



## **Strategies Considered Effective By Business Teachers In South- South, Nigeria For Teaching New Business Subjects In Secondary Schools**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the perception of business subject teachers in south-south, Nigeria on the strategies for teaching new business subject in secondary schools. A survey research design was adopted for the study. Three research question and two null hypotheses guided the study. A sample size of 1,329 public secondary school business subject teachers was drawn from the study population of 13,290. A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher on 5- point rating scale was used to elicit responses. The instrument was face validated and the mean reliability of the instrument was 0.86. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions while Z-test inferential statistics was used to test the null hypotheses. The study revealed that business subject teachers in south-south, Nigeria secondary schools identified direct instructional strategies as being ineffective, independent and experimental instructional strategies as very effective for teaching business subject at the secondary school level. It was recommended among others, that compulsory application of independent and experimental instructional strategies should adopted teaching business subjects in all secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria.

**Key words:** Effective strategies, Business Teachers, Teaching, New Business Subject Curriculum.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the world and across the globe, one of the major issues and concern of nations is to provide education for human empowerment and development in order to enhance individual sustainability and national development. Section 1 of the Nigerian national policy on education (FRN, 2004) state the need for functional education to be relevant, practical based required towards acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of his society. This implies that the quality of instruction at all level has to be practical oriented towards inculcating the values of acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance and poverty reduction.

In Nigeria, our education is made up of informal and formal system. Informal education is a term used to describe any form of learning that is outside the standard school setting while formal education involves learning normally delivered by trained teachers in systematic way within a school, academy, college, institute or university (Kim & Dopico, 2014). Formal system of education is designed based on standard curriculum for effective teaching and learning process.

Danmole (2011) defined curriculum as a guided learning experience and outcome developed through reconstruction of knowledge and experience under the support of a school for learners. Curriculum is also perceived as all the learning experience which are planned and guided by the school weather carried out in group or individually either in school or outside the school (Kelly 2009, Hamilton 2014, Obioma 2009, and Aina 2007) .In the school curriculum, subject is designed for the attainment of educational goals. One of such subject is the business subject which is offered in Nigerian secondary schools at all levels. For effective educational goal attainment, business subjects need to be effectively taught with effective strategies in order to attain the required goals. Effective teaching strategies must not be taken for granted if a nation would to be boast of being economically, technologically and educationally developed (Ferdinand, 2007). Teaching strategies according to Umezulike (2007) is the process of planning and carrying out teaching task in order to achieve educational goals. In the light of this, Adebayo (2003) stressed that, for teaching of business studies to be effective and meaningful, there is need for personnel (teachers) to acquire relevant degrees and experiences in their profession. According to Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)(2008), business subject programme requires personnel with holders of Nigeria Certificate in Education in Business Education, Holders of (HND) in Business Administration, but they should be encouraged to go for one year training in business education .The emphasis on proper planning using qualified personnel is to ensure mastery and effective use of appropriate teaching strategies in imparting knowledge, skills, and competencies in the world of work for socio economic and technical development.

The inability of colonial system of education inherited from our colonial masters to solve Nigeria socio-economic problems including vocational skills acquisition among our secondary school leavers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century generated a lot of public outcry among stakeholders. This led to the birth of National Policy on education which was instrumental to the introduction of business studies in 1981 in public secondary schools in Nigeria. Prior to 1977, no subject was called business studies in Nigeria education system. It came into existence as a result of the introduction of junior secondary school (JSS) in the 6-3-3-4 system of education in 1981, with five specific subject area which included: Office practice, Book-keeping/Accounting, typewriting, shorthand and commerce. Due to the need to transform our secondary school system to be in tune with global and national demands, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) through Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) made typewriting an elective subject while insurance and store management were added to business subjects in 2008 (Okolocha & Onyeneke, 2013).

Business subjects form a means of laying foundation for national, technological, economical advancement and for higher education (NPE, 1981 revised in 2004) and (FRN, 2009). According to Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013), Business subjects equip its recipients with personal skills, consumer skills and Knowledge for clerical and managerial abilities needed to adapt to changing economic and business realities and these skills made them to be wealth and job creators rather than wealth and job seekers. Ethisiemen (2005) and Aliyu (2006) See business subjects as comprehensive, practical and skill subjects, while Ogben and Amachi (2008) maintained that business subjects equip students with knowledge and skills that help them to find a job after schooling or create their own employment.

Business subjects at the junior secondary school level comprised subject taught at pre-vocational level and as an integrated subject. These include; book-keeping, shorthand, office practice, typewriting and commerce. At the Senior Secondary School level as contained in the new senior secondary school business subject curriculum launched in September 2011, business subjects include the following: financial accounting, store management, insurance, commerce and office practice. Whether at the Junior Secondary school level (JSS1-3) or Senior Secondary School level (SSS1-3), the principal objective of these subject remain the provision of student with the relevant skills, knowledge and attitude necessary for paid or self-employment as well as for higher education in business area. Today, any youth without skills is without a future, and any business subject programme which does not pay adequate attention to how students will acquire and practice technical and vocational skills is not useful. As the acquisition of skills for paid or self-employment is at the centre of business subject and youth empowerment, practical

skill is not acquired by chance. It is planned, taught learnt and practiced in a strategic manner especially in secondary school. Some schools of thoughts believe that the growing number of unemployed school leavers in Nigeria is not as a result of scarcity of jobs, but lack of skills. This therefore requires youths to acquire the right knowledge, skills, competencies and attitude needed by the labour market and environment.

Kang'ahi, Indoshi, Okwach and Osodo (2012) observed that the practical approach to teaching business subjects in secondary schools is a major missing link. To buttress this fact, they contended that the solution does not lie only with the availability of qualified teachers and modern teaching facilities, but also the effectiveness of the strategies applied in teaching. Ezekwesili (2007) affirmed that the reforms in Nigerian Education were aimed at promoting functional education for skill acquisition, job creation and poverty eradication. Teaching strategy is a method, step, means, approach, or procedure of achieving the stated goals of education (Marcella & Kysika, 2008). Teaching strategies play very important role in teaching and learning process. Effective strategies are very crucial in teaching and learning business subject at secondary school level. In regards to teaching strategy, Mannison (2009), Proposal six groups of instructional strategies for effective teaching of job skills as follows:

1. Direct Instructional Strategies: these strategies are highly teachers-centered and very effective for providing instructional information to student. Examples are, lecture method, listen and visualize method, programmed instruction method, individualized instruction method.
2. Indirect Instructional Strategies: these are student centered strategies which seek a high level of students' involvement in observing, investigating, drawing inferences from data and forming hypotheses. Examples are: inquiry method, assessment or Dalton method, questioning technique, read and practice method.
3. Interactive Instructional Strategies: these strategies rely heavily on discussion and sharing among participants. Student can learn from peers and teachers, at the same time, develop social skills and rational thinking. Examples are discussion, invitation of guest speaker/ resource persons, debates, role play, conferencing.
4. Experimental instructional strategies: These strategies are described as learner-centered and activity oriented. It involves personal and practical experience of the learner, Examples are, field Trip, office visit workshops, exposure.
5. Independent Instructional strategies: these are range of instructional methods which are purposefully provided to foster the development of individual student initiative, self – reliance and self-improvement. Example are critical thinking methods, E-learning, Project method, computer assisted instruction.
6. Material/ Visual Aid Strategies: this involves the use of instructional materials and visual aids in teaching and learning process. It enables the learners to learn through sight and sound. Example are television, video tapes, use of textbooks, instructional films.

In business subjects, the major thrust of effective teaching strategies according to Tema (2007) are: to deliver quality teaching and learning of business subject in schools, to ensure employability of business subject graduates, to enhance status and attractiveness of business studies programme. While the guiding principles that are considered major drivers of these strategies are effectiveness, quality, accessibility, entrepreneurship, employability and sustainability. On this premise, a good number of researchers and scholars in this area of study including Arend (2007), Curtine (2005), Ahmad & Aziz (2009), Nwodo (2006) and Onifade (2007), Marrian and Cafarella (2007), agreed that effective teaching strategies are not receiving adequate attention from the teachers, school and educational authorities as well as government. Also, teaching and learning of skills in business subject will continue to suffer a set back and unemployment among school leavers with its social ills and will continue to soar if urgent steps are not taken to ensure effective teaching of skills at secondary school level.

In recent times, the academic performance of post-primary school students, especially in the internal and external senior secondary school certificate examination (SSCE) in business subjects has been on the decline (Nwogu, 2011). Observation by parents, teachers and government shows that there seems to be

the absence of effective strategies which among others include direct, independent and experimental instructional strategies for teaching business subjects at the secondary school levels not only in South-South, Nigeria, but the whole nation. This has given rise to increase in unemployment and high rate of crime among young school leavers.

It is generally believed that if business subjects' students are properly taught the requisite skills before leaving schools, they should certainly acquire the desired job skills necessary for paid or self employment. Moreover, unemployment and poverty will be eradicated in our society. The problem of this study therefore is on how to identify those instructional strategies which could best be used to impart the requisite skills on business subjects' students among direct, independent and experimental instructional strategies.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study sought to determine how effective business subject teachers consider direct instruction, independent instruction and experimental instructional strategies for teaching business subjects in secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

1. How effective do business subject teachers in South-South, Nigeria consider direct instructional strategies for teaching business subject secondary schools?
2. How effective do business subject teachers in South-South, Nigeria consider experimental instructional strategies for teaching business subject secondary schools?
3. How effective do business subject teachers in South-South, Nigeria consider independent instructional strategies for teaching business subject secondary schools?

### **Hypotheses**

1. Male business subject teachers in South- South, Nigeria secondary schools do not differ significantly from female business subject teachers in their mean ratings regarding the effectiveness of direct instructional strategy for teaching new secondary business subjects.
2. More experienced business subject teachers (5yrs and above) do not differ significantly from the less experienced business teachers (below 5yrs) in their mean ratings regarding the effectiveness of independent instructional strategy for teaching new business subject.

## **METHOD**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was made up of 13,290 public secondary school business subject teachers in south-south, Nigeria. The figure was obtained from the post primary school management board of the six states for 2013/2014 academic year. A sample of 1,329 business subject teachers were drawn from the population of the study using proportionate random sampling techniques. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire containing 50 item-statements measured on a five-point Likert type of scale. The consistency and reliability of the instrument was ascertained using the split half method to determine the degree of reliability which yielded a correlation co-efficient of 0.86. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviations for research questions and Z-test was used to test the hypotheses.

## **RESULTS**

### **Research question 1**

*How effective do business subject teachers in South-South, Nigeria consider direct instructional strategies for teaching business subject secondary schools?*

**Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents, regarding the effectiveness of direct instructional strategies for teaching business subjects**

(N=1,329)

S/N	Items Of Direct Instructional Strategies	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Lecture method	1.80	1.89	Ineffective
2	Individualized instruction method	2.32	0.02	Ineffective
3	Information, advice and guidance	2.53	2.13	Fairly effective
4	Programmed instruction method	1.77	0.86	Ineffective
5	Brainstorming method	1.54	0.72	Ineffective
6	Support (scaffolding) method	1.54	0.72	Ineffective
7	Seminar method	1.54	0.72	Ineffective
8	Guided and shared reading method	1.42	0.59	Very ineffective
9	Listen and visualized method	2.29	1.00	Ineffective
10	Model-lead-test instructional method	1.62	0.8	Ineffective
11	Structure overview method	1.58	0.73	Ineffective
12	Explicit teaching method	1.54	0.72	Ineffective
13	Self-questioning method	1.36	1.64	Very ineffective
14	Deductive instructional method	1.44	0.55	Very ineffective
15	Peer tutoring method	1.42	1.68	Very ineffective
16	Team teaching method	1.50	1.73	Ineffective
	Aggregate $\bar{x}$ and SD	1.70	1.15	

Data in Table1 indicate that eleven items (1,2,4,5,6,7,9,10,11,12,and 16) of direct instructional strategies were rated ineffective , four items (8,13,14,and 15) were rated very ineffective, and item 3 , rated fairly effective with their grand mean score standing at  $\bar{x}$ =1.70, and standard deviation SD=1.15 respectively.

## Research questions 2

*How effective do business subject teachers in South-South, Nigeria consider experimental instructional strategies for teaching business subject secondary schools?*

**Table 2; Mean ratings of respondents regarding the effectiveness of experimental instructional strategies for teaching business subjects.**

(N=1,329)

S/N	Items of experimental instructional strategies	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Demonstration method	4.96	2.04	Very effective
2	Fieldtrips/excursion method	4.82	3.07	Very effective
3	Work shop method	4.94	3.11	Very effective
4	Laboratory exposure method	4.77	3.07	Very effective
5	Field interview method	4.92	3.13	Very effective
6	Office visits method	4.52	2.94	Very effective
7	Survey method	3.00	2.44	Fairly effective
8	Inter disciplinary method	2.00	1.99	ineffective
9	Industrial cooperation method	4.85	3.07	Very effective
10	School affiliation method	4.87	3.11	Very effective
11	Simulation method	0.00	0.00	Very effective
12	Games and play method	4.57	3.01	Very effective
13	Drill –and-practice method	4.79	2.08	Very effective
14	Narrative method	1.60	1.77	ineffective
15	Visits to employment agency/firms	4.56	2.97	Very effective
16	Field observation	4.85	3.07	Very effective
17	Filling out forms method	4.88	3.12	Very effective
	Aggregate $\bar{x}$ and SD	4.75	2.58	

Data in Table 2 showed that thirteen items(1,2,3,4,5,6,9,10,12,13,15,16,and 17) of experimental instructional strategies were rated very effective, two items (8and 14), were rated ineffective , and items 7 and 11 were rated fairly effective and very ineffective for teaching business subjects at secondary school level. Their grand mean score stands at 4.75 while their cumulative standard deviation (SD) = 2.58 respectively.

**Research question 3**

*How effective do business subject teachers in South-South, Nigeria consider independent instructional strategies for teaching business subject secondary schools?*

**Table3: Mean ratings of respondents regarding the effectiveness of independent instructional strategies for teaching business subjects**  
(N=1,329)

S/N	Items of independent instructional strategies	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Critical thinking method	4.86	3.09	Very effective
2	E –learning method	4.78	3.04	Very effective
3	Problem solving method	4.80	3.05	Very effective
4	Project method	4.78	3.04	Very effective
5	Computer assisted instructed(CAI)	4.85	3.08	Very effective
6	Discovery method	4.94	3.11	Very effective
7	Assigned questions method	4.75	3.05	Very effective
8	Cross word puzzles method	3.00	1.44	Fairly effective
9	Library research method	2.00	1.96	Ineffective
10	Exploratory method	4.92	3.10	Very effective
11	Correspondence course/distance leaving	1.00	1.40	Very ineffective
12	Case study method	4.85	3.09	Very effective
13	Take home test/homework method	3.00	1.41	Fairly effective
14	Decision –making process method	4.85	2.94	Very effective
15	Memorization method	0.00	0.00	Very ineffective
16	Text book method	1.26	0.48	Very ineffective
17	Manual and student prepared note book	2.06	1.90	Very effective
	Aggregate $\bar{x}$ and SD	4.76	2.30	

Data in Table 3 indicate that ten item (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12 and 14), of independent instructional strategies were rated very effective for teaching business subjects at secondary school levels. Also three items (11, 15 and 16) where rated very ineffective by the respondents for teaching business subjects. Items 8 and 13 where considered fairly effective, while item 9 was considered ineffective for teaching business subjects. Their grand mean score stands at 4.76, and their cumulative standard deviation (SD) = 2.30 respectively.

**Table 4: z-test analysis of mean scores of male and female business subject teachers in south-south, Nigeria on the effectiveness of direct instructional strategies**

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	S <sup>2</sup>	DF	$\alpha$	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Male	531	0.60	0.77	1,327	0.05	0.17	1.96	Accepted
Female	798	1.14	1.06					

❖ N=number,  $\bar{x}$ =mean, S<sup>2</sup>=standard deviation, DF= degree of freedom, Z-cal= Z calculated, Z- crit= Z critical

Results in table 4 indicate that male and female business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean rating regarding the effectiveness of direct instructional strategy for teaching new secondary school business subjects ( $Z\text{-crit} = 1.96, Z\text{-cal} = 0.17, DF = 1,327, P=0.05$ ).

**Table 5: Z-test analysis of mean ratings of business subject teachers on the effectiveness of independent instructional strategies for teaching business subjects as a result of years of experience**

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	$S^2$	DF	$\alpha$	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
More experienced	1,190	2.43	0.18	1,327	0.05	4.72	1.96	Rejected
less experienced	139	2.33	0.61					

The data in table 5 revealed that more experienced business subject teachers differ significantly with their less experienced counterparts in their mean ratings on the effectiveness of independent instructional strategies for teaching business subjects at the secondary school level. ( $Z\text{-crit}=1.96, Z\text{-cal}= 4.72, DF=1327, P=0.05$ )

## DISCUSSION

This study determines strategies considered effective by business teachers in south-south, Nigeria for teaching new business subjects in secondary schools. Three instructional strategies used in rating teachers' effective consideration were direct instructional strategies, experimental instructional strategies and independent instructional strategies. Results of the study on table 1 shows that business subject teachers used the various teaching methods grouped under direct instructional strategies, but were ineffective in delivering the course content of the new business subjects' curriculum. The result was not encouraging because teachers are seen as the heart and soul of the education process. Teachers roles are to teach, guide and direct students active learning through effective teaching strategies which is the basis for the realization of educational objectives. Poor instructional strategies hampers effective teaching and learning process and consequently affects students' academic performance. Nwodo (2006) and Njoku (1992) discovered in their studies that mere giving instructional information to student is not enough to impart vocational skills particularly in business education (business subject inclusive). It was found that one of the most commonly used methods in teaching skill subject is lecture. This could be responsible for the high rate of unskilled and unemployed youth in our society. Based on this, Nwodo (2006) and Njoku (1992) added that lecture method which is a key component of direct instructional strategies is rarely effective for teaching skill subjects such as accounting , keyboard etc. Again, the tested hypothesis on table 4 indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business subject teachers on the effectiveness of direct instructional strategies for teaching business subjects at the secondary school level. This led to the null hypothesis being accepted. Mannison (2009) upheld the results and the ineffectiveness of direct instructional strategies for teaching business subject by stating that direct instructional strategies are teachers-centre, and can only be effective in providing instructional information to students and not in teaching skills.

Results of the study in Table 2 shows that business subjects teachers considered experimental instructional strategies very effective in teaching business subjects at the secondary school level. Some of the methods of experimental instructional strategies include demonstration, fieldtrips/excursion, workshop practice, field interview, industrial cooperative, filling out forms etc. These methods involve the teaching of theoretical and practical aspects of business subjects within and outside the school. This could be the reason why experimental strategies were rated effective. Nwalado (2008) supported the effectiveness of experimental strategies by stating that business teachers can only teach skill subjects effectively with demonstration method. This is in line with Mannison (2009) who described experimental instructional strategies as learner-centered and activity oriented.

Data contained in Table 3 shows that business teachers considered independent instructional strategies very effective for teaching business subjects. The findings also indicated that independent methods which are intended to lead the students into independent learning, discovery, critical thinking, problem solving, project excursion and related assignments, case studies as well as effective decision making are poorly used in teaching business subjects in schools. As a result, many unskilled and unemployed school leavers abound in our society. Imarhiagbe (2003), while confirming the effectiveness of project method, observed that it provides opportunity for students to make essential application of the knowledge and skills they have learnt in practical situation. Also, Okwuanaso and Nwazor (2000) pointed out that problem solving method when effectively used, help to develop students independent thinking and effective decision making. Amadi (2011) finally noted that problem solving method involves the students into discovery instead of absorbing knowledge. Also, the result of the null hypothesis in Table5 showed that more experience business subject teachers differ significantly from their less experience counterparts in their mean ratings regarding the effectiveness of independent instructional strategies for teaching business subjects at the secondary school level. This means that experience influenced their responses. A reviewed literature, Barbra (2009), pointed out that the use of independent instructional strategies will certainly assist the students not only to become more autonomous learner, but also self-sufficient and responsible citizens by enhancing individual potential.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper has so far discussed the strategies considered effective by business teachers in south-south, Nigeria for teaching new business subjects in secondary schools. The paper identified direct instructional strategies as ineffective, while experimental and independent instructional strategies were also identified as very effective for teaching business subjects at the secondary school level. Business subject teachers have attained substantial progress in the area of awareness and identification of effective strategies for teaching business subjects but more need to be done in the area of effective application. This is because business subject teachers suffer from lack of focus and proper direction on how to use effective instructional strategies for teaching business subjects at the secondary school level. Lack of vocational skills among our school leavers was traced back to the absence of effective strategies in teaching skill subjects in secondary school and was responsible for the high level of unemployment in south-south, Nigeria and the whole country. However business subject teachers should ensure full application of appropriate teaching strategies in other to remove our youth from the ladder of unemployment and poverty that is affecting ourselves, economy and country at large.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Independent and experimental instructional strategies which were adjudged to be very effective are recommended for compulsory application in teaching business subjects in all secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria.
2. Government should assign independent supervisors to monitor and evaluate business subject teachers in secondary schools in respect of effective teaching of business subjects because of its strategic importance to national development.
3. Government should use secondary schools as skill acquisition centre which is more accessible to the students instead of building, equipping and managing separate centers for skill acquisition.
4. Government should give financial rewards and awards to teachers who use effective teaching strategies for teaching business subjects in secondary schools. In order to motivate others to implement its usage.
5. Relevant authorities of government should make teaching facilities available as well as financial provisions for field-trips, office visits and other out of classroom teaching/learning activities

6. School authorities should provide enough time in the school time tables for teaching the practical aspects of business subjects for mastery learning and sustainable acquisition.

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