Assessment of the Competencies Possessed by Business Educators for Effective Instructional Delivery in Universities in South-East-Nigeria

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Abstract
This paper investigated the competencies possessed by Business Educators in Universities for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A sample of 123 Business Educators, which comprised 83 and 40 Business Educators drawn from 10 (5 federal and 5 state universities respectively) public universities in South-East Nigeria, was used for the study. The entire population was used for the study; hence census sampling technique was adopted. The instrument for data collection was a 23-item researcher-developed questionnaire titled: Assessment of the Competencies Possessed by Business Educators for Effective Instructional Delivery Questionnaire (ACPBEFEIDQ). The instrument had two clusters with 4-point response scales of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, and Very Low Extent, with 4, 3, 2, and 1 ratings, respectively, addressing research questions. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha statistic, which yielded an overall index of 0.89. The data was collected by the researchers with the help of two research assistants. Out of 123 copies of the instruments administered, 99 copies, representing 80% were returned and used for data analysis. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions raised for the study, while the t-test statistic was used to test the two hypotheses that guided the study at a 0.05 level of significance. The results showed, among others, that Business Educators possessed both practical demonstration and digital competencies to a low extent. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the University administration should ensure that practical demonstration and digital competencies are part of the requisite skills to be considered during the recruitment of Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in Southeast Nigeria.

Keywords: Assessment, Competencies, Business Educators, Instructional delivery, Universities

Introduction

Education is a process of transformation aimed at creating a relatively permanent change in the life and attitude of the receiver. University education is regarded as the apex of education in Nigeria. It is the level of education that comes after secondary education. This level of education prepares the students for the labour market by equipping them with the prerequisite skills and competencies necessary for both the industry and self-reliance. For university education in Nigeria to play the above role, especially in this 21st century, attention must be paid to the effective implementation of university education programmes and policies. Lending credence to the afore-mentioned, Ubong and Wokocha (2019) pointed out that programmes in the university education are tailored towards preparing individuals for careers in teaching, civil service, industries, business establishment and by extension, self-employment. One of such programmes is the Business Education programme.

Business Education programme is a form of Vocational and Technical Education that is targeted at the acquisition of practical skills as well as rudimentary scientific knowledge for societal consumption. According to National Policy on Education (FRN, 2020), Business Education programme is aimed at producing manpower that is equipped with analytical as well as critical knowledge of the vital factors in present business world with a view to influencing the development of a virile economy (Ementa & Nwankwo 2023). Thus, the cardinal goal of Business Education programme is to produce manpower that are in possession of the required knowledge, skills as well as attitude to harness other resources to produce goods and services for meeting societal needs (Olowe & Enijumi 2024).

Business Educators are Business Education teachers. They are persons who are professionally trained in Business Education from recognized universities and Colleges of Education. According to Emeasoba and Nweke (2017), Business Educators are important stakeholders involved in ensuring effective integration of technological competencies in educational system. They are the key to whether technology is used appropriately or not. According to Eze-Desy & Emeasoba (2023) they can be seen as educators that train their students to solve business problems, plan for future growth and strategize how to run a business efficiently and effectively.

Effective instructional delivery is art of bringing about comprehension of what is taught by the teacher/lecturer. In other words, instructional delivery is effective when students understand what has been taught by the teacher/lecturer which is the planned goal of instructional delivery (Beckets, 2020). There is therefore need for the possession of these competencies by Business Educators for effectiveness in instructional delivery.

Assessment is the process of objectively evaluating or appraising the quality, value or effectiveness of performance typically using a systematic method or structured approached. It is a critical process in many fields which helps individuals, organizations and institutions make informed decisions and drive improvement. According to Ojohwoh (2019), it is a systematic and standardized appraisal of performance which can be used to establish the efficiency or otherwise of a person or system. According to Chinedu & Edeh (2023), Assessment can be used in many fields and for different reasons such as evaluating students learning understanding or performance, evaluating and determining employee skills, performance or competencies and evaluating the success or impact of a project or system.

Competencies refer the innate or acquired traits of an individual that enable them to undertake a specific task creditably well. Competencies are inner abilities developed by individuals to enable them to perform designated tasks professionally (Abdulrazak, Oladele, & Mohammed, 2023). In other words, competencies enable the performance of task in a professional manner. Pepple and Enouh (2020) defined competencies as underlying characteristics like generic and specific knowledge and traits that enable people execute their assigned responsibilities professionally and efficiently.

Practical demonstration is the performance of an activity under the direct observation of a designated examiner for the purpose of establishing that the performer is sufficiently proficient in a practical skill to meet a specified standard of competence or another objective criterion. According to Ojianyaegbu 2021, practical demonstration competence is an essential competency which every Business Educator is expected to possess to enable them cope with the challenges of instructional delivery. For effective instructional delivery to take place, learning experiences should be tailored towards the achievement of instructional objectives by the Business Educators (Ekoh-Nweke 2018).

Digital competence refers to an individual's ability to use online communication applications and networks to access and manage information electronically. It is the capacity to use trending technological devices in undertaking specific tasks (Onyebuenyi & Oluka, 2022). This capacity is a pre-condition for the use of mobile learning applications. Similarly, Ogunbodede et al (2023) observed that acquisition of relevant digital competencies by Business Educators would provide them with the opportunities to open Microsoft word application, use computer to exchange files, evaluate course-specific education software, develop computer-assisted software, develop software to teach a course and by extension, develop software to evaluate instructions.

Statement of the Problem

Business Education is an aspect of Vocational and Technical Education. It is a specialized programme of instruction designed to provide individuals with knowledge, attitudes and skills for occupational work, advancement and self-reliance. Unfortunately, these good objectives of the programme appear to be frustrated in our society. The poor performance of Business Education graduates in the recent time has constituted a source of worry to educational institutions, employers of labour and the society at large. There is observed inefficiency in the utilization of the relevant skills and competencies by Business Educators, especially in self-sustenance. It is no longer strange to see graduates of Business Education Walk around the major cities in search of non-existing paid employments, even in the present unemployment situation in the country instead of applying their acquired skills and competences for self-sustenance and reliance. These gaps motivated the researcher to unearth the competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in Universities in Southeast Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the:

1. extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.
2. extent of digital competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do Business Educators possess practical demonstration competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria?
2. To what extent do Business Educators possess digital competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.5 level of significance.

Ho_1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in federal and state universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Ho_2: A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of Business Educators in federal and state universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Method of Data Analysis

Data for the study was collected using well-structured questionnaire. 123 questionnaires were administered to Business Educators in Universities in Southeast Nigeria, out of which 99 were retrieved. The instrument was validated by experts and the reliability was done using Cronbach coefficient alpha method and a correlation coefficient of 0.89 was obtained, showing the reliability of the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions to determine the closeness or homogeneity of the respondents' responses while the t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The criteria for integration of mean ratings were determined using real limits of numbers, thus; 3.5 – 40 represented Very High Extent (VHE), 3.0 – 3.49 High Extent (HE) 2.0 – 2.49 Low Extent (LE) and 1.0 – 1.49 Very Low Extent (VLE). The null hypotheses were upheld for the items whose t-calculated value were less than the t-table value at 0.05 level of significance while the hypotheses were not accepted for items whose t-calculated value was greater than the t-table value at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

To what extent do Business Educators possess practical demonstration competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Analysis of Responses of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in Universities in South-East Nigeria

		Federal (N=66)			State (N=33)		
S/N	**Practical demonstration competencies**	**X_1**	**SD_1**	**RMK**	**X_2**	**SD_2**	**Remark**
1	I can speak clearly	2.65	0.74	HE	2.59	0.83	HE
2	I use of relevant terminologies related to the subject matter	1.89	0.66	LE	1.97	0.48	LE
3	I maintain effective use of eye contact	2.31	0.59	LE	2.59	0.83	LE
4	I can use gesture to effect learning	2.37	0.67	LE	1.90	0.48	LE
5	I display enthusiasm during instructional delivery	2.15	0.79	LE	2.38	0.59	LE
6	I use facial expression to convey emphasis	2.54	0.56	HE	2.42	0.62	HE
7	I use of physical movement to engage students' attention	2.81	0.69	HE	2.82	0.66	HE
8	I can move smoothly from one instructional activity to another	2.64	0.48	HE	2.55	0.64	HE
9	I provide positive reinforcement to motivate students	2.69	0.53	HE	2.72	0.68	HE

10	I can give concise direct instruction	2.54	0.77	HE	2.51	0.58	HE
11	I can integrate technology into instructional delivery practices	2.31	0.78	LE	2.33	0.56	HE
	Cluster Mean	**2.44**	**0.66**	LE	**2.34**	**0.65**	**LE**

VHE= Very High Extent, H.E= High Extent, LE=Low Extent, VLE=Very Low Extent.

The results in Table 1 indicated that the mean ratings of Business Educators in the Federal and State universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed, for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. The results revealed that the mean ratings of Business Educators in the Federal and State universities in all the items except items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 11 ranged between 2.51 and 2.82 which fall within the real limit of numbers range of 2.50-3.49 indicating high extent mean responses. Items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 11 recorded mean responses ranging from 1.89 and 2.42 which fall within the real limit of numbers range of 1.50-2.49 indicating low extent responses. The cluster mean responses of 2.44 and 2.34 for Business Educators in the Federal and State universities respectively which also fall within the real limit of numbers range of 2.50-3.49 indicated that the respondents agreed that Business Educators in the Federal and State universities possessed to a low extent practical demonstration competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. The cluster standard deviation of 0.66 and 0.65 for both Business Educators in the Federal and State universities respectively showed that their responses were not far from the mean and from each other.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in Universities in South-East Nigeria

Status	N	X	Sd	df	t-cal.	p-value	Remark
Federal	66	3.44	0.66				
				97	0.418	1.01	NS
State	33	3.24	0.65				

Data in Table 2 indicated a p-value of 1.01 which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. Since the p-value of 1.01 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, the hypothesis of no significant difference was not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Research Question 2

To what extent do Business Educators possess digital competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean Analysis of Responses of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in Universities in South-East Nigeria

		Federal (N=66)			**State (N=33)**		
S/N	**Digital competencies**	**X1**	**SD1**	**RMK**	**X2**	**SD2**	**Remark**
12	I have ability to use basic computer skills	1.32	0.51	VLE	1.30	0.61	VLE
13	I have ability to use software applications	1.63	0.84	LE	1.62	0.65	LE

14	I have ability to use digital white boards	1.67	0.52	LE	1.68	0.63	LE
15	I can use online course design	2.07	0.48	LE	2.05	0.66	LE
16	I can use multimedia integration skills	1.89	0.53	LE	1.80	0.67	LE
17	I can use messaging tools	1.57	0.84	LE	1.53	0.60	LE
18	I can use video conferencing	2.04	0.49	LE	2.01	0.58	LE
19	I have ability to use online discussion forums	1.89	0.86	LE	1.75	0.81	LE
20	I have ability to use collaborative document editing tools	1.78	0.67	LE	1.76	0.74	LE
21	I have ability to use online assessment tools	1.51	0.69	LE	1.53	0.50	LE
22	I can use digital rubrics	2.02	0.88	LE	2.00	0.73	LE
23	I can use cyber security tools	1.89	0.67	LE	1.85	0.71	LE
	Cluster Mean	**1.77**	**0.67**	**LE**	**1.74**	**0.66**	**LE**

VHE= Very High Extent, H.E= High Extent, LE=Low Extent, VLE=Very Low Extent.

The results in Table 3 revealed that the mean ratings of Business Educators in the Federal and State universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in Universities in South-East Nigeria. The results revealed that the mean ratings of Business Educators in the Federal and State universities in all the items except item 12 ranged between 1.51 and 2.07 which fall within the real limit of numbers range of 1.50-3.49 indicating low extent mean responses. Item 12 had a mean response of 1.34 and 1.30 for mean responses of Business Educators in the Federal and State universities which fall within the real limit of number range of 1.00- 2.49 indicating very low extent responses. The cluster mean responses of 1.77 and 1.74 for Business Educators in the Federal and State universities respectively which also fall within the real limit of numbers range of 1.50-2.49 indicated that the respondents agreed that Business Educators in the Federal and State universities possessed to a low extent digital competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. The cluster standard deviation of 0.67 and 0.65 for both Business Educators in the Federal and State universities respectively showed that their responses were not far from the mean and from each other.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in Universities in South-East Nigeria

Universities	N	X	Sd	df	t-cal.	p-value	Remark
Federal	66	1.77	0.67				
				97	0.213	1.00	NS
State	33	1.74	0.66				

Data in Table 4 showed a p-value of 1.00 which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. Since the p-value of 1.00 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, the hypothesis of no significant difference was not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the results of the findings of the study it was found that Business Educators in the Federal and State universities possessed to a low extent, practical demonstration competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. This implies that Business Educators do not show high competencies in the practical demonstration during instructional delivery. It was equally revealed from the study that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of practical demonstration competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. This in other words showed that the two set of respondents agreed that there was low level of possession of practical demonstration competencies among Business Educators. The results support the results from earlier similar studies by Amadi and Ovute (2021) which showed among others that Business Educators lack basic practical demonstration competencies for effective instructional delivery.

The results further revealed that Business Educators in the Federal and State universities possessed to a low extent digital competencies for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. This in other words means that Business Educators do not have adequate digital competencies for effective instructional delivery. The results specifically indicated that Business Educators possess low competencies in the use of software applications, digital white boards, video conferencing, Online course design and discussion forum as well as online assessment tools among others. Their Low-level use of digital tools in instructional delivery implies that they use more of the conventional teaching methods in teaching which according to Beckett (2018) are teacher-centered and do not support learning effectively. The results also showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the extent of digital competencies possessed for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. This shows that the responses of the two set of respondents did not differ widely on the extent digital competencies are possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria. The results corroborated the findings from the earlier study by Ojianyaegbu (2021) which showed that Business Educators have low digital competencies to teach Business Education effectively.

Conclusion

This study determined the competencies possessed by Business Educators for effective instructional delivery in public (Federal and State) universities in the South-East Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was concluded that Business Educators in both federal and state universities possessed both practical demonstration and digital competencies to a low extent for effective instructional delivery in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University authorities should ensure that classroom competency level of candidates are part of the requisite skills to consider during recruitment of Business Educators and other categories of lecturers.
2. Curriculum developers should ensure that major aspects of Business Education curriculum contents are delivered through practical demonstration methods for effective instructional delivery.
3. University Administration should ensure that Business Educators make use of ICT and other digital tools in instructional delivery so as to make them improve on their digital competencies for effective instructional delivery.
4. Association of Business Educators of Nigeria should organize regular conferences and workshops for their members on the relevance of these competencies and skills for

effective instructional delivery of Business Education programme curriculum in the universities.

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