

21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper focused on the challenges and opportunities facing educators of business and entrepreneurship education in using instructional delivery in public universities in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 46 business and entrepreneurship Educators in public universities in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions were raised for the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. A structured questionnaire was used to seek the opinion of business and entrepreneurship education lecturers on the subject matter. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha formula which yielded correlation co-efficient of 0.85 and 0.79 for clusters B1 to B2 with an overall reliability index of 0.82 obtained. Research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. Consequently, the study identified 10 challenges facing business educators in instructional delivery at 21st public universities in Enugu State, Nigeria. Also, there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators on the challenges in the instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum at 21st public universities in Enugu State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that National Universities Commission (NUC) and curriculum planners should ensure the integration of 21st-century teaching tools and pedagogies into the business and entrepreneurship education curricula.

Keywords: Challenges; Business education; Entrepreneurship education; Public universities

Introduction

In the 21st century, education is widely recognized as one of the most important tools for achieving sustainable development. It is an indisputable fact that education is one of the important tools for sustainable development. Education serves as a critical instrument for national and sustainable development, and it entails the acquisition of core knowledge and essential development skills needed for technical breakthrough and sociopolitical development, that promotes economic progress. According to Akpomi (2019), a nation's educational system must be seen as the cornerstone of any significant development if it is to promote true economic growth. It is impossible to dispute the role that education plays in fostering sustainable national development and in providing a means of effectively solving the challenges that face individuals, families, communities, groups, organizations, institutions, and states. In Nigeria, education is offered at different levels including pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

Tertiary education represents the third level of the formal education system, following primary and secondary education. It provides advanced learning, skills development, research, and professional training aimed at producing manpower for national development. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) in the *National Policy on Education*, tertiary education is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotronics, and other institutions offering correspondences or vocational courses. It is designed to further develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand, analyze, and apply knowledge for solving societal and economic problems. UNESCO (2017) defines tertiary education as all formal education programmes beyond the secondary level, provided by universities and other higher institutions, with



objectives that include teaching, research, and community service. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria offer diverse academic programmes including business education programme.

Business education is a branch of education that uses on teaching the skills and operations of the business world. This field of education operates at multiple levels, including secondary and higher institutions. Business education encompasses various components, reflecting the diversity of the broader business environment. Education in 21st century has been characterized with digitization and the integration of emerging technologies. Nwosu and Okoro (2018) describe business education as a programme that equips recipients with the basic business knowledge, functional skills, and attributes for vocations that enable them become employees, employers and entrepreneurs. This type of education, according to Mbah and Odike (2021), promotes the development and application of information communication technology (ICT) skills as well as innovative pedagogical strategies in instructional delivery. Business education is designed to train a competent and productive workforce capable of being employed or self-employed in business, production and services environment. Ezeabii (2017) asserted that business education is a subset of vocational education that gives students the theoretical knowledge and practical skills they need to succeed in the business world, whether they are working for themselves or on a job. Students in Business Education are expected to graduate as competent and energetic business teachers, office administrators, and businessmen and women capable of functioning effectively in the corporate world.

Entrepreneurship education has been recognized as a solution to youth unemployment and poverty in both developed and developing countries, particularly in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship is essential for driving innovation, creating jobs, and advancing a country's economy and society. Aina and Salako (2018) defined entrepreneurships as an individual's willingness and aptitude to seek out investment opportunities and use scarce resources to profitably exploit those opportunities. Entrepreneurship education according to Azuka (2016) is a process of teaching learners in a formal setting how to generate business ideas, evaluate alternatives with the aim of converting ideas into opportunities taking into consideration the capabilities of the entrepreneur, conducting feasibility studies, writing bankable business plan, organizing and managing the business with passion, creativity and innovation with the goal of making a profit. Kuratko and Hodgetts (1998) defined entrepreneurship education as the study of developing skills in areas such as wealth creation, negotiation, product development and marketing, creative thinking, and leadership. Nonetheless, the goal of entrepreneurship education is to provide students with the information, abilities, and drive necessary to promote entrepreneurial success in a range of contexts. According to Adeleke (2023), the assimilation of entrepreneurship education is necessary for the development of a knowledge-based educational system that is both structural and functional. Through entrepreneurial education sustainable development has become a significant issue for all well-meaning administrations of countries across the globe (Laurie, 2016). Entrepreneurship education is not just about teaching someone to run a business, it is all about encouraging creative thinking and promoting a strong sense of self-work and accountability. Through entrepreneurship education, students learn how to create a business, but they also learn a lot more.

Education is said to be evolving, and the manner in which learners are prepared to face the world of work is equally evolving. Clearly, 21st century business education is aimed toward preparing students to face the anticipated changes in the employment market. Therefore, in order for students to keep up with these expected changes and become relevant, institutions of learning such as universities and their academic staff must rise to the occasion by consciously preparing students for jobs that have not yet been created, or that have been created but have not yet been deployed in their part of the world. As Griffin and Care (2015) explained, in the 21st century, the focus of education is primarily founded on the preparation of students for new ways of thinking: ways that involve creativity, critical analysis, problem solving and decision making. Students must be prepared for evolving workplace practices that will test their communication and teamwork abilities. They will need to be well-versed in new

technologies, as well as able to detect and capitalize on the potentials of emerging technology. They must also develop the capacity to act responsible and engaged global citizens within an increasingly complex global environment. These students' future careers are likely to require advanced thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Entrepreneurship education is widely considered in the 21st century. It is a skill driven programme. The level of entrepreneurship in a country determines the growth and development of that country's economy. Galindo-Martin, Mendez-Picazo and Castaino-Martinez (2021) asserted that entrepreneurship education acts as a crucial pillar to achieve economic development independently of the conditions of a country. Entrepreneurship education is aimed at equipping students with requisite skills and capacities needed in the world of work. Evidence abounds in Nigeria that a high rate of graduate unemployment exists, which is not due to a lack of jobs, but rather a lack of employable skills that the labour market requires, as well as a skill gap and mismatch (Oladokun & Gbadegesia, 2017). In addition, one of the numerous goals of university education is improving the abilities of students to properly adapt to the social, economic and political spheres of the society. This is why the 21st-century education hopes to inculcate innovativeness and creativity within the students to foster new ideas that would develop and change the world (Ausat et al, 2023). They further held on to the fact that education is of utmost significance in the enhancement of entrepreneurship as it is a comprehensive and interconnected system which establishes attitudes and values that are pertinent to entrepreneurship. Again, Ofor-Douglas (2021) rightly put it that for educational managers or administrators to succeed in university educational management, the administrators need some basic skills to succeed such as conceptual skills, human relations skills and professional skills. Where it is properly harnessed and utilized, the administrator is bound to achieve the goals and objectives of the university.

The study focused on the public (federal and state) universities in Enugu State in order to determine the challenges and opportunities in instructional delivery. Public university are the government (federal, state, or local government) owned, managed and financed tertiary institution that awards degree to students in different disciplines at both sub- professional and professional level, including development of high-level manpower. There are two public universities in Enugu State that offer the Business Education programme to students. These universities are expected to provide training to students in contemporary issues, business education curriculum as well as entrepreneurship education. The use of instructional delivery in business and entrepreneurship education helps lecturers to train students with digital skills for a smooth transition from school to the workplace. A study conducted by Offordile (2018) showed that business educators are facing numerous challenges in implementing business and entrepreneurship education curriculum in schools. These challenges may be administrative or teaching challenges. The university administration according to Obinna (2016) needs to support the utilization of ICT in teaching since the i modern educational innovations no longer align with traditional teaching methods. As more university courses are introducing instructional learning to students, there is a need to investigate the challenges business educators face. It is against this background that this paper aims to examine the 21st century business and entrepreneurship challenges and opportunities in using instructional delivery in public universities in South East Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Business and entrepreneurship education are programme of instructions that equips recipients with the requisite attributes for job creation and further education. Despite these dual missions, available evidence has shown that Nigeria is handling this sector with levity. However, Nigerian higher education curriculum has been criticized for its inadequacy to cater for the needs of 21st-century learners. The curriculum seems to be adequately aligned with 21st-century needs, leading to high unemployment rates among graduates. Graduates from Nigerian higher educational institutions lack essential 21st-century skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, communication literacy, collaboration, and creativity skills, among others

Teaching in contemporary society is facing a daunting task of digitalization with human, facilities and environmental challenges. The teaching of students in tertiary especially the university is currently

using instructional materials as most lecturers utilize electronic devices with conventional face-to-face teaching approach. The extent of utilization of instructional materials is very high yet the performance of students is still not encouraging. These challenges have affected the performance of the graduates in the modern and automated service delivery environment.

The effective delivery of business and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is also facing a challenge due to an inadequate supply of qualified manpower, particularly at the tertiary level, due to insufficient funding. Unfortunately, Nigeria has for long been budgeting much lower percentage of the prescribed minimum over the years. The current budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria is only about 8.8% (N1.79 trillion) out of the total of N20.5 trillion, though in 2016 it was 7.9% of the total budgetary allocation (Premium Times, 2023). Global education agency, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, has agreed that any government that is serious on the education of its citizens should allocate at least 26% of its annual budget to education (UNESCO, 2015). The situation has become worse due to the current financial crisis which has impacted the country's economy

Business and entrepreneurship education is also faced with a lot of problems and challenges of inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities. Presently, in virtually all institutions involved in the teaching of business education, there is an acute shortage of laboratories, libraries, studios and entrepreneurship research centers. This being true, what are the challenges of business and entrepreneurship education faces in implementing instructional delivery in 21st public university? The quest towards answering this stumper compelled the researchers to embark on this study.

Therefore, the study is set out to investigate the challenges facing teaching of business and entrepreneurship education curriculum in universities in order improve the quality of learning among students using instructional materials in public universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the challenges of business education curriculum in the use of instructional delivery at 21st public universities Enugu State, Nigeria?
2. What are the business educators' challenges in the use of instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum at 21st public university Enugu State, Nigeria?

Null Hypotheses

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

1. **H₀₁**: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators in universities on challenges of instructional delivery at 21st public university Enugu State, Nigeria.
2. **H₀₂**: A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings of business educators on challenges in instructional delivery at 21st public universities Enugu State, Nigeria.

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A survey research method involves surveying people and recording their responses for analysis. According to Nworgu (2015), survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few of them to represent the entire group. This design was adopted due to the responses from sample of business educators used for the study could be generalized to the rest of others teaching programmes in universities. The area of the study was Enugu State of Nigeria. Enugu State is one of the five states in South-East geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Specifically, it focused on two public universities offering business education programme namely: University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu State. The study was carried out in the South-East Nigeria with a population of 46 business educators made up of 18 male and 28

females teaching. The data collection was carried out using 20 item structured questionnaire developed by the researcher based on the related literature. The instrument contained two sections; A and B. Section A contained demographic information of the respondents while section B was divided into two clusters B1 and B2 structured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with a corresponding numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1. The face validity of the instrument was ascertained by three experts, two from Business and Entrepreneurship Education Department and one from Measurement and Evaluation unit of Mathematics and Computer Education Department, all from Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. Their corrections and suggestions were used to produce the final instrument used for the study. The reliability of the instrument was determined using pilot-testing method and data collected were calculated using Cronbach alpha formula which yielded correlation coefficients of 0.85, 0.79 for clusters B1 and B2 with an overall reliability index of 0.82 obtained. The survey questionnaire was distributed to the 46 respondents, and all 46 copies were returned and analyzed using SPSS, version 25. The mean and standard deviation were utilized to answer the research question, and an independent t-test at the 0.05 level of significance was employed to test the null hypothesis. The decision guidelines were based on a benchmark of 2.50, which was considered agreement, while anything less than 2.50 was considered disagreement. If the estimated p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted; otherwise, it was rejected. At the 0.05 threshold of significance, the hypotheses were tested.

Results

The results of the study are presented according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the challenges of business education curriculum in the use of instructional delivery at 21st public university South-East Nigeria?

Table 1:

Mean Ratings on the Challenges of Business Education Curriculum in the Use of Instructional Delivery at 21st Public University Enugu State, Nigeria

S/N	Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	Inadequate provision of budgetary allocation for education	3.51	0.96	Agree
2	Low provision of befitting infrastructures	3.52	0.76	Agree
3	Inadequate instructional materials	3.42	0.80	Agree
4	Paucity of fund for improving ICT facilities	3.53	0.73	Agree
5	Lack of multimedia TV for instructional delivery	3.49	0.70	Agree
6	Lack of E-learning presentation (power-point)	3.47	0.68	Agree
7	Lack of human resources for the maintenance of ICT facilities	3.45	0.64	Agree
8	There is absence of internet facilities in my school	3.53	0.66	Agree
9	Lack of motion picture instructional facilities affect business education programme CCMAS implementation in my school	3.65	0.69	Agree
10	Lack of personnel support to enhance the development of CCMAS curriculum	3.22	0.73	Agree
Grand Mean and SD		3.48	0.82	

Source: Field Study, 2025, Note: SD= Standard deviation

The analysis of data presented in Table 1 shows that the mean ratings range from 3.42 to and 3.65 showing agree, with a grand mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.82. This means that Business Educators agree to the items as the challenges of business education curriculum in the use of instructional delivery at 21st public university in Enugu. The overall mean of 3.48 further confirms agree. The mean scores are indications that there are lots of challenges facing business education programme, which include: inadequate provision of funds, lack of qualified manpower, material

resources, low level of manpower, curriculum development, and lots more. The low standard deviation of 0.82 indicates that the respondents have relatively similar opinion itemized challenges.

Research Question 2: What are the business educators’ challenges in the use of instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum at 21st public university Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 2:

Mean Ratings on the Challenges in the Use of Instructional Delivery within Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum At 21st Public University Enugu State, Nigeria

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Lack of time to develop entrepreneurship education curriculum	3.13	0.81	Agree
2	Lack of experts to develop entrepreneurship education curriculum	3.47	0.84	Agree
3	Lack of facilities to enhance the development of entrepreneurship education curriculum	3.13	0.96	Agree
4	Lack of financial resources for the development of entrepreneurship education curriculum	3.52	0.66	Agree
5	Inadequacy and low capacity of competent lecturers to handle instruction for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education programme	3.56	0.70	Agree
6	Ineffective curricular capacity to support the entrepreneurship training of Nigerian graduates	3.62	0.68	Agree
7	High emphasis on theory and inadequate attention to practical entrepreneurial skill acquisition	3.37	0.82	Agree
8	High level of lecturer-oriented approach of instruction instead of learners-centered approaches in entrepreneurship education among students	3.50	0.69	Agree
9	Inadequate integration of ICT facilities for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education programme in Enugu State, universities	3.39	0.84	Agree
10	Lack of well packaged training infrastructure and problems of capacity building of business educators for effective teaching of entrepreneurship education programme	3.53	0.79	Agree
Grand Mean and SD		3.42	0.78	Agree

Source: Field Study, 2025, Note: SD= Standard deviation

Table 2 shows that all ten items listed as challenges involved in the entrepreneurship education curriculum implementation at 21st public university have mean value ranging from 3.13 to 3.62, with a grand mean of 3.42. This means that the respondents agree that there are challenges in the development of entrepreneurship education curriculum in the use of instructional delivery within public universities Enugu State, Nigeria. The standard deviations for the ten items ranged from 0.66 to 0.96, which showed that respondents were homogeneous in their views.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators in universities on challenges of business education curriculum in the use of instructional delivery at 21st public university Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 4:

ANOVA Analysis on Significant Difference between Male and Female Business Educators in Universities on Challenges of Business Education Curriculum in Instructional Delivery At 21st Public University Enugu State, Nigeria

Sources	SS	Df.	MS	F.	p	Decision
Between Groups	2.458	2	1.229	1.388	0.065	Accept Ho
Within Groups	53.357	55	.777			
Total	58.615	57				

Table 4 shows a calculated F-value of 1.388 with a significant (sig.) p-value of 0.065 which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 ($0.065 > 0.05$) at degrees of freedom of 2 and 55. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business education lecturers on the challenges of business education curriculum in the use of instructional delivery at 21st public university South-East Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two: A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings of business educators on challenges in the use of instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum at 21st public university South-East Nigeria.

Table 5:

T-Test Analysis on Difference Exists in the Mean Ratings of Business Educators on Challenges in the Use of Instructional Delivery .at 21st Public Universities

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t	p
Challenges in instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum	Male	18	2.12	.753	57	.856
	Female	28	2.64	.365		
Total	46					

The results presented in table 5 shows that the aggregate mean ratings of business educators in public universities on the challenges facing business educators is 2.72 and 2.64, while the corresponding standard deviation is .753 and .365. The table indicated that the t-value is .856 at df of 57, while the p-value is .394. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant, since the p-value is greater than the alpha value (0.05), ($0.394 > 0.005$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected; hence, the mean responses of business educators in universities do not significantly differ on the challenges in the use of instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum at 21st public university South-East Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of the study identified 10 challenges facing business education in the use of instructional delivery at 21st public university South-East Nigeria which among others include: inadequate provision of funds, lack of qualified manpower, material resources, low level of manpower, low provision of befitting infrastructures, lack of multimedia TV for instructional delivery, lack of E-learning presentation (power-point), lack of human resources for the maintenance of ICT facilities. This means that the identified challenge is the use of instructional delivery as a teaching strategy in teaching business education courses in university. This finding is in agreement with Obinna (2016) and Bakare, Okereke and Obe (2017) that institution management and government challenges to the utilization of ICT facilities in teaching includes paucity of fund for improving ICT facilities, poor funding and procurement of low-quality facilities for teaching. Therefore, the use of instructional delivery as a teaching strategy together with the provision of needed facilities by university administrators have become imperatives for effective instructional interactions between lecturers and students in this digital era. The findings are in consonance with Atah, Idike, Rosemary, Kolo, Ititim,

Ogbiji, and Ochui (2023), who opined that the world is transitioning from an analog to a digital age, so business educational programmes must be created to be more fit for 21st century learning by digitalizing curriculum to be relevant to twenty-first century learners in a digital format.

Moreover, the findings of the study on research question two showed that the lecturer's challenges in the use of instructional delivery within entrepreneurship education curriculum at 21st public university South-East Nigeria. The findings identified the lecturers' challenges in using instructional delivery entrepreneurship education curriculum includes lack of time to develop entrepreneurship education curriculum, lack of experts to develop entrepreneurship education curriculum, lack of facilities to enhance the development of entrepreneurship education curriculum, lack of financial resources for the development of entrepreneurship education curriculum, inadequacy and low capacity of competent lecturers to handle instruction for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education programme, high emphasis on theory and inadequate attention to practical entrepreneurial skill acquisition among others. The findings corroborated that of Mgbonyebi and Osamor (2019) whose finding revealed 12 challenges facing entrepreneurship education in OTM programme in Polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. In addition, this finding of this study agreed with the report of Agbonlahor (2016) who summarized the challenges of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria to include capacity of lecturers/instructors, absence of curricular capacity to support the training, lack of infrastructural support, favourable policy environment and lack of government support, overemphasize on theory delivery and absence of research support and linkages.

Conclusion

Based on the findings that emanated from the discussions of the study, it was concluded that the challenges such as inadequate funding, inadequate instructional facilities, inadequate supply of modern facilities, and equipment, inadequate supply of modern equipment for business and entrepreneurship education program and others identified, are all put into consideration while planning the business and entrepreneurship education curriculum. This will transform business and entrepreneurship education program positively. The introduction of business and entrepreneurship education program has led to the use of instructional delivery as a teaching strategy to bridge the gap between the traditional approaches and the ever-expanding digitization trend in education. . The study therefore concludes that university administrators and Business Educators need to address the identified challenges to achieve the desired success in business and entrepreneurship education teaching in universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal and State governments should prioritize increased budgetary allocations for business and entrepreneurship education programs in public universities.
2. The National Universities Commission (NUC) and curriculum planners should ensure the integration of 21st-century teaching tools and pedagogies into the business and

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