# Instructional Innovation and Business Education Students' Skill Acquisition: A Study of Tertiary Institutions in Port Harcourt

**Dr. E.A. Amadi & Azuazu. O. S.**

**Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education,
Rivers State University, PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

**ABSTRACT**
The study examined the relationship between instructional innovations and secretarial students' skill acquisition. The purpose the study was to examine how the use of projector affects the presentation skill of secretarial students, how practical learning will affect the writing skills of students from secretarial studies, and how the use of c-learning (computer based instruction) affect the technological skill of secretarial students. The population of the study consisted of one hundred and sixty (160) final year secretarial students from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic in Port Harcourt, while the yaro yamen formula was used to obtain the sample size of 114 respondents. The arithmetic mean was adopted in answering the research questions. A total of 114 questionnaires were administered by the researchers while 90 copies were retrieved representing 79% of the total questionnaire distributed, the data collected were analyzed using spear man ranking statistical tool for the test of hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The following findings were made: There is a significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of secretarial students; there is a significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of secretarial students; there is a significant relationship between c-learning (computer based instruction,) and communication skill of secretarial students. The study concluded that variables of instructional innovation such as use of projector, practical learning and c-learning has a great effect on measures of secretarial students skill acquisition. It was therefore, recommended among others that, Tertiary institutions should create conducive and favourable environment that encourage the use of new and innovative teaching Medias in teaching. for proper acquisition of skill; Secretarial students should endeavour to acquire the required skill need to the proficient in their field.
**Keywords:** Instructional Innovations, secretarial students, skill acquisition

**INTRODUCTION**
The world and indeed every facet of human life are going through very speedy transformations as a result of information and communication technology. Professionals in different fields of human endeavor are coming up with new ideas and novel techniques of executing organizational activities. The educational system has witnessed a lot of drastic changes in terms of instructional strategies and the instructional media Even in developing nations such as Nigeria, the use of the internet, computer systems, electronic board, projector, and other computer- aided media is gaining primacy in the educational circle. Yu-Je, (2008) sees the injection of new and diversified teaching approaches and new media in delivering instructional content as what is often called instructional innovation.
Stakeholders in business education (secretarial inclusive) like other academic disciplines in Nigerian tertiary institutions clamor for instructional innovations in order to increase learners' participation and understanding, and develop a flexible, smart, and enabling learning environment capable of exposing the students to current developments, challenges and available solutions in their discipline. Instructional

innovations in business education also entails replacement or blending of face-to-face instruction to online synchronous and asynchronous learning platforms which gives both the lecturer and the business education student the leverage of holding active participatory classes without being physically gathered in the four walls of the classroom.

Online programmes make the art of teaching and learning very flexible and convenient for both the teacher and the learner. In universities where business education makes use of e-campus facilities, the students get all necessary information concerning online lecture schedule, assignment, etc. E-learning offers the ability to share material in all kinds of formats such as videos, slideshows, word documents and PDFs (Portable Document Format). Conducting webinars (live online classes) and communicating with professors via chat and message forums are also an option in e-learning. The beautiful thing about this innovation is that it allows the busiest business man, politician or worker to earn and learn at their own pace thereby encouraging positive attitude towards learning. F-learning is not only beneficial to students: lecturers who use online platforms in delivering course contents also enjoy the leisure of teaching from the comfort of their offices or simply uploading educational video clips and other materials online for their students to access. The crave for innovation is all tailored towards equipping students (secretarial inclusive) with the necessary set of skill needed by employees and the labour market.

The establishment of the National Policy on Education (1989) which emphasizes the functionalism and acquisition of appropriate skills, competencies as the bedrock for the survival of the individual in the Nigeria society. Thus: subsequently marked the landmark for the inclusion of Business Education in the Nigeria System of Education. Along the line Secretarial Education emerged as an off-short of Business Education. Business education is designed to train and develop students with basic skills necessary for working in the modern day office. The importance of developing these business skills cannot be over emphasized. It is expected that a graduate of business education will be able to carry out basic computer commands, develop an acceptable typing speed of about 40-60 wpm, and use the net. As a professional business educator, business education graduates are expected to have acquired graphic designing skills such that they can design complimentary cards, official letter head paper, bulletin and other graphic works.

Previous researchers have examined the level of instructional innovations that have been introduced into the Nigerian educational system (Gabriel, 2008; Amadi, 2010; Chima and Henry, 2012; and Anyanwu, 2009). However, none of these researchers examined how instructional innovations affect business education students' performance and skills acquisition to the best of my knowledge. There is evidently a gap in empirical literature on the relationship between instructional innovations and business education students' skills acquisitions. The dearth of empirical studies on how dimensions of instructional innovations (use of projector, practical learning, e-learning) have affected business education students' skills acquisitions (presentation skill, technological skill, communication skill) has necessitated this study in selected tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt.

**Statement of Problem**

The wave of technological advancement has transformed life generally. The educational systems of the world are striving to move with the trend which has resulted to pedagogical innovations, innovative instructional media and complete transformation of the learning environment. However, some academic disciplines such as business education are yet to fully imbibe these innovative instructional platforms such as the use of projector, practical learning, e-learning (computer based instruction), etc. in the teaching and learning process. Business education in almost all the tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt today do not run e-learning programmes which denies the lecturers and students some of the relevant learning experiences offered by online learning environment.

The researcher has also observed that computer-aided instruction and practical learning is very poor in business education programmes. Business education in the 21st century is expected to fully expose the students to technologies involved in business education but experience has shown that even the teaching and learning of computer-related courses are mostly taught without using relevant multimedia. This study intends to unearth the relationship between instructional innovations and business education students' skill acquisition in tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt.

**Purpose of Study**
The purpose of this study was to examine empirically instructional innovations and business education students' skill acquisition in selected tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives of this study are as follows:
1. To examine how the use of projector affects the presentation skill of secretarial students.
2. To examine how practical learning will affect the writing skills of students from secretarial studies.
3.      To examine how the use of e-learning (computer based instruction) affect the      technological skill of secretarial students.

**Hypotheses**
The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.
$H_{o1}$:      There is no significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of business education students.
$H_{o2}$:      There is no significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students.
$H_{o3}$.      There is no significant relationship between e-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students.

**Concept of Instructional Innovation**
Traditional pedagogical styles and instructional materials are fast changing and being replaced with digital technologies that make teaching and learning not just easier but more interesting and convenient. The various forms of new ideas, concepts, practices, methods of teaching, and new technologies introduced into the teaching and learning process constitutes the concept of instructional innovation. A lot of innovations have been injected into the teaching and learning process.

The New International Webster Dictionary (2013) defines innovation as "the making of a change in something established." Innovation involves bringing in something new or novel to the system. As society and time changes, the need for advancement and changes in the teaching style, approach, emphasis and materials used for delivering instructional contents. As new challenges and trends of globalization emerge, progressive educationists have clamoured for creativity and innovative methods of teaching to meet current societal demand. Yu-je (2008) defines instructional innovation as "an educational model that aims at creative talents and realizing the heuristic method of teaching." Bruce (1989) in Yu-je (2008) as the "interactive relationship between the learners' and the learning environment and adoption of information technology in teaching using proper strategic skills, in the hope of generating better teaching efficacy." The adoption of information technology such as computer systems, projecting materials, c-mailing, computer applications, online learning platforms and other educational technologies in the teaching and learning process is the hallmark of instructional innovation. Innovative business educators often adopt new teaching approach and styles. Wu in Vu-je (2011) called instructional innovation teaching innovation which he describes as when teachers employs multiple and active teaching strategies, and varied and loaded content to arouse learners' interest thereby, developing positive learners' attitudes toward active learning and augmenting students' ability. Instructional innovation also entails the ability of the teacher to creatively select and combine interesting and appropriate teaching styles and enriching the learning experience with concepts and activities that make learning worthwhile. Rather than using telling the same old story and following the same old pattern, innovative educators creatively introduce activities that make the teaching and learning livelier. For instance, rather than the routine note copying, the business educator can organize the class into groups, assign them topics for presentations or use simulation method where the students have to act out certain concepts. This makes learning more interesting and challenging.

**Business Education Students' Skill Acquisition**
As potential business education that will function in the present day business office, business education students need to acquire and develop certain basic skills. In fact the crux of business education is to develop prerequisite administrative support skills. The Business Dictionary (2016) defines skills as an ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and

adaptively carryout complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills). Skill is also defined as the ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc to do something well. The Merridian Dictionary (2016) defines skill as ability that comes from training or practice or a developed or acquired ability. Business education skill refers to the competencies and abilities expected to be possessed by a graduate of Business Education to efficiently and effectively work in an organization. People's skills are not suddenly developed: it takes some deliberate effort to develop one's skills. The term skill development refers to improving yourself and your skill sets to add value for the organization and for your own career development (Berkeley, 2016). This adopts a definition from (Aral, Brynjolfsson, and Van (2009) which states that skill development is the entire process of a student acquiring basic competencies and abilities and improving them to the point that they can use acquired information and skills to solve practical problems. It refers to the process of developing pre-service competencies and professional competencies. As earlier, there are certain professional skills that secretarial students need to acquire and develop while in school. Borgatti and Cross (2013) identified presentation skill, communication skill, and technological skill as part of skills that need to be developed by business education students.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consisted of one hundred and sixty (160) business education students from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Elechi Amadi Polytechnic in Port Harcourt, while the Taro Yamen formula was used to obtain the sample size of 114 respondents. A total of 114 questionnaires were administered by the researchers and they were able to retrieve 90 copies which represent 79% of the total questionnaire distributed, the data collected were analyzed using spear man ranking statistical tool for the test of hypothesis at 0.05 level .of significance. The formula for Spearman Rank Order Correlation is stated thus:

$$r = 1 - \frac{6\sum d2}{n(n2-)}$$

Where;

n = number of pairs of data

d = different between the ranking in each set of data.

$\sum$ = Summation

**Decision Rule:** The null hypothesis will be rejected if the calculated r value is greater than the critical r value, if otherwise, it will be accepted.

## RESULTS

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of secretarial students.

**Table 1: Use of projector and presentational skill**

| X | Y | RANK 1 | RANK 2 | D=X-Y | $D^2$ | Level of sign | Cal. P value | Crit. P value |
|----|----|------|------|------|-------|-----|------|------|
| 20 | 15 | 2.5 | 4 | -1.5 | 2.25 | | | |
| 10 | 15 | 6.5 | 4 | 2.5 | 6.25 | | | |
| 12 | 8 | 4.5 | 8 | -3.5 | 12.25 | | | |
| 6 | 4 | 10.5 | 11.5 | -1 | 1 | | | |
| 10 | 20 | 6.5 | 1 | 5.5 | 30.25 | | | |
| 20 | 10 | 2.5 | 6 | -3.5 | 12.25 | 0.05 | 0.56 | 0.503 |
| 12 | 8 | 4.5 | 8 | -3.5 | 12.25 | | | |
| 4 | 6 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 4 | | | |
| 25 | 15 | 1 | 4 | -3 | 9 | | | |
| 9 | 16 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 36 | | | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| 6 | 4 | 10.5 | 11.5 | -1 | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | $\sum D^2$=127.5 | | | |

*Source: Survey Data, 2018*

Since the calculated r Value 0.56 is greater than the Critical P Value 0.503, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of business education students was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of business education students.

**Test of $Ho_2$:** There is no significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students.

**Table 2: Practical learning and technological skill**

| X | Y | RANK 1 | RANK 2 | D=X-Y | $D^2$ | Level of sign | Cal. P value | Crit. P value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 20 | 4 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 2.25 | | | |
| 15 | 10 | 4 | 6.5 | -2.5 | 6.25 | | | |
| 8 | 12 | 8 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 12.25 | | | |
| 4 | 6 | 11.5 | 10.5 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| 20 | 10 | 1 | 6.5 | -5.5 | 30.25 | | | |
| 10 | 20 | 6 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 12.25 | 0.05 | 0.55 | 0.503 |
| 8 | 12 | 8 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 12.25 | | | |
| 6 | 4 | 10 | 12 | -2 | 4 | | | |
| 15 | 25 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 9 | | | |
| 16 | 9 | 2 | 8 | -6 | 36 | | | |
| 8 | 7 | 8 | 9 | -1 | 1 | | | |
| 4 | 6 | 11.5 | 10.5 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | $\sum D^2=127.5$ | | | |

*Source: Survey Data, 2018*

Since the calculated r value 0.55 is greater than the critical P value 0.503, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students.

**Test of $H_{o3}$:** There is no significant relationship between e-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students.

**Table 3: E-learning and communication skills**

| X | Y | RANK 1 | RANK 2 | D=X-Y | $D^2$ | Level of sign | Cal. P value | Crit. P value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | 13 | 1 | 5 | -4 | 16 | | | |
| 11 | 14 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| 9 | 11 | 8.5 | 6 | 2.5 | 6.25 | | | |
| 7 | 3 | 10 | 12 | -2 | 4 | | | |
| 9 | 21 | 8.5 | 2 | 6.5 | 42.25 | | | |
| 20 | 10 | 2 | 7 | -5 | 25 | 0.05 | 0.54 | 0.503 |
| 12 | 8 | 4 | 8 | -4 | 16 | | | |
| 4 | 6 | 12 | 9 | 3 | 9 | | | |
| 16 | 24 | 3 | 1 | -2 | 4 | | | |
| 10 | 15 | 6.5 | 3 | 3.5 | 12.25 | | | |
| 10 | 56.5 | 6.5 | 10 | -3.5 | 12.25 | | | |
| 6 | 4 | 11 | 11 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | | $\sum D^2=148$ | | | |

*Source: Survey Data, 2018*

Since the calculated r value 0.54 is higher than the critical value 0.503, the null hypothesis which states there is no significant relationship between e-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between e-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The test of hypothesis one found that there is a significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of business education students. This is in line with the findings of Szabo and Hastings (2000). 155 students were administered a 10-item questionnaire to measure how they felt about the use of presentation graphics (compared to a traditional lecture format) in the classroom. Ninety percent of the respondents believed that presentation graphics (powerpoint and projectors) were more attention capturing than traditional lectures and 85% said that it was more interesting. In another study by Mantei, (2000), students were exposed to either traditional lectures with overheads or to lectures supplemented with presentation graphics where notes were posted to the Internet. The students in the presentation graphics condition reported that they found the presentation graphics format more interesting and enjoyable, and that when notes were posted on the Internet, it enhanced their learning.

Furthermore, the test of hypothesis two found that there is a significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students. This finding is in consonance with the findings of Wurdinger and Carlson (2010) who found that most college faculty teach by lecturing because few of them learned how to teach otherwise. Although good lecturing should be part of an educator's teaching repertoire, faculty should also actively involve their students "in the learning process through discussion, group work, hands-on participation, and applying information outside the classroom". This process defines experiential learning where students are involved in learning content in which they have a personal interest, need, or want. In his study, George (2011) found that experiential (practical) learning experiences help to complete students' preparation for their chosen careers which reinforce course content and theory. Students learn through student- rather than instructor-centered experiences by doing, discovering, reflecting and applying. Through these experiences students develop various skills and self-confidence and gain and strengthen decision-making skills by responding to and solving real world problems and processes.

Conclusively, the test of hypothesis three found that there is a significant relationship between e-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students. In agreement with this finding Barker and Wendel (2001) found in his study that students in virtual schools showed greater improvement that their conventional school counterparts in critical thinking, researching, using computers, learning independently, problem-solving, creative thinking, decision-making, and time management. Kearsley (2000) notes that given instruction of equal quality, groups of students learning online generally achieve at levels equal to their peers in classrooms. Equality between the delivery systems has been well documented Over decades for adult learners. Evidence to date convincingly demonstrates that when used appropriately, electronically delivered education 'e-learning' can improve how students learn, can improve what students learn, and can deliver high-quality learning opportunities to all children" (NASI3E, 2001).

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between the use of projector and presentational skill of business education students; there is a significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students and that there is a significant relationship between e-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students.

Thus, the study concluded that there is a significant relationship between the usc of projector and presentational skill of business education students. In addition, it was also concluded that there is a significant relationship between practical learning and technological skill of business education students. Finally, the study concluded that there is a significant relationship between c-learning (computer based instruction) and communication skill of business education students.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:
1. Government should endeavour to put up policies, programs that promote the use of     new and innovative instructional strategies in tertiary institutions.
2. Tertiary institutions should create conducive and favourable environment that encourage the use of new and innovative teaching Medias in teaching for proper acquisition of skill.
3. Business education students should endeavour to acquire the required skill needed to  be proficient in their field.

**REFERENCES**
Amadi J.C. (2010). Female challenges in acquiring computer education at the Federal Polytechnic, Idah. *Journal of Research in National Development*, 8 (2): http://www.escience1abs.com. Retrieved, 29 Sept 2011.
Aral, N.; Brynjolfsson, V.D. & Van, E. (2009). Modern Information Processing: A Functional Approach to Administrative Management. New York: Prentice hail.
Barker, K., & Wendel, 1. (2001). E-Learning: Studying Canada's virtual secondary Schools. Kelowna, BC: Society for the advancement of excellence in education. Online at http ://www.excellenceineducation.calpdfs/006 .pdf.
Borgatti, S. & Cross, H.D. (2013). Information and management: A Contemporary perspective. Great Britain: Macdonald and Evans Limited.
Chima, F. & Henry, J. (2012). E-learning innovation through the implementation of an internet supported learning environment. *Educational Technology and Society*, 3, 1-16.
Gabriel, B. (2008). Student achievement and performance levels in online education research study. Edmonton, Alberta: Alberta online consortium. http ://www.albertaonline.ab.calpdfs/AOCresearch hill report
George Mason University. Center for teaching excellence (2011). About teaching:
Experiential learning. http://cte.gmu.edu/Teaching/experientallearning.html
Kearsley, G. (2000). Online education: Learning and teaching in cyberspace. Belmont, CA. Wadsworth.
Mantei, E.J (2000). Using internet class notes and PowerPoint in the physical geology lecture. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 29(6), 30 1-305.
National Association of State Boards of Education (2001). Any time, any place, any path, any pace: Taking the lead on e-learning policy. Alexandria, VA: Author.Arnad
Szabo A., & Hastings, N (2000). Using IT in the undergraduate classroom: should we replace the black board with PowerPoint? *Computers and Education*, 35(6), 175-187.
Wurdinger, S. D., & Carlson, J. A. (2010). Teaching for experiential learning: Five approaches that work. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
Yu-Je, L., Chia-Hui, C., & Ching-Yaw, C. (2011). The influences of interest in learning and learning hours on learning outcomes of college students in 'Taiwan: Using teacher's instructional attitude as the moderator. *Global Journal of Engineering Education*, 13(3). 1-15
Yu-Je, (2008). A study of the influence of instructional innovation on learning satisfaction and study achievement. *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning,* 4(2), 43- 54.