

Challenges in Business Education

Jessey Daniel Udo & Emem Monday George

Department of Business Education

Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Afaha Nsit

Abstract

Business education plays a vital role in preparing individuals for success in the dynamic and competitive world of commerce. However, educators and researchers in the field of business education face numerous methodological challenges that require investigation and resolution. This study therefore aims to explore the methodological challenges encountered in business education. The primary objectives of this study are as follows: to identify the methodological challenges faced by educators and researchers in business education; to explain the implications of these challenges on teaching, learning, and research in the field and to propose strategies for addressing these challenges to enhancing the quality of business education. In order to achieve these objectives, three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The population for the study comprised four institutions of higher learning that offer business education programs. Data for the study were collected using structured questionnaire. Four-point Likert and mean score was used to analyze the data collected. The study found that outdated curriculum and teaching techniques; inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities; inadequate provision of financial resources by the government and shortage supply of qualified manpower are some of the methodological challenges faced by educators in business education. The study recommended that business education curriculum should be reviewed and updated. Seminars and academic workshops should be organized for business education teachers in order to expose them to modern teaching techniques. Also, the government should provide financial support to business education programs in tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Business Education, Challenges, Business, Improvement, Methodology, Wealth

Introduction

Education as a systematic, intellectual and moral training is geared towards acquiring knowledge, development of character and also mental development that will ensure human survival (Udo, 2021). According to Oluwole and Adebayo (2018), one of the major key players in the evolution of any nation from one economic level to another is education. Hence, education bequeaths to student's necessary knowledge, skills and competencies which can be used to develop themselves in the future and contribute meaningfully to the growth of the society. Similarly, business education as an educational training encompasses knowledge, skills, competencies, structural activities, abilities, capabilities and all other structural experiences acquired through formal, on-the-job or off-the-job training. These skills are aimed at enhancing recipients' opportunity for securing jobs in various sectors of the economy or promoting self-

dependency (Koffi & Etukudo, 2016). This philosophy of business education in Nigeria is predicated on the fact that every citizen is a participant in the nation's economic activities either as a producer or consumer of goods and services and that every citizen must be conscious of his/her contribution to the economic well-being of the nation (Asuquo, 2010). Consequently, for business education to be sustainable, it is imperative to enunciate the nature and trend of educational progress made by students. This becomes a reality through effective teaching and learning as well as evaluating teaching methodologies.

From the foregoing, it can be summarized that business education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of organizations and economies, equipping students with essential skills to thrive in dynamic and competitive markets. As a result of the impact of business education on the development of human resources, productivity and economic growth, it has become inherent in the national development strategies in many societies. Consequent to this, to achieve sustainable national development, attention should be paid to strengthening the bridge between education and schooling and preparation for the world of work with respect to improving vocational education (Business Education) in Nigeria (Oluwole & Adebayo, 2018).

Studies show that the history of business organizations in Nigeria and across the globe revolves around individuals who either coordinate or manage the activities of such organization. It is safe to say that the quality and quantity of human resources determines a nation's growth and development. This is because the development of any society is hinged on the development of its human resources (Oni, 2010). It can be said therefore that the effectiveness of human resources depends on the effectiveness of business education which is heavily dependent on the methodologies employed by instructors. However, in recent decades, the business world has experienced unprecedented transformations, compelling business schools and educators to reassess their pedagogical methods. Traditional teaching approaches that once sufficed in a relatively stable environment no longer meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. As the landscape of business continuously evolves due to technological advancements, globalization, and societal changes, it becomes imperative to assess and address the methodological challenges faced by educators in the business domain. As such, this study seeks to investigate the methodological challenges faced by business educators and analyze the impact of these challenges on student learning outcomes and overall program effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the methodological challenges encountered in business education. Specifically, the study is primarily set to:

1. Identify the methodological challenges faced by educators in business education.
2. Explain the implications of these challenges on teaching and learning.
3. Propose strategies for addressing these challenges to improve business education.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would be of benefit to students, teachers, educational planners as well as the entire society. Students being aware of methodological challenges would equip them with the ability to recognize and overcome obstacles they might face in their future careers. Also, by analyzing methodological challenges, students would be encouraged to think critically about their own learning experiences. They could reflect on what works best for them and actively participate in the learning process, promoting a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

The study would help teachers identify the specific challenges encountered in business education programs and provide insights into better teaching strategies. By understanding the difficulties, teachers could adapt their methods to suit their students' needs and improve their effectiveness in delivering the curriculum. Identifying and addressing methodological challenges could also help teachers refine their teaching strategies. By understanding which methods is best for different types of learners and subjects in business education, teachers could enhance their instructional techniques to engage students more effectively.

Also, the study would help educational planners to identify specific methodological challenges and shortcomings in current business education practices. These challenges may include outdated teaching methods, inadequate curriculum design, lack of practical application opportunities and insufficient use of technology. Understanding these issues is the first step in finding solutions to enhance the overall learning experience. By pinpointing the methodological challenges, educational planners would devise strategies to address them. This might involve integrating innovative teaching approaches, promoting active learning, incorporating real-world case studies and adopting technology-enhanced learning methods. Improved teaching methodologies could lead to better student's engagement, comprehension, and retention of knowledge.

Finally, the study would be of immense benefit to the both Federal and State governments because it would be a working document for policy formulation in relation to business education. It could also, contribute to the existing literature on challenges in business education; hence it would be important to the society at large.

Research Questions

The following research questions were considered pertinent to the success of the study;

1. What are the methodological challenges faced by educators in business education?
2. What are the implications of these challenges on teaching and learning?
3. What strategies can be adopted to address these challenges to improve business education?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive approach to comprehensively assess the methodological challenges in business education. The population of the study comprised faculty members and students in Business Education Department in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri; Imo State University, Owerri; Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and College of Education, Afaha Nsit, Akwa Ibom State with a population size of seventy-four (74) staff and students. Hundred percent of the population (74) was selected. The instrument used for data collection was the structured questionnaire. This was divided into two parts. Part A contained information on the demography of the research subjects while Part B contained twelve (12) questionnaire items which were spread along the four research questions formulated for the study. The instrument was administered with the help of two research assistants. The data collected from the filled questionnaire were analyzed and objectively expressed using mean scores. A decision level of 2.5 was used. The results are arranged in frequency distribution table in relation to specific research questions. Simple mean method was used to test the variable with the highest frequency. The rating scores of the respondents were tallied and calculated using the mean score and subsequently worked out using the following formula;

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum FX}{N}$$

Where \bar{X} = Mean

X = Sum total of scores

N = Sample size.

Decision Rule: Any response equal or above 2.5 is accepted to be significant, while any response below 2.5 is not significant and therefore rejected.

Data Analysis

The data collected with the aid of research instruments were used in compliance with statistical tables which contained the raw scores and their percentage derived from responses to each of the items in the questionnaire.

Research Question 1: What are the methodological challenges faced by educators in business education?

Table 1: Mean of methodological challenges faced by educators in business education.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	(\bar{X})	Decision
1	Use of outdated curriculum and teaching techniques.	3.2	Agreed
2	Inadequate provision of modern infrastructural facilities.	3.1	Agreed
3	Inadequate provision of financial resources by the government.	2.9	Agreed
4	Shortage supply of qualified manpower.	3.2	Agreed
	Overall mean	3.1	Agreed

Results in Table 1 shows that the overall mean is 3.1 which is above the discriminating score 2.50. This shows that use of outdated curriculum and teaching techniques; inadequate provision of modern infrastructural facilities and shortage supply of qualified manpower are some of the methodological challenges faced by educators in business education.

Research Question 2: What are the implications of these challenges on teaching and learning?
Table two; Mean of implications of methodological challenges on teaching and learning.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	(\bar{X})	Decision
1	Inability to produce skilled and competent graduates.	3.3	Agreed
2	Increased rate of unemployment and level of poverty among business education graduates.	3.2	Agreed
3	Inability to meet the need of industries or employers of labour.	3.2	Agreed
4	Creation of gap between business education and industries in Nigeria.	3.1	Agreed
Overall mean		3.2	Agreed

Results in Table two shows that the overall mean is 3.2 which are above the discriminating score 2.50. This shows that methodological challenges in business education have resulted to inability to produce skilled and competent graduates. This has consequently increased the rate of unemployment and level of poverty among business education graduates.

Research Question 3: What strategies can be adopted to address these challenges to improve business education?

Table 3: Mean of strategies adopted to improve business education.

S/N	Questionnaire items	(\bar{X})	Decision
1	Adequate provision and utilization of resources.	3.2	agreed
2	Use of revised curriculum and updated teaching techniques.	3.1	agreed
3	Adequate supply of qualified manpower.	2.9	agreed
4	Adequate provision of financial resources.	3.2	agreed
Overall Mean		3.1	agreed

Results in table three shows that the overall mean is 3.1 which are above the discriminating score 2.50. This shows that adequate provision and utilization of resources and adequate supply of qualified manpower can improve business education. Also, use of revised

curriculum and updated teaching techniques can also serve to enhance business education programs across institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The data collected from research question one was tabulated and their results showed that items 1, 2, and 3 have their mean as 3.2, 3.2, and 3.1 respectively. This was above 2.5 which was the decision level and therefore it was accepted. This implies that outdated curriculum and teaching techniques; inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities; inadequate provision of financial resources by the government and shortage supply of qualified manpower are some of the methodological challenges faced by educators in business education. The findings corroborate with the study of Akpan et al. (2014) who found inadequacy of skilled and experienced manpower as a factor that has retarded teaching and learning in most African countries, including Nigeria. In line with this, Edokpolor (2015) stated that these challenges have contributed to the increasing rate of unemployment and level of poverty among business education graduates. In support of this assertion, Aworanti (2015) also noted that the basic infrastructural facilities have declined both in quality and quantity. Even where these infrastructural facilities are available, they are not only in bad and non-functional state but also very obsolete.

Elaborating on these methodological challenges, Aworanti (2015) further stated that it is regrettable that most vocational education curricula are outdated having been in use for over fifteen years. Looking at this situation closely, it is clear that current business education may not be able to meet the need of industries or employers of labour genuinely. This situation has consequently created a huge gap between business education and industries in Nigeria. It is uppermost in the minds of experts in the field of business education that the curriculum should respond to labour market trends and projection of manpower requirement (Akpan et al., 2014). Similarly, Edokpolor and Egbri (2017) opined that this situation has devalued the image of business education both in education and labour market. To this effect, Ekpo (2011) ascribed the insecurity in Nigeria, such as the spate of terrorist attacks, kidnappings, suicide bombing, crime, breakdown of law and order, with the high rates of unemployment and poverty. This invariably implies that if the challenges in business education are addressed, it will grant students the skills and opportunities to access basic life-sustaining essentials, such as food, education, protection, healthcare, clothing and shelter, as well as access quality living, self-esteem, and freedom from servitude.

Conclusion

The study on "Methodological Challenges in Business Education" seeks to delve into the complexities surrounding the design, implementation, and assessment of business education programs. In an era marked by technological advancements, globalization, and shifting paradigms in the business world, traditional pedagogical approaches are increasingly being tested and critiqued. As a result, educators face the critical task of reevaluating and

adapting their methodologies to best prepare students for the multifaceted realities of modern business. This research endeavor aims to shed light on the multifaceted challenges that educators encounter in the context of business education. By investigating the evolving demands of the corporate landscape, examining emerging technologies, and assessing the effectiveness of different instructional techniques, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the broader discourse on business education's future.

Recommendations

Following the findings of the study, the study recommends that;

1. Business education curriculum should be reviewed and updated. Seminars and academic workshops should be organized for business education teachers in order to expose them to modern teaching techniques.
2. The government should provide financial support to business education programs in tertiary institutions.
3. Institutions of higher learning should also initiate income generating projects to subsidize government funding.
4. Teachers should be well remunerated. Allowance should be paid to business education.
5. ICT facilities should be made available in all business education departments in our institutions.
6. Proper, up to date and relevant equipment for teaching and Learning should be put in place in institution that offers business education.

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