

CHALLENGES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL PACKAGES FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in universities in South-East Nigeria, formed the basic objective for this research. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population was 57 Federal and State university lecturers in business education. No sampling was adopted because of the manageable size of the population. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire which was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a coefficient of 0.79. Mean with standard deviation was used for data analysis and the t-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The findings include: inadequate funding of our universities for curriculum development, use of obsolete instructional facilities in our universities, among others. Recommendations made include: adequate fund should be provided by the federal and state government on the development of instructional packages and proper regulation of universities instructional packages should be carried out on regular basis.*

KEYWORDS: Challenges, Instructional packages, Curriculum development, Business education, National Universities Commission

INTRODUCTION

The application of information and communication technology to education and digitalization of instructional delivery has become the order of the day that most learners and educators are moving towards programmed learning. Programmed instruction is one of the innovations in education involving self-instructional strategies (Okafor, 2009). Programmed instruction was developed as a result of the perceived needs of learners, which arose as a result of the increase in the number of students in the classroom and innovative teaching approach. Hamza (2012) noted that designing a training course is like mapping out a road trip or creating a journey. An instructional package is basically an outline of all the what, where, who, when and how of the training for use by coordinators, curriculum implementers and trainers. The development of instructional packages in universities is organized by institutions and curriculum development agencies and regulatory bodies.

Development of instructional package or programme is like the hammer-and-nail construction. That is knowing what to build, materials needed and building the solid

structure. Hamza (2012) further stated that the development of instruction involves writing materials, creating learner exercise and working with content experts and trainers. It is the most time consuming phase of instruction. Draft materials may go through multiple stages involving several people before they are ready for instructional use.

Planning instructional activities according to Orikpe (2013) involves all the necessary things the teacher does before embarking on the instructional delivery proper. Teachers and Educators who learn to develop and plan instructional activities can provide high quality instruction. Developing instructional packages for quality instruction in business education is the responsibility of the business educators, institution and national university commission (NUC). Business education is conceived in a broad perspective as a programme of study, which is aimed at creating awareness in occupations, preparing youths for work in business offices, preparing recipients to become better citizens and consumers of goods and services, and preparing business teachers (Odah and Ogbaga, 2010).

Okoli (2010) opined that business education is concerned with the teaching of skills, attitudes, competencies and knowledge necessary for a successful business career. It is also designed to develop special emphases on marketable business skills and technologies in fields like accounting, secretarial, clerical, stenographic, sales or distributive occupations (Etuk, 2005). The array of these definitions points to the fact that business education instructional package is concerned with equipping its recipients with the knowledge, soft skill and competencies including positive attitudes needed by the recipient of the discipline for gainful employment or self-reliance.

It is imperative to state that business education instructional package development needs to contain relevant trends and issues in the society in order to equip useful skills and knowledge that are needed for effective job performance. It is pertinent for practitioners (business educators) to identify key issues for development of functional business education curriculum and other instructional packages in order to train business educators that will be relevant in the internet age.

Further, the growth in electronic commerce has created a need for the training of business educators who will be knowledgeable and skilled in e-commerce, so they can impart such skills and knowledge to business education students especially those in tertiary institutions. It is therefore important that institutions, National University Commission (NUC) and other stakeholders collaborate to develop instructional packages for teaching. The development of instructional packages for teaching has been facing some challenges because of gap between curriculum content and labour market needs. According to Hornby (2006) challenge is a difficult task that requires extra effort to overcome. The challenges in the instructional development has continued to be on the increase as a result of information and communication technology (ICT) and other issues. These challenges according to Odah and Agbaga (2010) are originating from changes in skills, tools and procedures in the world of work occasioned by technological innovations in business. Nwosu (2006) opined that the curriculum is out-dated and should be revised from time to time. The business education programme in Nigeria universities are regulated in terms of

quality and standards by National university commission(NUC). They develop the minimum standard for training students in business education and other university programmes.

Also,individual institutions develop their own programmes in addition to the minimum standard. For instance, each University in South-East Nigeria has instructional packages for their students which are added to the National University Commission (NUC) programme.

South-East Nigeria has five states with public universities offering business education programme. The public universities in south -east Nigeria exist either as state or federal universities. The state universities are owned, funded and managed by the state government while the federal universities are owned, managed and funded by the federal government. All these universities are regulated by the national university commission (NUC). In developing instructional programmes for these universities, they usually adopt collaborative measures with the lecturers and other relevant stakeholders (Okeke,2014).

In spite of these collaborative approaches to development of instructional packages, there seem to be some challenges as most of these state and federal universities with NUC are yet to provide a functional instructional package. This is normally observed in the performance of business education graduates in office work or business environment. The most pertinent is the innovation in information and communication technology (ICT) that revolutionalized every area of human life.These scenario points to the fact that there are challenges negating the achievement of the set curriculum in the recipients or that the curriculum instructional packages are faulty. Nwosu (2006) noted that the curriculum is faulty and needs to be reviewed or new one being developed.

The researchers wonder why many of the business education graduates are not performing well in the world of work and others are entrenched by unemployment. Does it mean that these students were not properly trained or that the instructional packages are faulty? Does it mean that the curriculum is faulty and needs to be reviewed or new one being developed?The faulty curriculum producing students without contemporary skills and knowledge has affected the quality of graduates of business education. This has consequently resulted in high rate of unemployment and low quality of graduates based on the labour market needs. This conditions needs to be checked. For assurance of quality of business education programme and the provision of needs of individuals and the society, the instructional package must incorporate current trends in the academic and economic demands of the society. Utoware and Kren-Ikidi (2013) asserted that for educational system to deliver on their mandates, the quality of training given to the individuals passing through a course or the other should be such that can give adequate skills and information needed in the real world sense.

However, if there are factors militating against the achievement of the above objectives they need to be addressed. Therefore, the crux of this research is to identify the challenges to the development of functional business education instructional packages for developing

contemporary skills and knowledge among business education students in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in universities in South-East Nigeria. Specially, the study sought to determine:

1. The institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public Universities in South-East Nigeria.
2. The NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria?
2. What are the National university commission (NUC) Challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses tested at .05 level of significance guided the study:

- H₀₁ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state university lecturers on the institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.
- H₀₂ A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of business educators in federal and state universities on the National University Commission (NUC) challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Nworgu (2015) a descriptive survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be a representative of the entire group. Survey research design is deemed appropriate for this study as data was collected from business educators in public universities and analyzed regarding challenges to the development of instructional packages. The population for the study was 53 lecturers of business educators in Federal and State universities in South-East states of Nigeria. There was no sampling due to the manageable size of the population. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher after an extensive literature review. The instrument was face validated by 3 experts and the reliability of the instrument tested using Cronbach Alpha and it yielded an

index of 0.79 showing that the instrument was reliable. The instrument has four point rating options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was distributed with the help of three trained research assistants. Out of 53 copies distributed 52 were properly filled and returned, giving 96. 22% return rate. These were therefore used for data analysis. Mean with standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected where the value of t-calculated was more than the t-table value otherwise it was not rejected.

RESULTS

The results of the study are presented according to research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1

What are the institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria?

Table 1. Mean ratings with standard deviation of federal and state university lectures on the institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

| S/N | The following are institutional challenges for development of instructional packages | Federal N=37 | | State N=15 | | Overall N=52 | | Decision |
|-----|--|-----------------|------|---------------|-----|-----------------|------|----------|
| | | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | |
| 1 | Inadequate funding of our universities for curriculum development. | 3.1 | 0.76 | 3.2 | 0.8 | 3.1 | 0.79 | Agreed |
| 2 | Non-availability of capable human resources | 3.0 | 0.99 | 3.4 | 0.6 | 3.2 | 0.91 | Agreed |
| 3 | Poor information and communication technology (ICT) facilities for research in most universities | 3.3 | 0.99 | 3.2 | 0.9 | 3.2 | 0.96 | Agreed |
| 4 | Poor research findings on contemporary job needs from the labour market by universities | 3.3 | 0.99 | 3.2 | 0.9 | 3.2 | 0.96 | Agreed |
| 5 | Lack of interest by the school management on the development of instructional packages | 3.3 | 0.73 | 3.2 | 0.8 | 3.2 | 0.77 | Agreed |
| 6 | Politicization of appointment of key officers in the universities | 3.4 | 0.50 | 3.4 | 0.7 | 3.4 | 0.60 | Agreed |
| 7 | Appointment of unqualified personnel for the universities | 3.2 | 0.73 | 3.3 | 0.6 | 3.3 | 0.67 | Agreed |
| 8 | Obsolete instructional facilities in our universities | 3.1 | 0.90 | 3.6 | 0.6 | 3.4 | 0.76 | Agreed |
| 9 | Absence of workshops by the institution administration for retraining of staff. | 3.2 | 0.71 | 3.0 | 0.7 | 3.1 | 0.74 | Agreed |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| 10 | Poor motivation of staff by university authority | 3.2 | 0.86 | 3.6 | 0.5 | 3.4 | 0.71 | Agreed |
| | | 8 | | 3 | 6 | 6 | | |
| | Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation | 3.2 | 0.80 | 3.3 | 0.7 | 3.3 | 0.77 | Agreed |
| | | 5 | | 7 | 3 | 1 | | |

The result of data analysis presented in table I indicates that the mean ratings of federal and state universities ranges from 3.15 to 3.48 indicating that the respondent agreed to the items as the challenges of the institutions on the development of instructional packages for business education programme in universities. The cluster mean of 3.31 further concurred to that. The low standard deviation of the respondents shows that the opinions of the respondents are similar.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state universities lecturers on the institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

Table 2.t-test statistics on the responses of federal and state university lectures on the institutional challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

| Variables | \bar{X} | SD | N | df | t-cal | t-tab | P | Decision |
|-----------|-----------|------|----|----|-------|-------|------|-------------|
| Federal | 3.25 | 0.80 | 37 | 50 | 0.453 | 2.009 | 0.05 | Not |
| State | 3.37 | 0.73 | 15 | | | | | Significant |

t-cal (0.453) < t-crit (2.009)=NS

The result of t-test analysis indicates that the t-calculated value at .05 level of significance and 50 degree of freedom for the 10 items is 0.453 while the critical value is 2.009. Since the t-calculated is less than the critical value the null hypothesis is therefore not significant. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of Federal and State University lecturers on the challenges of the institution to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria.

Research Question 2

What are the National University Commission (NUC) challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East Nigeria?

Table 3. Mean ratings with standard deviation of federal and state university lecturers on the NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in public universities in South-East State of Nigeria.

| S/N | The following are NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages | Federal N=37 | | State N=15 | | Overall N=52 | | Decision |
|--|--|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | |
| 11 | Inadequate investment of work needs for the societies | 3.00 | 0.88 | 3.26 | 0.78 | 3.13 | 0.83 | Agreed |
| 12 | Poor regulatory framework on Institutional packages development | 3.48 | 0.50 | 3.22 | 0.72 | 3.35 | 0.61 | Agreed |
| 13 | Lack of collaborative measures between institutions and National University Commission (NUC) | 3.06 | 0.97 | 3.47 | 0.91 | 3.27 | 0.94 | Agreed |
| 14 | Inadequate research by the National University Commission (NUC) on the learners need. | 3.12 | 0.88 | 3.18 | 1.08 | 3.15 | 0.98 | Agreed |
| 15 | Insensitivity to technological innovations like the use of ICT | 3.29 | 0.82 | 3.52 | 0.54 | 3.41 | 0.68 | Agreed |
| 16 | Poor funding of the NUC for executing its statutory role. | 3.32 | 0.92 | 3.35 | 0.82 | 3.34 | 0.87 | Agreed |
| 17 | Politicization of the commission statutory role. | 3.40 | 0.66 | 3.31 | 0.81 | 3.36 | 0.73 | Agreed |
| 18 | Corruption among officers on the development of functional institutional packages | 3.43 | 0.79 | 3.30 | 0.85 | 3.37 | 0.82 | Agreed |
| 19 | Poor monitoring of each universities programmes on each discipline. | 3.14 | 0.63 | 3.05 | 0.96 | 3.21 | 0.80 | Agreed |
| Cluster mean/standard Deviation | | 3.25 | 0.78 | 3.30 | 0.83 | 3.29 | 0.81 | Agreed |

The result of data presented in table 3 shows that the mean ratings of the respondents range from 3.13 to 3.41 indicating agreed response. This means that the respondents agreed that the itemized are the National University Commission challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in South-East Nigeria. The overall cluster mean of 3.29 further shows that the respondent totally agreed to the items. The pull standard deviation of 0.81 shows that the respondents have homogenous responses to the items.

Hypothesis 2

A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of Federal and State university lecturers on the NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in South-East Nigeria.

Table 4: t-test statistics on the mean ratings of federal and state university lecturers on the NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in South-East Nigeria.

| Variables | \bar{X} | SD | N | df | P | t-cal | t-tab | Decision |
|-----------|-----------|------|----|----|------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Federal | 3.25 | 0.78 | 37 | 50 | 0.05 | 0.181 | 2.009 | Not |
| State | 3.30 | 0.83 | 15 | | | | | Significant |

t-cal (0.181) < t-crit (2.009)=NS

The result of t-test analysis presented in Table 4 shows that the t-calculated value at 0.05 level of significance and 50 degree of freedom for the nine items is 0.181 while the table value is 2.009. Since the t-calculated is less than t-table value the null hypothesis is not rejected for these items. The implications of this is that a significant different does not exist on the mean ratings of Federal and State University lecturers on the NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in South-East Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study according to research question one showed that the respondents agreed that the itemized are institution challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme in south-East Nigeria. The identified challenges include, inadequate funding, non-availability of capable human resources, poor information and communication technology facilities. Also, poor research findings on contemporary job needs, lack of interest by the school management, politicization of appointment, obsolete instructional facilities etc were found out to be among the challenges. The findings of the study is in agreement with Okeke (2014) who noted that inadequate funding is one of the major challenges to the development of quality instructional programme for training students in the contemporary world of work. The findings of Umeh (2013) further concurred with the finding of the study. Umeh noted that politicization of appointment and project has affected the development of instructional programme that would contend with the global challenges in the 21st century.

The result of the study further submits that lack of motivation of staff also influence the development of quality instructional packages in universities. Furthermore, the findings indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state university lecturers on the institutional challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programmes in public universities in south East Nigeria.

The findings of the study in research question two showed that the itemized nine NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programme were agreed upon. The NUC challenges identified include, inadequate investment, poor regulatory framework on the institutional instructional package development, lack of collaborative measures, inadequate research by the commission, insensitivity to technological innovations, poor funding and others. The outcome of the study showed that these challenges are hindering the development of instructional packages for business education programme. The findings of the study are in line with Nwosu (2006) who noted

that poor regulatory framework and poor research findings hinder the National University Commission in developing a quality instructional packages for university education programmes.

The findings of the study were further supported by Orikpe (2013). Orikpe noted that instruction package development is dependent on the regulatory body to overcome the challenges in the labour market. The study also noted that corruption among the NUC officials on the development of functional instructional packages is a major challenge. It is believed that these findings would enable the stakeholder to make the necessary adjustment. Furthermore, the result of the study indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state universities on the NUC challenges to the development of instructional packages for business education programmes in public universities in South East Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The study identified the challenges to institutions and regulatory body (NUC) in developing a functional instructional packages for business education programme in Universities. With the current trend in information and communication technology, it is pertinent to structure the system on instructional package that would enable the students develop the needed skills and knowledge for successful living. The institution and NUC need to take the issue of instructional package development serious as it is the foundation which the teaching and learning procedures rest on. The identified challenges if tackled would help to improve the quality of curriculum development in business education. This points to the fact that the stakeholders need to re-strategize in the development of instructional packages for the challenges to be surmounted. Subsequently, well developed instructional packages will address the skill and knowledge gap in the labour market.

Recommendations

Based on the result of the study the following recommendations were made;

- (1) Adequate fund should be provided by the federal and state government for the development of instructional packages for qualitative education.
- (2) Research work should be carried out on the contemporary job needs of the society before developing instructional packages.
- (3) Lecturers should be retrained and sensitized on the needs of society before developing an instructional package.
- (4) Proper regulation of universities instructional packages should be carried out on periodic basis.

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