

Pedagogical Approaches for Effective Teaching of Business Education Courses in the New Normal by Experts from Universities in the South –East, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *Post –Covid-19 pandemic brought significant approaches for effective teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. These new approaches triggered the researchers to carry out this study to highlight the pedagogical approaches for effective teaching of business education programme as perceived by the experts from Universities in the South East. Two research questions were answered by the study and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study utilized survey research design. The population for the study was 68 Business Educators teaching in Public Universities that offer Business Education programme in Universities in South East. A structured questionnaire of 23 items developed by the researchers was used for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t.test statistics was used to test the hypotheses. Findings from the study revealed that experts from the Universities in the South East perceived inquiry and collaborative learning as the pedagogical approaches for effective teaching of business education programme in Universities in South East in the new normal. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended among others that Business Educators should strategize and utilize inquiry and collaborative approaches for effective teaching in the new normal.*

KEYWORDS: Pedagogical approaches, effective teaching, business education and new normal.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 recession has caused great recession in both developed and underdeveloped countries. This COVID-19 recession is more noticeable in developing country like Nigeria. Sequel to the outbreak of corona virus, the Federal Government of Nigeria in an attempt to curtail the spread of the virus announced temporary close down of all schools in Nigeria with effect from 23rd March 2020. The minister of Education of Federal Republic of Nigeria took bold step to cover the gaps in learning and announced that schools should adopt E-learning platforms for teaching and learning without ascertaining the teachers' preparedness in the adoption of E-Learning. Many educators equally agreed that students will have gaps in their learning as a result of the shutdown of schools. Therefore, many institutions adopted online teaching especially private institutions.

The United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimated that as at 30th March 2020, eighty seven percent of the worlds' students, that is, 1.5billion learners have been affected by school closures. This puts a new demand on our education system. According to Ogunode (2020), one of the effects of COVID-19 pandemic was the suspension of teaching and learning in schools. This suspension of teaching and learning has affected many academic programmes mostly in public universities. In the view of Dan (2020), the Corona Virus pandemic has changed almost everything including the way Institution and commercial facilities operate in the new normal. Ajani (2020) emphasized that as schools resumes for the new normal, school structure, lesson scheduling, class management, staffing, adoption of classroom technologies and host of other educational activities are required to change. This is to conform to the new COVID-19 educational regulations of prohibition of mass gathering, social distancing and adoption of online teaching. This brought about the concept new normal to the lime light.

New normal is all about redesigning and readapting the curriculum with an emphasis placed on relevant individualized learning. (Folawe 2020). New normal teaching refers to modality where the students and the teacher are both physically present in the classroom and there are opportunities for active engagement, immediate feedback and socio-economic development of the learner. In order to cover the gap in academic programme caused by COVID-19 teachers at all levels of education in Nigeria were asked to engage in online teaching and learning. Various social media such as radio, television, telegram, WhatsApp,Edmodo etc were used in teaching and learning. The students were actively engaged in active and collaborative learning process despite the quarantine.. Teaches adopted many approaches to teaching and learning in the new normal brought about by COVID-19. In the view of the authors, some of the approaches worthy of application in teaching Business Education courses in the new normal include, collaborative learning and inquiry based approaches of learning.

Collaborative learning is the educational approach of using groups to enhance learning through working together. Groups of two or more learners work together to solve problems, complete tasks or learn new concepts. Miriah(2020) opined that collaborative learning attains higher level thinking and preserve information for longer times than students working individually. This is because groups tend to learn through discussion, clarification of ideas and evaluation of other ideas. Information that is discussed is likely to be retained in the long term memory. Some of the advantages of collaborative learning is that it improves knowledge acquisition and retention. It also promotes learning from other person and teaches students how to think critically and quickly. Learners are more likely to engage in thoughtful discussion with each other when given a specific goal. This helps to improve both their understanding of the subject and their esteem for each other. Example of collaborative teaching is a teacher presenting a problem to various teams to solve. Another pedagogical approach to teaching in the new normal covered in this study is inquiry based teaching.

Inquiry based teaching approach is an approach to learning that emphasizes students' role in the learning process rather than teacher telling students what they need to know. In this type of learning approach, the students are encouraged to study the topic of the lesson themselves, ask questions and share ideas. This tallied with the view of Team (2020) that inquiry based learning promotes engagement, curiosity and experimentation rather than the students being instructed, they are empowered explore the topic by asking questions and finding solutions to the problem. One of the advantages of inquiry based approach to learning is that it encourages students to brainstorm questions on the topic that interests and excites them. The researchers are of the opinion that there is need to adopt collaborative and inquiry based pedagogical approaches for effective teaching of business education programme in the new normal in Universities in the South East. In teaching data and word processing, business educators can share the students into smaller groups and give them task to perform.

Pedagogy means the study of various methods used in teaching and learning. The pedagogy adopted by educators sharpens the activities and other teaching strategies. This helps business educators to understand their students' need and background.

A business educator is an expert trained in the major components of business education. He/she is a person who is proficient in teaching of business education course and who can utilize different teaching methods and pedagogies in teaching. Therefore, the opinion of these experts on the pedagogical approaches to teaching business education in the new normal is apt at this critical time of post COVID -19 era. For effective teaching of business education in the new normal, the experts need to adopt different pedagogical approaches to teaching in the new normal.

Teaching is the process of imparting desired knowledge to the learner. Utoware and Eneogwe(2017) described teaching as the exchange of ideas between a teacher and a student. Similarly, Aliyu in Utoware and Eneogwe opined that teaching is the process of imparting knowledge in the classroom. Therefore, experts in universities in the South East need to impart the requisite knowledge to the learners by adopting collaborative and inquiry based approaches to teaching and learning in the new normal.

An expert in the context of this study is a business educator teaching business education courses in Universities in the South East. They are trained personnel who impart the desired knowledge to the learner. The authors are of the opinion that these two approaches can be suitable for giving students tasks to perform by sharing them into smaller groups. The teacher pose questions to the students and guides them on how to solve the questions. Also through collaborative enquiry, the teacher gain understanding of the students reasoning. An empirical study of this nature must be based on theory. This study was based on cognitive learning theories. The theory stresses the acquisition of knowledge and skills. To the cognitivists, learning takes place by doing it your elf. Practice of skills and correct feedback are needed to promote learning and could be achieved through collaborative and inquiry based approaches of teaching.. It is against this back drop that

the researchers sought to determine the pedagogical approaches for effective teaching of business education courses in the new normal by experts from universities in the South East.

Statement of the problem

The shutdown of schools in Nigeria at all levels resulted to loss of labour hours and school children are the worst hit. Many schools in Nigerian education system especially private schools tried to cover the lost labour hours by engaging in online teaching and learning using radio and television and other e-learning platforms. This system of teaching and learning has its own shortfalls because children in remote areas that do not have access to electricity do not benefit from this system of teaching and learning. Therefore, this study becomes imperative. The question now is how we can make up for the teaching and learning time lost to the pandemic. This may likely be covered by adopting effective pedagogical approaches to teaching. This can help business educators to create plans for smooth transition back to or help them to adjust to new normal after COVID -19 era. Deducing from the students' poor performance in 2021 University Tertiary Matriculation Board (UTME), the Registrar of JAMB blamed the poor performance of the candidates on the truncation of academic calendar by COVI-19 pandemic. If new approaches to teaching and learning are not adopted by Educators, the students may likely continue to perform poorly in their examination because of the labour hours lost during the lock down.

Research questions

The following research questions were answered by the study.

1. What is the collaborative based approach for effective teaching of Business Education courses in the new normal by experts from Universities in the South East?
2. What is the inquiry based approach for effective teaching of business education courses in the new normal by experts from Universities in the South East?.

Hypotheses

The following were tested at 0.05 level of significance

H₀₁: Significant difference does not exists between the mean ratings of experts in Federal and State Universities on the collaborative learning approaches for effective teaching of business education courses in the new normal by experts from the Universities in the South East.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Universities on the inquiry based approaches for effective teaching of business education courses in the new normal.

METHOD

The researchers adopted a survey research design. The justification for using survey research design is because the study sought the opinion the respondents on the pedagogical approaches for

effective teaching of business education in the new normal by experts from Universities in the Sought East offering Business Education programme. The population comprised 68 Business Educators teaching in public Universities in the Sought East. The instrument has 27 items in two clusters generated from the research questions. The instrument was validated by three experts, two experts from the Department of Business Education an expert from the Department of Maths and computer Education (Measurement and Evaluation option) all from the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. The instrument was administered to Business Educators in the South East and successfully retrieved from the respondents recording 100% return rate. Data collected in respect of the research question were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t.test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with 2.50 or more is regarded as agree while any item with less than 2.50 is regarded as disagree. Similarly, null hypothesis is accepted if the calculated t-value is less than the table t-value and rejected if otherwise.

RESULTS

The result of the study is represented in Tables according to the research questions that guided the study.

Research question 1: **What is the collaborative approach for effective teaching of business education courses in the new normal?**

Table 1: Mean ratings of the experts on the collaborative approaches for teaching and learning of business education in the new normal.

S/N	The following are the collaborative approaches for teaching and learning of business education in the new normal.	Fed.Uni. Business Educators N=49		State Uni Business Educators N=19		Overall		Dec.
		X1	SD1	X2	SD2	XG	SDG	
1.	Equal opportunities to participants	3.37	0.53	3.32	0.48	3.35	0.51	Agree
2.	Effective and frequent communication	3.59	0.49	3.58	0.51	3.59	0.49	Agree
3.	Promote interaction (Face to face)	3.57	0.54	3.68	0.48	3.60	0.52	Agree
4.	Clearly defined roles for sub groups	3.71	0.46	3.84	0.37	3.75	0.44	Agree
5.	Individual accountability	3.48	0.51	3.53	0.51	3.50	0.50	Agree
6.	Maximum peer interaction	3.53	0.58	3.63	0.49	3.56	0.56	Agree
7.	Unanimous focus on a common goal	3.47	0.58	3.58	0.51	3.50	0.56	Agree
8.	Sharing of resources	3.35	0.69	3.37	0.68	3.35	0.69	Agree
9.	Consistent, united and enthusiastic effort	3.43	0.50	3.42	0.51	3.43	0.49	Agree
10.	Heterogeneous grouping	3.24	0.88	2.95	0.97	3.16	0.91	Agree
11.	Strong leadership	3.65	0.52	3.68	0.48	3.66	0.51	Agree
Grand Mean		3.49	0.57	3.51	0.54	3.50	0.56	Agree

The result in Table 1 shows that the mean rating of the respondents ranges from 3.16(heterogeneous grouping) to 3.75(clearly defined roles) This shows that the experts agree that the identified 11 items are the collaborative approaches for teaching of business education in the

new normal by experts from universities in the South-East. The cluster mean of 3.50 attest to it. The low cluster standard deviation of 0.56 obtained from data analysis indicates that the respondents have consensus opinion in their responses to the items.

Table 2 :

Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings of Federal and State University business educators on the collaborative approaches for teaching and learning of business education in the new normal by experts from universities in South -East

Variables	N	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Dec.
Fed.Uni.Business Educators	49	0.173	66	0.863	0.17078	.98599	NS
State University Business Educators	19						

The result of the data in Table 2 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significance and 66 degree of freedom for the 11 items is 0.173 with a significant value of 0.863. Since the significant value of 0.863 is more than 0.05 level of significant, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference with regard to the 11 items on the mean ratings of Federal and State University business educators on the collaborative approaches for teaching and learning of business education in the new normal by experts from universities in South –East. Hence the Null hypothesis is not rejected.

Research Question Two: What is the inquiry based approach to teaching and learning of business education in Universities in the South East in the new normal?

Table 3: Mean ratings of the respondents on the inquiry based approach of teaching and learning of Business Education in the new normal

S/N	The following are the inquiry based approaches to teaching and learning of business education in the new normal.	Federal Uni. Business Educators N=49		State Uni. Business Educators N=19		Overall		Dec.
		X ₁	SD ₁	X ₂	SD ₂	XG	SDG	
1	Establish flexible group norms that can guide the group	3.59	0.49	3.79	0.42	3.65	0.48	Agree
2	Keep the groups mid sized	3.65	0.59	3.63	0.68	3.64	0.62	Agree
3	Create group roles for larger task	3.76	0.43	3.84	0.37	3.78	0.42	Agree
4	Use real world problem	3.45	0.61	3.37	0.68	3.43	0.63	Agree
5	Keep in mind the diversity of the groups	3.59	0.49	3.58	0.51	3.59	0.49	Agree
6	Establish group interactions	3.53	0.50	3.57	0.51	3.54	0.50	Agree
7	Use some stress reducing strategies for each group	3.47	0.62	3.37	0.68	3.44	0.63	Agree
8	Create a pre-test	3.45	0.65	3.53	0.69	3.47	0.66	Agree
9	Create a post test	3.39	0.70	3.37	0.83	3.38	0.73	Agree
10	Consider the learning process as a part of the assessment	3.53	0.65	3.74	0.45	3.59	0.60	Agree
11	Engage the students in problem solving	3.41	0.73	3.42	0.77	3.41	0.74	Agree
12	Engage the students in critical thinking	3.57	0.61	3.58	0.69	3.57	0.63	Agree
Grand Mean		3.53	0.65	3.56	0.61	3.54	0.59	

Table 2 shows that the mean ratings of the respondents ranges from 3.38 (create a post test) to 3.78(create group roles for larger group). This means that experts from the University in the South East perceive creating group roles for larger group as one of the inquiry based approach to teaching and learning in the universities in the South East in the new normal.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings of Federal and State University business educators on the collaborative approaches for teaching and learning of business education in the new normal .

Variables	N	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Dec.
Fed.Uni.Business Educators	49	0.347	66	0.730	0.40172	1.15851	NS
State University Business Educators	19						

The result of the data in Table 4 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significance and 66 degree of freedom for the 12 items is 0.347 with significant value of 0.730. Since the significant value of 0.730 is more that the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means

that there is no significant difference with regard to the 12 items on the mean ratings of Business Educators in the Federal and State universities on the inquiry based approach to teaching and learning of business education in Universities in the South East in the new normal.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result in table one shows that collaboration learning is one of the pedagogical approaches for effective teaching of business education in the new normal. The reason could be as a result of the relevance and of advantages collaborative learning such increase in student's retention, self esteem and taking responsibility. Collaborative learning also enhances problem solving. Every member of the group participates in solving the problem in order to complete the task. This tallied with the assertion made by Gates (2018) that collaborative learning has been shown not only to develop higher-level thinking skills in students but also boost their self-esteem and as well.

The result of the hypothesis in Table two showed that significant difference did not exist between the mean ratings of the experts in the Federal and State Universities in the South East on the collaborative learning approaches for effective teaching of business education courses in the new normal.

This reason could be that one of the primary responsibility of business educators is to impart the requisite knowledge to the learner irrespective of State or Federal universities. This finding collaborated with the findings of Nwokike(2014)who found that significant difference did not exist between the mean ratings of business educators in the Federal and State Universities.

The result of the study in research question 2 Tables 3 disclosed that experts in the universities in the South East consider inquiry learning as an effective pedagogical approach for teaching business education in the new normal .it is interesting to note that one of the benefits of inquiry – based learning is that it promotes better understanding of the contents of the lesson .This can be obtained when business educators establish flexible group norms that can guide the group in accomplishing the task. This tallied with the statement made by Ruben (2018)that students exposed to inquiry –based learning are given the opportunity to nurture their talents and passion. In inquiry based learning students take control of their learning during the unit of the lesson being taught .Reuben(2018)went further to stress that inquiry based learning promotes the act of questioning concepts and materials. This helps them to gain confidence when encouraged to ask about concepts related to educational materials, social skills, cultural differences and behavioural expectations.

The result of the hypothesis 2 Table 4 showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of the experts in the Federal and State Universities on the inquiry approach to effective teaching in the new normal .Therefore institutional ownership does not matter when it comes to imparting knowledge, skills and right attitude to students. The result of the hypothesis

collaborates with the findings of Onojetah(2019)who found that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of the responses of business educators in the universities and Colleges of Education on the modern instructional technologies for utilization to reform business education curriculum for global competitiveness of the graduates in Edo and Delta states. This indicates that institutional levels did not matter likewise institutional ownership. What matters is the pedagogical approaches adopted by business educators in teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

The study was carried out to identify the pedagogical approaches to teaching of business studies in Universities in the South East in the new normal. Based on the analysis of the data collected and the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that collaborative and inquiry learning are among the pedagogical approaches to teaching of business education courses in the new normal.

Educational implications of the study

The new normal by its implication will provide a paradigm shift from the analogue system of teaching to pedagogical teaching approaches to teaching. Business Educators in the Universities in the South East need to adopt these pedagogical approaches in teaching in the new normal because of the many opportunities it offers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended among others that:

1. Business Educators in South East should strategize and utilize collaborative approaches for effective teaching in the new normal
2. Equally, Business Educators should adopt inquiry based approaches by engaging students in critical thinking.

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