% 19	28.36% 19	67
Work commitments	13.85% 9	15.38% 10	9.23% 6	44.62% 29	16.92% 11	65
My ability to use computer technology	84.62% 55	6.15% 4	6.15% 4	3.08% 2	0.00% 0	65
My access to the internet	81.54% 53	4.62% 3	7.69% 5	6.15% 4	0.00% 0	65
My ability to self-direct my studies	42.42% 28	18.18% 12	16.67% 11	21.21% 14	1.52% 1	66
My history of completing programmes	56.92% 37	10.77% 7	20.00% 13	12.31% 8	0.00% 0	65
Confidence in my ability to study at this level	55.56% 35	17.46% 11	19.05% 12	6.35% 4	1.59% 1	63
Confidence in my technology skills	72.31% 47	13.85% 9	9.23% 6	3.08% 2	1.54% 1	65

Figure 1 Relevance in HE through eLearning



6,347 words