Instructional Variables and Effective Teaching of Business Education in Colleges of Education, South-South Nigeria.

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Abstract
This study examined the influence of instructional variables on effective teaching of Business Education Programme in Colleges of Education in south- south zone of Nigeria. Five research questions were formulated and answered. The population of the study comprised of teachers in Colleges of Education under the area of study. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting 50 business education teachers from the seven colleges of education in south-south zone of Nigeria. A twenty item questionnaire was designed by the researchers for data collection. Cronbach Alpha method was used in determining the reliability of the instrument which yielded a coefficient index of .79. Findings of the study indicate a positive influence of instructional variables on effective teaching of business education. The recommendations made were based on the findings such as the federal government of Nigeria should be more concerned with educational issues by equipping schools with proper and adequate machines, equipment, instructional materials such as computer, overhead projector and qualified teachers and Classroom facilities should be re-designed to reflect 21st century learning environment which emphasizes on individualize learning.

Key word: *Instructional Variables, Effective Teaching, and Business Education Programme,*

Introduction

Instructional variables are primarily descriptions of the learning objective-oriented activities and flow of information between teachers and students. Direct and indirect instructions are two main categories that many teachers find useful for classifying teaching methods. Any instructional method a teacher uses has advantages, disadvantages, and requires some preliminary preparation. Often times, a particular teaching method will naturally flow into another, all within the same lesson, and excellent teachers have developed the skills to make the process seamless to the students. Which instructional method is "right" for a particular lesson depends on many things, and among them are the age and

developmental level of the students, what the students already know, and what they need to know to succeed with the lesson, the subject-matter content, the objective of the lesson, the available people, time, space and material resources, and the physical setting.

Teacher's competencies takes into consideration the following: having the appropriate training to teach a specific subject and being able to teach that class effectively. Sammons, DeLaMatre and Mujtaba (2002), observed that the overall school effectiveness is due to classroom level factors rather than school level factors. Low, Taylor, Joseph, and Atienza, (2009), noted that, appropriate teaching methods are context specific. What is needed for a teacher to be competent and effective can vary upon factors such as: the type of activity in the lesson; the subject matter; the pupil's background (such as age, ability, sex, socio-economic status and ethnicity); the pupils' personal characteristics (such as personality, learning style, motivation and self-esteem) and the learning environment. Termos (2012) and Fattahian (2004) observed that teacher competencies and effectiveness has been found to strongly influence students' progress.

According to Selwyn (2011), Computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) uses instructional methods designed to encourage or require students to work together on learning tasks. "e-learning" and "networked collaborative learning" (NCL). Using Web 2.0 social tools in the classroom allows for students and teachers to work collaboratively, discuss ideas, and promote information. Schoolnet (2004), blogs, wikis, and social networking skills are found to be significantly useful in the classroom. Therefore colleges of education in south-south zone of Nigeria should implement high technology application in classroom instruction; the collaborative tools prepare students with technology skills necessary in today's workforce. This research work is based on Richey (2008) concept of educational technology which holds that effective use of technological tools in learning promotes teachers effectiveness and students high performance. The concept is concerned with an array of tools, such as media, machines and networking hardware, as well as considering underlying theoretical perspectives for their effective application. Richey defined educational technology as "the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using and managing appropriate technological processes and resources.

Information Communication Technology Facilities

New technologies provide opportunities including the ability to tailor learning to the individual Aminpour (2007). The beauty of this instructional variable is that: Information Technology (IT) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the form of lesson units are made easy. IT and ICT has the channel for delivering instruction. The influence that IT can have on teaching method depends on the knowledge and skills of students and teachers, and the implementation of IT and ICT Kusha (2006). Teachers need special knowledge and skills including techniques of using software and hardware to teach students (Tahourie 2006).

Teacher's Competencies

According to Zamani (2005), competencies include knowledge and skills this is critical to a teacher's role as educator. Training should be widely available to practicing teachers through staff development programmes. Mahdavi, (2000), the entrance of IT into teaching had changed teaching and made it attractive. If teachers learn to use new technologies in education, teaching would be more interesting. According to Darling-Hammond (2006), teachers' competencies include the following:

- Teachers should be skilled in developing assessment methods, administering, scoring and interpreting the results of both externally-produced and teacher-produced assessment methods.
- Teachers should be skilled in using assessment results when making decisions about individual students, planning teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement.
- Teachers should be skilled in communicating assessment results to students and parents.

Low, Taylor, Joseph, and Atienza, (2009), to develop competence, teachers need to progress from awareness to capacity building. Teachers' competencies are classified into three broad performances: professional practice, leadership and management, personal effectiveness.

Classroom Facilities

Classroom facilities include rooms generally used for scheduled instruction that require no special, restrictive equipment or configuration. These rooms may be called lecture rooms, lecture- demonstration rooms and general purpose classrooms. A classroom may be equipped with tablet armchairs (fixed to the floor, joined in groups, or flexible in arrangement), tables and chairs (as in a seminar room), or similar types of seating. These rooms may contain multimedia or telecommunications equipment, smart board, projector screen and dry erase board. A classroom may be furnished with special equipment (e.g., globes, pianos, maps) (Keengwe, Onchwari, and Onchwari, 2009) Iiyoshi, and Kumar, (2008) classroom facilities appear to be an important precondition for student learning, provided that other conditions are present that supports a strong academic programme in the school. Decaying environmental conditions such as broken walls, black board, non-functioning toilets, poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, and inoperative heating and cooling systems can affect learning as well as health and the morale of staff and students.

Learning environment

An overcrowded class affects the learner's performance and teachers competencies. This is the situation in colleges of education in Nigeria. Crowded classroom conditions not only make it difficult for students to concentrate on their lessons, but inevitably limit the amount of time teachers can spend on innovative teaching methods such as cooperative learning and group work. A study of overcrowded schools in New York City revealed that students in such schools scored significantly lower on both mathematics and reading exams than did similar students in underutilized schools. In addition, when asked, students and teachers in overcrowded schools agreed that overcrowding negatively affects both classroom activities and instructional techniques (Low, Taylor, Joseph, and Atienza, 2009).

In the writings of Muijs and Reynolds (2005), environment affects teaching and learning, especially in the area of behaviour. Behaviour, is, something that a student is doing, which happens within the context of what is happening around the student. The environment gives the student signals about when to act and how to act. It is important to include the use of technologies in the classroom and a quality library. Also, environmental factors associated

with one's location, activities, people in the surrounding area, schedules, and or events affects behaviour and learning.

Statement of the Problem

There are several research results on instructional variable and effective teachings. Yet little or no significant impact has been recorded in the school system in Nigeria. Many schools lack 21st century teachers, good classroom facilities, inadequate school facilities, overcrowding of students in the classes, poor learning environment, inadequate and improper use of instructional materials such as computer etc. The use of technology to facilitate effective teaching and learning has not been achieved. The poor standard of education in Nigeria is a source of concern to the government, citizenry, parent, teachers and the youths. Based on these issues, this study intends to examine the influence of instructional variables on effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in South-south states of Nigeria. This study chooses colleges of education for the study because at this level teachers are being trained to teach students at various levels.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to examine the influence of instructional variables on effective teaching of business education in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of:

1.   ICT facilities and effective teaching of business education in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria.

2.   Teachers competence and effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria.

3.   Classroom facilities and effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria.

4.   Learning environment and effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria.

Research Questions

1.   Does ICT facilities influence effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria?

2.   Does teachers' competence influence effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria?

3.   Does classroom facilities influence effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria?

4.   Does learning environment influence effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would be significant to curriculum planners to re-design the curriculum to include 21st century teaching method and materials, innovations and technologies. The findings would be significant to government and school authorities to organize training programmes, conferences, seminars and developmental programmes for teachers to up-date their knowledge and skills in classroom management and ICT. It will also encourage government to fund and equip schools with 21st century facilities that will enhance effective teaching and learning. The study will be significant to policy makers, proprietors, practicing teachers and students' teachers.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research was used to identify and seek opinion from a large number of business education teachers in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria. The population for the study was 70 business education teachers. Stratified random sampling was adopted in selecting 50 business education teachers from the seven colleges of education in south-south Nigeria, ie College of education (T) Asaba, Akwa Ibom State College of education, Delta State College of education Agbor, College of education Warri, College of education (T) Obudu, College of education (T) Omoku and College of education Ekiadolor. A twenty item questionnaire was designed by the researchers and used for data

collection/information. The instrument was structured on a modified 4 point scale; strongly agreed (SA, 4.0), agreed (A, 3.0), strongly disagreed (SD, 2.0), disagreed (D, 1.0). Of the 60 questionnaires administered, 50 were completed and returned with valid information. The analysis was done based on the response rate of the subjects. The instrument was validated by an expert in Test and Measurement Department in University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The data generated from the respondents was analyses using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1*: Does ICT facilities influence effective teaching of business education programme in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?*

Table 1: Mean With Standard Deviation Of Respondents Rating On ICT Faculties And Teaching Of Business Education (N=50)

ICT and teaching of business education	X	SD	RMKS
Use of computer in teaching business education enhances effective teaching	3.86	.98	Accepted
Use of multi-media gadgets in classroom enhances effective teaching	3.58	.99	Accepted
Use of software enhances effective teaching	3.05	1.0	Accepted
Exploration of network enhances effectives teaching/classroom management	3.25	.43	Accepted
Use of e-library enhances effective teaching	3.57	.62	Accepted
Application of different packages such as micro soft word, power point etc enhances effective teaching	3.15	.91	Accepted
Use of different computer operating system such as Microsoft Disk Operating System MS-DOS enhances effective teaching	3.29	.97	Accepted

The data on table 1 revealed that items 1-7 had their mean score of 3.05-3.86 which is above the cut-off point. The mean rating for this study was 2.50. This implies that, all the respondents agreed with these items to be ICT facilities which when applied and utilized will enhances effective teaching of business education in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria.

Research Question *2: Does teacher's competence influence effective teaching of business education programme in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?*

Table 2: Mean With Standard Deviation Of Respondents Rating On Teacher's Competence And Teaching Of Business Education (N=50)

Teacher's competence and teaching of business education	X	SD	RMKS
Skills in administrating scores and producing assessment method	3.47	.56	Accepted
Skills in communicating assessment result	3.35	.48	Accepted
Skills in developing assessment method	3.42	.48	Accepted
Skills in interpreting score result	3.30	.66	Accepted
Skills in applying different teaching methods	3.29	.97	Accepted
Skills in using during classroom activities	3.28	.70	Accepted
Skills in applying marking scheme	3.40	.44	Accepted

The result on table 2 revealed that the items on teachers' competence had a mean range of 3.28- 3.47. These showed that all the items on the above table were found to be relevant. This implies that if all the items on this table are found in a 21st century teacher it will enhance effective teaching of business education in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria.

Research Question 3: Does classroom facilities influence effective teaching of business education programme in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean With Standard Deviation Of Respondents Rating On Classroom Facilities And Teaching Of Business Education (N=50)

Classroom facilities and teaching of business education	X	SD	RMKS
Overcrowding of students affects learning	3.86	.86	Accepted
Physical building condition affects students' performance	3.05	1.0	Accepted
Use multimedia gadgets affect learning	3.75	.99	Accepted
Poor lighting in classroom affect learning	3.52	.73	Accepted
Lack of chairs and tables affect effective learning	3.50	.50	Accepted
Poor chairs and table arrangement affect effective teaching	3.57	.62	Accepted
Lack of white board in the class affect effective teaching	3.86	.86	Accepted

The data on table 3 showed a mean rating of 3.05- 3.86. Therefore, the respondents agreed to all the items to be issues of classroom facilities. This implies that, if the listed issues are checked and put in place it will enhance effective teaching of business education in south-south Nigeria.

Research question 4: Does learning environment influence effective teaching of business education programme in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?

Table 4: mean with standard deviation of respondents rating on teaching/learning environment and teaching of business education (N=50)

Learning environment and teaching of business education	X	SD	RMKS
Overcrowding of students affects teacher/students' performance	3.30	.54	Accepted
Physical building condition affects students' performance	3.37	.55	Accepted
Location of the school affect students behavior and performance	3.47	.56	Accepted
Poor lighting of the classroom affects teaching/learning situation	3.52	.56	Accepted
Noisy environment affects effective teaching/learning	3.57	.62	Accepted
Insecurity of environment affects effect teaching/learning	3.15	.91	Accepted
Lack of sufficient classrooms affects effective teaching/learning	3.28	.70	Accepted

The data on table 4 showed a mean rating of 3.15-3.57 which is above the cutoff point of this study. All the items on the above table showed a positive interaction. The implication is that teaching/learning environment must be considered as a priority for achieving effective teaching.

Discussion of Findings

ICT facilities: The finding of this study reveals that ICT facilities enhance effective teaching of business education programme in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria. This study corroborate with the view of Fattahian (2004) who noted that teachers need special knowledge and skills including techniques of software and hardware in teaching. Tahourie (2006) findings support this study, the author observed that ability to search network and data base for more information will solve problems and enhance research skills and ability to teach students.

Teachers' competence: the findings on table 3 revealed that teachers must possess some form of training, communication skills and technical skills to enhance effective performance. This study is in line with the findings of Zamani (2005), who noted that training develops competence. Such training should be widely available to practicing teachers through staff development programme. According to the findings of Darling-Hammond (2006), teachers' competencies include: skills in assessment, skills in administering scores, skills in communicating assessment result, skills in using instructional materials.

Classroom facilities: the findings on table 4 showed a relationship between classroom facilities and performance of students and teachers. Iiyosh and Kummar (2008) noted that

lack of multimedia gadgets, interactive white board; physical building conditions affect students' performance and learning habits. The non-functioning of toilets, poor lighting, and inadequate ventilation affects the health and morale of staff and students. Therefore, classroom must be well equipped with educational facilities.

Learning environment: the findings on table 5 indicate that the learning environment must be conducive for teachers and students to achieve effective teaching/learning performance. Low, Taylor, Joseph and Atienza (2009) noted that overcrowded classes are a serious challenge; as a result students find themselves trying to learn while jammed into a space never intended as classroom. The author in their study noted that students in such overcrowded classes scored significantly low in classwork and exams. It is sad to note that colleges of education in south-south Nigeria are overcrowded as a result affect students' performance and teachers competencies.

Conclusion

It is logical to conclude that proper and adequate instructional materials will enhance effective teaching of business education in colleges of education in south-south Nigeria, therefore, school authorities should be concern about school facilities, good learning environment and teachers comfort to achieve positive performance.

Recommendations

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should be more concerned with educational issues by equipping schools with proper and adequate machines, equipment, instructional materials such as computer, overhead projector and qualified teachers.

2. The curriculum of teacher business education programme should be re-structured to include all the modern technological gadgets and software to enhance effective instruction and teachers' competence.

3. Classroom facilities should be re-designed to reflect 21ˢᵗ century learning environment which emphasizes on individual learning and teachers competence.

4.   Teacher's welfare package should be designed to include compulsory developmental/training programme which will enhance teacher's competencies and new teaching methods.

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