

Communication and Operational Competencies Needed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Senior Secondary School Business Classes

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Abstract

The study sought to identify the communication and operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of all the 202 business subjects teachers in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. There was no sampling. A structured questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two from Business Education Department and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Cronbach Alpha reliability procedure was used. The instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Two hundred and two (202) copies of the instrument were administered to the respondents but 196 were retrieved representing 97% of the instrument. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test. The findings of the study showed that communication competencies and operational competencies are needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes. It was also found from the hypotheses tested that qualification did not make any significant difference in the opinion of the respondents on communication competencies. Also, it was found that there was no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents on operational competencies based on gender. Based on the findings, it was concluded that business teachers needed communication and operational competencies. It was also, recommended among others that business subject teachers should be encouraged by appropriate authorities to enhance their communication and operational competencies through in-services training, participation in workshops, seminars and symposia. As such will help the teachers take care of communication competencies in terms of how to explain, express, write, analyze any topic in the curriculum while the operational competencies will help the teachers to develop reflective thinkers in the society.

Keywords: *Communication and Operational Competencies, Instructional Delivery Senior Secondary School, Business Subject Classes.*

Introduction

Education and business form the bedrock of any nation's development. Teacher competencies constitute an important factor for national, economic, technology, and education development. Paline and Ekpenyong (2016) stated that from educational perspective, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) calls for functional education that would be pertinent, useful and allow for the acquisition of suitable skills and development of competencies to live in and contribute to national development.

Atueyi (1999) and Onifade (2007) share the same view that business subjects have a critical mission to achieve in national growth because of their potentials. They also emphasized the need to shift from financial capital development alone into more of human capital development. Eya (2007) observed that the practical approach to teaching business

subjects in secondary schools is a major missing link. He also stated that the solution does not lie only with the availability of qualified teachers and modern teaching facilities, but also the competencies applied for effective instructional delivery. Effective instructional delivery is the driving force that results in the quality of knowledge transmission. Nneji in Egba (2017) described instructional delivery method as the variety of ways through which the teacher can present the subject matter to the learners. In my own view, instructional delivery methods are the actions adopted by a teacher to aid his students reaches the objectives developed for the lessons and to facilitate the process of knowledge transmission. Norman in Egba equally stated that instructional methods involve the utilization of all the teaching materials, techniques, obtainable to lecturers which will enable them reach the instructional desire of the learners and enable the students advance from dependent to independent learner. The method an educator employs has the potential of promoting or hindering learning, sharpening mental activities, encouraging curiosity, initiative and self reliance. The educator is the key to learning because he analyses the instructional process and selects the best methods that will enable him achieve the set goals. For effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes, teachers need to employ relevant and appropriate competencies. Competencies is the ability coming from one's knowledge and attitude to doing something well. In general terms, teacher competencies is a pattern of thinking, feeling, acting or even speaking that causes a teacher to be successful in his or her job. Therefore, the competencies studied were the communication competencies and the operational competencies. Communication competencies refer to the techniques a teacher employs to communicate efficiently with other persons/students for effective instructional delivery. According to Richards and Rodgers (2006), communication competence is the sum of all the techniques a person employs to communicate efficiently with another person in a communicative event.

Operational competencies refer to the ways business subject teachers plan, organize, control and motivate students for effective instructional delivery. Krihnaveni and Anitha (2007) said that to develop and produce permanent learners and thoughtful academics in society, teachers' operational competencies should be developed so that skills will be established in teaching roles. According to Surujlal, Chalmers and Dhruv (2012) operational competencies must be learnt in order to make teaching palatable in the schools and this will help students to understand lessons in real-world situation, particularly in business.

Any productive activity that satisfies human wants may be referred to as business. Awojokun, Akamgbe, Folaranmi, Arukwe and Abdullahi (2009) described business as a planned venture aimed at generating goods and services, in a gainful and a user fulfilling manner. Business is prearranged prolific measures that fulfill known societal desires with or without profit intention. Business subjects are those subjects that provide someone with useful and profitable abilities, understanding and attitudes or principles that facilitate functionality of an individual in any work place as job creator rather than as job seeker. Esene (2006) stated that business subjects in secondary schools are designed in a way that the recipients of the educational programme participate effectively both in and out of the world around. The recipients are equipped to fulfill two major roles: as an employer of labour and as a self – employed. Business subjects are taught in senior secondary schools. Senior secondary schooling is a phase of educational activity that has 3 year interval. The qualification of teachers to teach this level of education in business classes is of great importance; even though there exist qualified and unqualified business subjects teachers. Qualified business subjects teachers are referred to as the professional business subjects' teachers with the following qualification of education: BA(Ed.), B.Sc(Ed), PGDE(Ed), MA(Ed.) etc. in business subjects while the unqualified business teachers are referred to as those who are not professional business teachers and they are likely to have the following qualification: ND, HND, B.Sc, MA, BA etc. Ibrahim, Yosof, Yaakob and Othman (2019)

found that the communication competencies required by teachers do not significantly influenced by teachers' qualification. These teachers possessing these qualifications are made up of male and female. Gender is a cluster of characteristics that differentiates male and females. According to Hobson in Egba (2017) gender inequality in field of education has remained a contentious issue. Due to gender differences, the teachers are included to certain socio-cultural patterns that directly and indirectly influence their performances. However, the importance of competencies is not restricted to any particular gender because every individual, irrespective of class or gender, requires operational competencies to meet instructional delivery. Chalmers, Surujlal & Dhrup (2013) found that the operational competencies required by teachers do not significantly influence by teachers gender. To this end, Atueyi (2020) advocated that both male and female should be given equal opportunities in education. This is because business subjects in senior secondary school classes are mainly for vocational competencies presently. That is why; Igboke (2012) outlined the specific purpose of secondary school business subjects as vocational competency, personal use competency, consumer competencies, and socioeconomic competency.

The objectives of business subjects in senior secondary schools according to Inegbedion, Njuko, Ekpeonyong, Umoru and Liadi (2015) were as follows: To supply someone with wide information and basic understanding acceptable to variety of occupations within a given field so that one won't be imperfect in his/her selection of occupation and is ready to transfer from one field to a different throughout his/ her operating life; to offer instruction and impart the required skills to people to allow them become independent; to provide the environment in terms of information, abilities and mind-set in continuing education at any point in the individual's operating life; to help students acquire purposeful skills in their selected field; to make occupational information accessible to students so as to enable them to understand and appreciate how they function.

The attainments of these objectives require effective instructional delivery of business subject curriculum. Business subject curriculum, according to Saba and Njoku in Udemé (2014) is an organized cluster of lessons or series of subject with deliberate knowledge needed for graduation or qualifications of a student under supervision of a teacher in a school. The curriculum is a school based effort to transmit a body of knowledge and achieve certain objectives in the lives of those to whom it is transmitted. It is a process which communicates core principles, facts and features of an educational programme which students must master to such an extent that the programme can be said to have achieved its peculiar objectives (Smith, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

Senior secondary school business subject teachers were trained to teach business subjects such as Commerce, Business Methods, Economics, Shorthand and Typewriting but experience have shown that fundamental competencies like communication competencies and operational competencies are needed for teaching these and new subjects- Marketing, Insurance, Store Management, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), etc. If teachers do not have skills in passing information to students in term of giving feedback, commenting on their assignment among others, then, proper implementation of the curriculum will be hampered. Furthermore, if business subject teachers do not have the ability to understand the learners interest, if they cannot plan the lesson and organize teaching materials effectively, then effective instructional delivery will not be achieved. Accordingly, this paper studied the communication and operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to determine the:

1. Communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes.
2. Operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes?
2. What are the operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes?

Research Hypotheses

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

HO₁: The mean ratings of the respondents on the communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes do not differ significantly based on qualification.

HO₂: The mean ratings of the respondents on the operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes do not differ significantly based on gender.

Methodology

The survey method was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in all public secondary schools in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. The population for this study was two hundred and two (202) business subject teachers in public senior secondary schools. The population consists of 78 males and 124 females. The data for the study was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 25 item statements. It was validated by three experts: two from Business Education Department and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The instrument was also subjected to a reliability test, and yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Two hundred and two copies of the questionnaire were administered. The researchers and their research assistants retrieved 196 (97%) copies of the questionnaire which were used for data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using t-test.

Results

The data collected for the study are presented on the table below and analyzed based on the research questions and the null hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1

Data to answer the above research question are contained in Table 1

Table 1: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation on Communication Competencies Needed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Senior Secondary School Business Classes

S/N	Communication Competencies	N	X	SD	Decision
1	Write questions to assess knowledge and higher order thinking	196	3.01	0.43	Agree
2	Provide written feedback on students’ assignment	196	2.61	0.79	Agree
3	Record students’ performance and progress	196	3.04	0.59	Agree
4	Answer students’ questions	196	3.47	0.55	Agree
5	Read aloud fluently	196	3.13	0.73	Agree
6	Read students assignment	196	3.00	0.00	Agree
7	Read curriculum content	196	3.10	0.59	Agree
8	Listen and interpret class discussion	196	2.76	0.84	Agree
9	Listen to students answer question during a lesson	196	3.29	0.68	Agree
10	Read information related to business subjects from newsletters	196	3.29	0.79	Agree
11	Watch, extract information related to curriculum topic from videos	196	3.03	0.56	Agree
12	Use communication technologies	196	3.86	0.37	Strongly Agree

Source: Field Work, 2020

The data presented in Table 1 indicate that items 1 – 12 were accepted by the respondents as the communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes, since all the items attained a mean score above 2.50.

Research Question 2

Data for answering the above research question are contained in Table 2

Table 2: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation on Operational Competencies Needed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Senior Secondary School Business Classes

S/N	Operational Competencies	N	X	SD	Decision
13	Plan the lesson	196	3.07	0.42	Agree
14	Lead by example	196	3.06	0.47	Agree
15	Plan so that curriculum will be completed in a year	196	3.16	0.37	Agree
16	Organize teaching materials effectively	196	3.00	0.00	Agree

17	Respect for the learners’ needs and feelings	196	2.97	0.22	Agree
18	Provide guidance to learners	196	2.90	0.39	Agree
19	Demonstrate the art of packaging	196	2.70	0.60	Agree
20	Teach the use of requisition form	196	2.94	0.90	Agree
21	Explain the channel of distribution of goods and services	196	2.69	0.62	Agree
22	Discuss the concept of retailing	196	2.73	0.79	Agree
23	Explain different types of warehouse using local example	196	2.94	0.69	Agree
24	Teach sources document	196	2.70	1.03	Agree
25	Teach customer follow-up	196	2.68	0.87	Agree

Source: Field Work, 2020

The data presented in Table 2 indicate that the respondents accepted all the items of 13 – 25 as the operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes. This is because each of the items attained a mean score above 2.50.

Test of Hypotheses

HO₁: The mean ratings of the respondents on the communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes do not differ significantly based on qualification.

Data collected to test hypothesis 1 are presented in Table 3

Table 3: Summary of t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses on Communication Competencies needed for Effective Instructional Delivery

Variables (Qualification)	NO	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision	Sig.
Qualified	83	3.16	0.53	194	1.93	1.96	Uphold H ₀	NSd
Unqualified	113	3.12	0.62					

Source: Field Work, 2020

Key: Sig: Significant; NSd: No Significant difference

Table 3 above reveals t-calculated value of 1.93 and t-critical of 1.96 at 194 degree of freedom. From the table, since the t-calculated is less than the critical t-value, we uphold the null hypothesis and conclude that qualified and unqualified senior secondary school business teachers do not differ significantly in their opinion regarding the communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes based on their qualifications.

HO₂: The mean ratings of the respondents on the operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes do not differ significantly based on gender of respondents.

Data collected to test hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 4

Table 4: Summary of t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of the Respondents on Operational Competencies needed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Business Classes

Variables (Gender)	NO	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision	Significance
Male	87	3.09	0.63	194	0.56	1.96	Uphold	H ₀
Female	109	3.11	0.55					

Source: Field Work, 2020

Key: NSd: No Significant difference

Table 4 reveals t-calculated value of 0.35 and t-critical of 1.96 at 194 degree of freedom. From the Table, since t-calculated is less than the critical t-value, we therefore, accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the respondents do not differ significantly in their opinion regarding the operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school classes based on gender.

Discussions

The results in Table 1 revealed that communication competencies were needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes. The findings are in collaboration with the findings of George (2014) who found that ability to have good command of English; having listening abilities; ability to explain things thoroughly are communication competencies required by business education teachers in secondary schools in Abak Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State he studied. The test of hypothesis (H₀₁) in Table 3 proved that the mean responses of the respondents do not differ significantly on the communication competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes based on gender. The findings are in agreement with Ibrahim, Yosof, Yaakob and Othman (2019) who found that the communication competencies required by teachers do not significantly influenced by teachers’ qualification.

The result in Table 2 shows that all the operational competencies were needed by the respondents for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business

classes. The findings are in agreement with Surujlal, Chalmers & Dhurup (2012) who found similar operational competencies required to teach in secondary schools. In the same vein, Krihnaveni and Anitha (2007) stressed that to develop and produce permanent learners and thoughtful academics in society, teachers' operational competencies should be developed so that competencies will be established in teaching role. Also, the test of hypothesis (H_{02}) in Table 4 proved that the mean responses of the respondents do not differ significantly on the operational competencies needed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes based on gender. The findings are in agreement with Chalmers, Surujlal & Dhurup (2013) who found that the operational competencies required by teachers do not significantly influence by teachers gender.

Conclusions

Based on the finding of the study, it was concluded that business teachers needed communication and operational competencies to enhance their effectiveness in instructional delivery of business subjects in the senior secondary schools. Also, it was concluded that teacher qualification and gender may not influence the application of the communication and operational competencies for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary school business classes.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study; it was recommended:

1. That business subjects who are already in field should be encouraged by appropriate authorities to enhance their communication and operational competencies through in-service training, participation in workshops, seminars and symposia.
2. That Universities and Colleges which train business subjects' teachers should ensure that students acquire communication and operational competencies before graduation.

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