

# EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION: THE GAP BETWEEN TEACHING AND RESEARCH

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## **Abstract**

Through effective utilization of instructional materials in teaching business subjects, the long desire spirit of self-reliance, well educated, entrepreneurship and economically skilled individuals of Nigeria populace can be achieved. This will lead to the production of well qualified and competent business teachers who will keep abreast with contemporary technological development. This paper therefore highlights the concepts of instructional materials, importance of instructional materials, strategies for effective utilization of instructional materials, the gap between teaching and research and recommendations.

Instructional materials occupy important place in the teaching and learning process of business education. Instructional materials when properly manipulated and utilized, create a situation or atmosphere in which curiosity is aroused, imagination stipulated, interest generated, viewpoints enlarged and attitude changed. It give the learners of business education courses true mental impression at the time they first learn the subject; correct initial concepts; prevent subsequent errors; obviate the need for remedial teaching; make the lessons real and ensure individual and group participation. Instructional materials facilitate learning, aids retention, intensify the impressions and cause the imaginary to become firmly embedded in mind. Agogo (2000) and Akpan (2006) in confirmation asserted that the primary purpose of using instructional materials in the teaching and learning process in business education is to facilitate learning. This would make the learners to retain and recall with ease a greater portion of what they see and manipulated during the lesson. Ibe-Basseyy and Agba (2001) observed that effective use of instructional materials in any classroom instruction will encourage interest in learning because student's motivation, individualized instruction and immediacy in learning can be ensured. Akpan (2006) also confirmed that instructional materials foster individual interest and facilitate learning and creative effort. Effective utilization of instructional materials in teaching business education would motivate student's interest in learning business courses and facilitate creativity among students.

## **Concept of Instructional Materials**

Sofolahan (2005) defines instructional materials as information carrying technologies that are used for instructional purposes with the hope of delivering educational information very quickly and widely. Inyang-Abia (2008) observed instructional materials to be all resources which may be used by the learner in isolation or in combination formally to facilitate the acquisition and evaluation of knowledge, skills and morals. Ibe-Basseyy (2004) in his view described instructional materials as objects, devices and things that are used by teachers to transmit, transfer and share their encoded lessons with their learner who will decode such lesson by analyzing and interpreting them to facilitate effective learning. Amadi (2005) views instructional materials as anything the teacher uses to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Therefore instructional materials could be defined as instruments or tools through which ideas, knowledge and facts are relayed for effective teaching and learning.

## **Importance of Instructional Materials**

Effectiveness and efficiency in teaching and learning process are achieved when instructional materials are incorporated in the lesson. Teachers and learners refer to and use them as easy source to

acquire knowledge, new ideas, skills and competences. Therefore the following are the importance of instructional materials during lesson.

- Translating abstract information into concrete purposeful learning experience.
- Reduce verbalism and minimize the signal to noise ratio in any instructional communication process.
- It promote and enhance the attainment of instructional objectives
- Institutionalize consciousness and academic excellence in academic performance of students in business courses
- Make students to understand and acquire skills and knowledge in business courses easily
- Ensure high level of effectiveness and efficiency in educational achievement.
- Provide experiences that may not otherwise be available to learners
- Facilitate the development of attitude and morals far beyond years of verbal sermonisation.
- Make teaching very easy and productive because learners are active participants in the lesson.
- Stimulate discussion, inquiry and diagnosis.

### **Strategies for Effective Utilization of Instructional Materials**

Instructional materials can be useful in the process of teaching and learning and achieve the set objectives if it is properly selected. The strategies for effective utilization of instructional materials are as follows:

- **Proper Identification and Selection of Instructional Materials:** The identification and selection of the most appropriate instructional materials are essential in the discharge of the formidable business task of transmitting skills to the learners. Teaching and learning will be improved when there is proper identification, selection and effective utilization of instructional materials. Soleye (2000) in confirmation observed that effective teaching and learning of business courses is guided by the identification and effective application of instructional materials and equipment. When instructional materials are identified and selected, classroom instruction will be effectively carried out by the teacher while the learners continue to carryout effective learning activity.
- **Instructional Objective:**  
Teachers' main target in teaching and learning process is to achieve specific objectives of the lesson. Therefore, the instructional materials a teacher select or develop for the lesson should be such that would enable the teacher achieve the instructional objectives in the three domain of education. The use of instructional materials within an instructional setting is determined by the requirements of objectives, content and methods (Akpan 2006). Eze (2012) also confirmed that instructional materials a teacher should select for effective teaching should be able to achieve the specific instructional objectives in any given lesson.
- **Learner's Characteristics:**  
Learners are the centre in the educational activities. The instructional materials selected for instruction must be in line with the need, age, interest and background of the learners. Teachers should therefore select instructional materials that will meet the individual differences of the learners in order to achieve the specific objectives of the lesson.
- **Effective Utilization of Instructional Materials:**  
The instructional materials selected should be relevant to all angles suitable to the class so as to promote well developed concepts and make information adequate Okujagu (1997) observed that students have a lot to gain from the proper utilization of instructional materials to achieve the desire results. Through effective utilization of instructional materials in teaching business subjects, the long desire spirit of self-reliance, well educated, entrepreneurship and

economically skilled individuals for Nigeria populace can be achieved. This will lead to the production of well qualified and competent business teachers who will keep abreast with the contemporary technological development. Akpan (2006) also affirmed that effective utilization of instructional materials in teaching and learning process motivates student's interest in learning and facilitate creativity among students.

➤ **Teachers Capability:**

Teacher's knowledge, skills, competences and resourcefulness affect the effective selection of instructional materials. The ability of teachers to develop and apply the instructional materials to achieve the set objectives is important and should be taken into consideration. Therefore, teachers should always up-date their knowledge through workshops and conferences on how to develop, operate and when to apply instructional materials to improve teaching and learning. The success of any learning process depends largely on the instructional procedures. For a given instructional procedure to achieve the desire objectives, it must be properly harnessed through adequate and proper use of instructional materials.

➤ **Class Size:**

The number of students in the class contributes much to the type of instructional materials to be effectively used during teaching and learning. Some instructional materials can be used in teaching large and small classes such as overhead projector, power point, etc while some are ideal in teaching only small classes. For instance charts, pictures, television etc. The instructional materials to be used need to cover the interest of all angles of the class so as to promote well developed concepts and make information adequate. Instructional material that covers the interest of the class would serve as a channel between the teacher and the students in delivering the instruction and also serve as motivation on the teaching and learning. Akpan (2006) affirmed that effective application of instructional materials in the class encourages student's active participation in learning process and increase the scope of students experience and introduce different methods of instruction.

➤ **Availability of Instructional Materials:**

Instructional materials such as visual, audio and audio-visual should always be made available for effective use and learning of business education courses to achieve the goals of business education. Learners' effective learning of business education enables them to acquire the requisite skills leading to employment and self productivity. Availability and effective utilization of instructional materials in business education would motivate student's interest in learning business courses and facilitate creativity among students. A skillful teacher with a wide array of visual and audio-visual teaching aids can achieve high level of instructional effectiveness that far exceed what is possible when the necessary teaching aids are not provided.

**Gap between Teaching and Research in Business Education:**

Despite the importance of instructional materials in the teaching and learning process, there exists a gap between teaching and research in business education in areas such as:

➤ **Poor Attitude Towards Effective Utilization of Instructional Materials:**

Teacher's poor attitude to effective use of instructional material in class during teaching and learning process has created a gap between what has been researched upon to be the basic guiding principles of effective teaching and learning. Teachers in business education do not endeavour to make use of instructional materials as an integral part of their instructional activities in order to make teaching and learning easy, real, interesting and effective thereby creating a gap between teaching and research.

➤ **Non-availability of Instructional Materials:**

A cursory look at educational institutions reveals that despite the important role of instructional materials in the teaching and learning process, there is still non-availability of instructional materials in many schools. This hampered the objectives of instructional materials in teaching and learning. The none availability hampered student's motivation, individual instruction and immediacy in learning and create vacuum between teaching and research. Akpan (2006) affirmed that non-availability and application of instructional materials in classroom would not encourage student's active participation in learning process and increase the scope of student's experience. Ibang (2012) identified non-availability of instructional materials as one of the variables responsible for poor quality of education that create vacuum between teaching and research. Availability and effective application of instructional materials in business education would bridge the gap between teaching and research.

➤ **Teacher's Ability or Skills to Use Instructional Materials:**

Most teachers in business education lack the skills of using the related instructional materials during classroom instructions. There is also the inability to direct learners on how to use the available instructional materials. Learners on completion of years of study would lack the ability and feel reluctant to research for the utilization of instructional materials during teaching in schools and even in their private business affairs. This situation creates a vacuum between teaching and research that would eventually lead to production of unqualified and incompetent business teachers that would not keep abreast with the contemporary technological development. Okujagu (1997) observed that teacher's inability to effectively utilized instructional materials during teaching and learning would deny business students the true mental impression at the time they first learn.

➤ **Poor Motivation for Effective Utilization of Instructional Materials:**

Business educators are not properly motivated towards effective utilization of instructional materials. Business education teachers do not always afford the cost of some instructional materials used in business education or improvise them for effective use. Government on the other hand do not motivate the teachers by providing these teaching aids to help them communicate effectively with the students during teaching and learning process or assist school financially for the production of these materials. This hindered the effective utilization of instructional materials in the teaching and learning process thereby creating a serious gap between teaching and research.

### **Conclusions**

The success of any learning process depends largely on the instructional procedures. For a given instructional procedure to achieve the desired objectives it must be properly harnessed through adequate and proper use of instructional materials.

The use of variety instructional materials in teaching business courses will enable students with different learning abilities to access the content of the lesson taught and increase the likelihood of learning effectively.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the importance of instructional materials in teaching and learning process in business education, the following are recommended for effective utilization.

- Government should always assist financially to provide the needed instructional materials in business education to help business educators communicate effectively during the process of teaching and learning.
- Teachers should always be familiar with the strategies for effective utilization of instructional materials.
- Enough instructional materials should always be made available in business education for effective utilization to ensure effective acquisition of business skills easily.

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- Instructional materials should be neatly prepared and presented to the students in order to capture the interest of the students.
- Adequate motivational incentives in terms of condition of service and welfare package should be given to business education teachers.
- Academic staff should always be motivated and encourage through sponsorship in seminars, workshops and conferences to update their knowledge on effective utilization of instructional materials.

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