

**BUSINESS TEACHERS' STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF BUSINESS SUBJECTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UMUAHIA EDUCATIONAL ZONE ABIA STATE**

**By**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study determined business subjects teachers' strategies for effective teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. Two purposes and corresponding research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and 78 business subjects teachers were studied without sampling. A structured Questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for data collection. Cronbach alpha method was used to test the internal consistency of the instrument. Data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. Mean was used to answer the research questions and standard deviation was used to explain how the responses of the respondents varied. t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant using the statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the data. The findings showed that classroom management and provision of modern technological equipment and facilities were rated effective for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education zone, Abia State. The findings also revealed that gender and years of experience significantly affected respondents mean ratings in this regard. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others that; government should provide funds for regular training and retraining of business subjects teachers to ensure that they are abreast of trends in the changing society*

**Key words:** effective, teaching, Business subjects, Classroom management, Modern Technology

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is globally recognised as an instrument for social, political, scientific and technological development. This is the reason why no society can afford to toy with the education of its citizens as this could result in a snail speed development (Azikiwe, 2010). According to Kpolovie (2012), education constitutes the core of human development as it is the most crucial institution for empowering youths with knowledge and skills needed for employment and meaningful contribution to national development. Educational institutions prepare students for real life by equipping them with up-to-date information and necessary skills to meet the expectations of the business world.

In most countries like Nigeria, educational curriculum is developed to meet the national objectives in the various fields. The curriculum of secondary school education prepares young people for full adult lives in the dynamic world. This is in line with the assertion of the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) 2013) that secondary school education aims at promoting life-long education, by developing in the learner the ability to think critically and be innovative. This kind of education, according to Enu and Esu (2010) affords the products of the system the ability to respond to social goals, economic realities and future life-challenges. Secondary education can meet this need by enabling students to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies to develop as holistic individuals in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (RoK, 2012).

Business education programmes were introduced in Nigerian formal education system as integral part of technical education in the 1950s when the first technical teacher education programmes were established at Yaba Higher College in 1954 (Okafor, 2012). Business education is therefore a form of vocational education directed towards developing the learner to become productive in teaching, paid employment and self employment (Amoor, 2010). Okafor (2012) stressed that these forms of education are geared towards preparing individuals for the world of work. Business education plays a significant role in economic development by providing knowledge and skills to the learners, thereby, enabling them to adequately impart knowledge into others, and handle sophisticated office technologies and information systems (Amoor, 2010). The goal of business education is primarily to produce competent, skilful and dynamic business

teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), two tiers of secondary education emerged- the junior and senior secondary. At the junior secondary level, typewriting, shorthand, book keeping, office practice and commerce are integrated as business studies. Business subjects offered in the senior secondary school are financial accounting, keyboarding, economics, commerce, insurance, marketing, trademanship, and office practice among others, out of which students choose two or three business subjects in addition to other areas to make up for West African School Certificate Examination (Ofoha, 2011). A report by Ofoha has shown that the teaching of business subjects in secondary schools is not effective because of inadequate attention by the government and other relevant stakeholders in the education industry. Effective teaching in secondary schools should emphasize the use of activity-oriented method and instructional strategies to make students achieve their learning goals (Adediran, 2014). The production of a functional and productive citizenry which is the major focus of secondary school education entails that secondary school education concerns itself with inculcating creative, reflective, competence and decision-making skills in the learners (Mezieobi & Mezieobi, 2008). In line with this, countries of the world have stepped-up efforts to improve students' performance and reduce achievement gaps.

According to Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson and Orphanos (2009), strategies that enhance effective teaching and improved students' performance are organizing forums where teachers meet in learning teams and share their experiences. In addition, other strategies include encouraging collaborative learning, promoting teacher professional learning, providing resources for teachers to improve students' learning and investing in teacher capacity building. Ajoma (2009) stated that for teaching and learning to be effective, relevant strategies must be adopted by the teacher who is the distributor of knowledge. Teachers need to use different instructional strategies to ensure that students acquire employability skills. The instructional strategies such as classroom management and supply of modern technological equipment and facilities could help to improve the teaching of business subjects in secondary schools and increase students' performance.

Effective classroom management sets the stage for students' learning. Without it, classrooms are disorganized and chaotic, and very little academic learning can happen (Jones & Jones, 2011). Effective classroom management strategies support and facilitate effective teaching and learning which is generally based on the principle of establishing a positive classroom environment encompassing effective teacher-student relationships. According to Asiabaka (2008),

the primary purpose of teaching/learning process is to bring about in the learner desirable change in behaviour through critical thinking. This process nevertheless cannot take place in a vacuum but rather in an environment structured with modern technological equipment and facilities to facilitate learning. Nwanna (2012) lamented the dearth of technological equipment and facilities in some secondary schools for effective teaching of vocational subjects. Adeyemi and Olaleye (2010) disclosed that technological equipments especially ICT resources are lacking in secondary schools in Nigeria. In support, Apagu and Wakili (2015) regretted that ICT facilities which can enhance effective teaching and learning are not adequately available. Given this scenario, most teachers of business subjects in different parts of the country struggle to impart knowledge and skills to their students with obsolete equipment in an era of information and communication technology (ICT) and as a result, their performance cannot be judged effective. The situation regarding classroom management and supply of modern technological equipment and facilities for effective teaching of business subjects in Abia State is not clear. However, the teachers are in a position to rate the strategies to reveal the actual situation which will guide objective remedial actions by government and other relevant bodies.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Business education in this era of new technology requires competent business subject teachers who are well equipped with current skills, knowledge and attitudes needed in the business world. Business subject teachers are expected to always make proper and adequate use of approved teaching strategies, instructional facilities and materials for effective teaching of the subject. Despite the national aspiration for vocational education and various efforts by key educational stakeholders to improve students' performance especially at the secondary school levels in Nigeria for more than three decades, reports have revealed that secondary school leavers do not sufficiently possess the basic skills for success in employment and further education (Ojimba, 2012; Ofoha, 2011). The researcher has personally observed that relevant equipment and resources are not adequately provided for effective teaching of business subjects in some secondary schools in Umuahia education zone, Abia State. Several strategies such as classroom management and supply of modern technological resources are being designed and implemented in the education industry to improve teaching and students' performance. This researcher is worried that despite all these, secondary school students in Umuahia Education zone, Abia State continue to perform poorly in business subjects. The question then is whether these strategies are being effectively implemented

in Umuahia Education zone? The answer to this question requires an empirical study involving teachers of business subjects hence the need for this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine business subjects teachers' rating of strategies for effective teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the rating of business subjects teachers on:

1. classroom management as a strategy for effective teaching of business subjects
2. provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as a strategy for effective teaching of business subjects

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the business subjects teachers' ratings of classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State?
2. What are the business subjects teachers' ratings of provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Male and female business subjects teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State.
2. Experienced and less experienced business subjects teachers' do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

## **Classroom Management by Business Subject Teachers**

Classroom management is a cardinal feature of the total education process. It contains all the steps through which interaction between the teacher and the student take place. Classroom management is the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite of disruptive behaviour by students. The term also refers to the prevention of disruptive behavior of students (Berliner in Al-Zu'bi, 2013). Classroom management refers to all those essential activities which are highly necessary not only to create but also to maintain a supportive and orderly atmosphere. It includes planning and preparation of teaching and learning materials, organization of the materials, decoration of the classroom, creation of expectation and establishment and enforcement of rules and routines in the classroom (Tan, Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown, 2003).

Teachers cannot meet the demands of these mandated plans without effective classroom management strategies employed in their classrooms. According to Shilling (2011), student achievement has suffered in schools where plaguing discipline and behavioural issues have not been adequately addressed. When students with behaviour issues are not handled properly, research has shown they can negatively influence the learning environment by persuading others to join them, which cause teacher effectiveness to be questioned, and causing an increased stress for the teacher (Braden & Smith, 2006; Etheridge, 2010). Furthermore, it has been revealed that identifying effective and efficient strategies for improving behaviour must be included in educational reform before a profound impact on schools is noticed (Sailor, Stowe, Turnbull III & Kleinhammer-Trammill, 2007).

## **Provision of Modern Technological Equipment and Facilities**

Business laboratories with relevant equipment are needed to enable the students acquire practical skills and competencies. Equipment of any subject constitutes one of the principal determinants of the competence of the graduates. Provision of modern technological equipment and other teaching and learning materials is of paramount importance in teaching/learning of business subjects. It is only when these needed equipment are provided that the products will become proficient in the world of work, through the acquired skills, without being re-trained by the employers of labour. When the necessary equipment for teaching and learning of business subjects are not provided, teaching and learning becomes theoretical and ineffective. According to Esene and Ohiwerei (2005), equipment include typewriters, computers, dictating machines, stencil duplicators, telephone, filing cabinets, among others. Provision of equipment for the teaching and

learning of business subjects is a necessity. The teaching of business subjects today demands the use of modern technological equipment and facilities. This becomes opposite in view of the fact that since the emergence of technology, innovative strategies of teaching and learning have become inevitable (Ibeneme & Ikegwuani, 2010). Relating the essence of modern equipment and facilities in harnessing the nitty-gritty of vocational education programme, Ezenwafor (2012) specified that the key equipment in today's works is ICT facilities. According to Azih and Nwosu (2012), some of these modern equipment and facilities relevant for effective teaching of business education programme include computers which involve file server computers, CD Rom, intranet, internet, extranet, data base management software, overhead projectors, slide projectors, power-point software, multimedia projectors, data projectors, local area network, wide area network, digital library, e-journals, and audio tapes. It appears some of these facilities are not sufficiently provided for teaching and learning process in the secondary schools. This might account for why teachers are not making use of them in their teaching.

## **METHOD**

The survey research design was adopted in this study. The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. The population of the study comprised 78 business subject teachers of public secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Business Subjects Teachers' Rating of Implementation of Strategies for Effective Teaching of Business Subjects" (BSTRISSETBS). The instrument was constructed on a five point scale of Highly Effective (HE), Effective (E), Fairly Effective (FE), Ineffective (I) and Highly Ineffective (HI). The response options are weighted 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The questionnaire was face validated by experts in the field of business education and measurement and evaluation. Cronbach alpha method was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument. The computation showed correlation coefficients of 0.81 and 0.93 for clusters B1 to B2 with an overall coefficient of 0.85. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and ascertained the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' ratings while t-test was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## **RESULT**

### **Analysis of Research Questions**

### Research Question 1

What are business subjects teachers' ratings of classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State?

**Table 1**

**Mean ratings of business subjects teachers on classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects** **N= 78**

<b>S/N Classroom Management</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1. Engages students in active discussion about issues related to real world applications.	3.90	.54	Effective
2. Help teachers to adjust instruction in response to individual student needs.	4.10	.54	Effective
3. Helps teachers closely monitor off task behavior during class.	4.10	.54	Effective
4. Enforces classroom rules to control student behavior.	4.60	.49	Highly Effective
5. Encourages interaction between teachers and students.	4.30	.78	Effective
6. Helps direct the students' transition from one learning activity to another.	4.11	.70	Effective
7. Firmly redirect students back to the topic when they get off task.	4.10	.63	Effective
8. Helps establish a teaching daily routine in the classroom.	4.10	.30	Effective
9. Help teachers to explore questions in the classroom.	4.20	.60	Effective
10. Using whole class instruction to ensure a structured classroom.	4.30	.64	Effective
<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>4.18</b>		<b>Effective</b>

As displayed in Table 1, the cluster mean of 4.18 shows that business subject teachers in Umuahia Education zone rated classroom management strategy as effective in teaching of business subjects in secondary schools. The item by item mean shows that items 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 with the mean scores (3.9, 4.10, 4.10, 4.30, 4.11, 4.10, 4.10, 4.20 and 4.30 respectively) are rated by business subjects teachers as effective while item 4 with the mean score 4.60 was rated by business subjects teachers as highly effective in teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. The standard deviation showed that there is homogeneity amongst responses indicating a greater consensus of opinion.

### Research Question 2

What are business teachers' ratings of provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State?



**Table 2****Mean ratings of business subject teachers on provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects N= 78**

<b>S/N Provision of Modern Tech</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
11. Provision of shorthand laboratory equipment such as the tape recorder and cassette players.	3.86	.60	Effective
12. Provision of adequate ICT equipment such as internet, intranet, data base management by school authorities can enhance the teaching of business subjects.	4.29	.46	Effective
13. Installation of wireless application protocols (WAP), multimedia computers and multimedia projectors.	4.20	.40	Effective
14. Provision of adequate electricity supply by school authorities can enhance the teaching of ICT in business subject.	4.00	.45	Effective
15. The usage of modern equipment could contributes to radical changes in school management	4.00	.45	Effective
16. Sponsoring of business teachers to attend ICT workshops/seminars can enhance the teaching of business subjects	4.19	.41	Effective
17. Purchasing of modern computers by school authorities can enhance the teaching of ICT in business subject.	4.20	.75	Effective
18. Enhances the teaching of ICT in business subject.	4.11	.70	Effective
19. Good management policies on ICT by school authorities can enhance the teaching of ICT in business subject.	4.11	.83	Effective
20. Provide opportunities for staffs and students to communicate with one another through e-mail, chat room and easier access to current information.	3.81	.42	Effective
21. Provision of modern equipment enhances quality of work of both teacher/students.	3.91	.31	Effective
22. Provision of digital libraries, e-books, microwaves, fiber optic cables and digital satellite system	3.90	.30	Effective
23. Provision of printers, telephone and teleconferencing devices.	4.09	.54	Effective
24. Provision of photocopiers, scanning machines and the laminating machines.	3.90	.54	Effective
25. Introduction of word processing, e-learning, blended learning and mobile learning.	3.80	.60	Effective
<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>4.02</b>		<b>Effective</b>

As indicated by the cluster mean of 4.02 in Table 2, business subject teachers in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State rated provision of modern technological equipment and facilities strategy as effective for the teaching of business subjects in secondary schools. The item by item mean shows that all the items with mean ranging from 3.80 to 4.29 are rated as effective. There is homogeneity in items amongst business subject teachers' responses.

## Hypothesis 1

Male and female business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State.

**Table 3**

**Summary of z-test comparison of the mean ratings of and female business subject teachers on classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State**

	Male (n=25)		Female (n=53)		df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD				
Classroom Management	4.31	.07	4.17	.19	283	2.94	1.96	S

The analysis in Table 3 show that there was significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business teachers on classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. This is shown by the t-cal value of 2.94 which is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was rejected.

## Hypothesis 2

Experienced and less experienced business subjects teachers' do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State.

**Table 4**

**Summary of t-test comparison of the mean ratings of business subject teachers on provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects based on experience in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State**

	Less Experienced (0-5yrs) (n=17)		Experienced (6yrs and above) (n=61)		df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD				
Provision of modern technology	3.98	.25	4.05	.19	283	2.78	1.96	S

Table 4 shows that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced business teachers on the provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for the teaching business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. This is shown by the t-cal value of 2.78 which is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore rejected.

## **DISCUSSION**

Results of the study revealed that business subjects teachers rated classroom management strategy as effective for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State. Classroom management engages students in active discussion about issues related to real world applications and helps business teachers adjust instruction in response to individual student needs. Teachers strictly enforce classroom rules to control student behaviour. The findings are similar with the findings of Al-Zu'bi (2013) who stated that effective classroom management consists of teacher behaviours that produce high levels of student involvement in classroom activities, minimal amounts of student's behaviour that interfere with the teachers or other students' work, and efficient use of instructional time. Teachers as effective classroom managers planned rules and procedures carefully, systemically taught these to students, organized instruction to maximize student task engagement and success, communicated directions and expectations to students. The t-test analysis revealed that there was significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business subjects teachers on classroom management as an effective strategy for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State.

Results of the study indicated that business teachers rated provision of modern technological equipment and facilities as an effective strategy for teaching business subjects in secondary schools. This validates the position of Adeyemi and Olaleye (2010) who recommended that modern equipment and facilities should be adequately provided in schools for effective teaching and learning. Also Apagu and Wakili (2015) specified that the key equipment in today's technological scene is the computer hence the global call for computer literacy. Vocational and technical education as a discipline requires adequate instructional facilities such as the information and communication technology (ICT) so as to make teaching and learning more effective. It appears some of these facilities are not sufficiently provided for teaching and learning process in the secondary schools. This might account for why teachers are not making use of them in their

teaching. Testing of the second hypothesis revealed that there was a significant difference among the responses of experienced and less experienced business subjects teachers on provision of modern and technological equipment and facilities. Therefore, it followed that the null hypothesis was not accepted.

### **Conclusion**

The results of the study revealed that all the two broad strategies were rated as effective. It is, therefore, concluded that an aggressive adoption of these strategies will lead to a remarkable improvement in the teaching and learning of business subjects at the secondary school level.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should provide funds for regular training and retraining of business subjects teachers to ensure that they are abreast of trends in the changing society.
2. Government, school authorities and professional body of business educators in Nigeria should collaborate with the private industries to ensure that modern technological equipment and facilities are adequately supplied to schools to match theory with practical in consonance with global best practices in the education industry.

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