



THE ROLE OF INDUSTRY-ACADEMIA COLLABORATION IN FOSTERING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING PRACTICE, INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering teaching practice, instructional strategies and career development effectiveness in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted to achieve the purpose of the study while the population of the study comprised of 74 final-year Business Education undergraduates and 8 lecturers from public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. A simple random technique was used to select 65 undergraduates and 6 lecturers while a structured questionnaire was employed for data collection. Cronbach's alpha was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the items in the instrument, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.73. The findings of the study revealed that industry-academia collaboration has a potential role in fostering teaching practice, instructional strategies and career development effectiveness among Business Education undergraduates. The study recommended, among others, that efforts should be intensified by the government and all other major stakeholders to improve industry-academia collaboration in Business Education in universities as this will help to equip undergraduates with the employability skills to be proficient in the business world.

Keywords: Business Education, Career Development, Industry-Academia Collaboration, Instructional Strategies, Lecturers, Students, Teaching Practice.

Introduction

The goal of education is to develop manpower that will be equipped with skills, knowledge and competences required for the overall development of a nation. Therefore, students as the output of the educational system must develop the attributes needed for creative life to enable them contribute their quota to the development of a nation. The objectives of tertiary education as stipulated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) in its education policy document emphasized the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities, and competencies, both mentally and physically as means for the individual to be self-reliant and also contribute to the development of the society. There is a need for educational institutions to provide functional and quality education that will equip students with various employability skills as solution to the challenges of unemployment confronting the graduates of higher institution. Instead of this goals to be achieved, there have been



some disconnections between the products of higher institutions and what is expected in the world of work, thereby causing increase in the rate of unemployment and underemployment.

Many organizations today are looking beyond good paper qualifications to search for people who have diverse skills. Today's employers of labour prefer skilled job seekers that can perform many functions effectively and efficiently so as to contribute to the productivity and success of their organizations (Nwokike & Ezenwafor, 2021). This buttresses the need to discover effective strategies for equipping Business Education undergraduates with relevant employability skills that will contribute to the development of their career in education. One of these effective strategies is encouraging collaboration between higher institutions and the sectors where the students may likely be employed upon graduation.

Industry-academia collaboration is described as an interaction that facilitates exchange of knowledge and technology between industries and institutions at various levels. It is an involvement between schools and industries, and it is established through agreement between two or more parties to establish goals and also come up with a plan of action for the achievement of those goals. Ayonmike and Okeke (2016) emphasized that there is need for effective collaboration between the institutions of learning and industry so as to bridge the skills gap and reduce the alarming rate of unemployment plaguing the society.

A functional Business Education programme that will empower students with career prospects require adequate collaboration with relevant industries that the graduates will serve (Uchenu, Okeke-Okonkwo & Ifi, 2019). This collaboration can be in the area of teaching practice, instructional strategies and career development. Successful partnership in these areas will enhance students' sustainable educational career development, generate mutual respect and trust among education institutions and employers and allow mutual problems to be solved and shared goals reached. These outcomes may help educational leaders increase access to and improve the quality and efficiency of education for employability programmes.

Statement of the Problem

The goal of Business Education is to equip students with the necessary skills and competencies required by employers of labour and to be self-employed in this globalization era, but unfortunately, this goal is still far from being achieved considering the persistent increase in unemployment rate among graduates (including Business Education graduates). A large number of Nigerian higher institutions graduates in the labour market lack necessary skills and competencies that qualify them for employment (Emeasoba, 2017). This problem of unemployment has become a nightmare to the stakeholders in the education sector, industry, government, graduates, parents and the general public because it cannot be divorced from the increasing youth involvement in social menace plaguing the society. Although, efforts have been made to reduce unemployment by the government and other stakeholders in the area of curricula reviews, provision of facilities, training and retraining of lecturers, maintenance of conducive learning environment and students' involvement in Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme and teaching practice, but unemployment level keep increasing. This persistence increase may not be disconnected from little or no attention given to industry-academia collaboration. This bring to the fore, the need to examine the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering teaching practice, instructional strategies and career development in Business Education in Nigeria.



Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering the effectiveness of teaching practice in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Research Question 2: What is the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering the effectiveness of instructional strategies in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Research Question 3: What is the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering the effectiveness of career development in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Literature Review

Industry-Academia Collaboration and Teaching Practice Effectiveness

Educational goal can only be achieved if there are competent and dedicated teachers in the educational system to impact and impart into the student, appropriate knowledge, attitude and values (Emesini, Ugwu, Mbah & Ikposu, 2019). The FRN (2013) in its education policy document emphasized the fact that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers and that teacher education will continue to receive major attention in all educational planning and development. Thus, the teacher possess the key to nation building and the aspiration of any nation to develop into a great country can only be successful if there are qualified and dedicated teachers to pilot the affairs of teaching and learning in the educational system.

In the process of producing qualified teachers, the would-be-teachers like Business Education students go through formal teacher training in higher institutions such as Universities and Colleges of Education. This training involves an internship period known as “teaching practice” where students are provided with opportunities to develop teaching skills and competences in their major area of specialization under the tutelage of professional teachers. Teaching practice is a compulsory course for all would-be-teachers enrolled in teacher education programme in any institution of higher learning. It is an organized academic programme where student-teachers are expected to observe, learn and participate in all teaching, learning and general schooling activities.

Teaching practice is defined as a coaching exercise where the teachers-in-training practice the skills of teaching continuously and regularly under the close observation and supervision of an expert (Emesini *et al.*, 2019). It is an opportunity for an aspiring teacher (otherwise known as student-teacher or teacher-trainee) to acquire practical classroom experience under the supervision of a professional (Emesini *et al.*, 2019). Emesini *et al.*, (2019) explained that teaching practice is an important component of teacher education that involve process of bridging the gap between educational theories and practice where the student-teachers, under cooperative and interactive guidance, acquire valuable skills in teaching and its management to impart knowledge and assist the students to achieve academic breakthrough and excellence.

The success of teaching practice depends on the extent of collaboration that exist among cooperating teacher, university supervisor and aspiring teacher (Aglazor, 2017). The goal of this collaboration is to guide the aspiring teacher to successful completion of teaching practice, provide the needed clarity of purpose and to mentor and support the student-teacher towards the acquisition of sustainable employability skills. This industry-academia collaboration should involve extending invitation to selected school principals to interact with students during teaching practice orientation programme, sending students to schools to observe professional teachers during the course on teaching methods, marking of student-teachers’ lesson plan by cooperating teachers during teaching practice exercise, involving the cooperating teacher in the supervision and grading of student-



teachers, and multiple visit (minimum of three times) of supervisors from the institution to the schools where students are observing the teaching practice exercise.

Aglazor (2017) affirmed that ideally, supervisors from the institution should visit and meet with aspiring teachers at their assigned postings at least three times during the teaching practice exercise to enable them make informed decisions relating to student-teachers' progress and performance. The first meeting should be at the beginning of the teaching practice where supervisor should set expectations and answer any question that the student-teacher may have; the second meeting should be evaluative in nature, where the supervisor observes the student-teacher's classroom teaching and provide feedback, set on-going goals and answer any new question that the would-be-teacher may have while the final meeting should be a conclusive evaluation meeting to determine completion of the field experience and final grade. The supervisors should also facilitate meetings with cooperating teachers and aspiring-teachers to ensure open communication on overall performance of the student-teacher and to discuss issues that emerged during the programme.

Emesini *et al.*, (2019) in their study emphasized that lack of proper supervision of student-teachers by lecturers is a major challenge militating against the effectiveness of the teaching practice programme. In the same vein, Aglazor (2017) buttresses the fact that it is important that student-teachers are paired with competent, knowledgeable and concerned university supervisors to help them assume the full range of duties of a teacher during this practical training period. She also emphasized that host (cooperating) teachers have significant influence in aspiring teachers' professional growth and development.

Industry-Academia Collaboration and Instructional Strategies Effectiveness

An attempt to motivate learners to stay focused to achieve predetermined objectives made teachers to employ various means known as instructional strategies or teaching methods. Instructional strategies according to Ukata, Wechie and Nmehielle (2017) are the methods used by teachers during the teaching and learning activities either in the classroom, online or in some other medium, in order to aid the activation of students' inquisitiveness about a subject matter, to engage students in learning a specific task, and to develop their critical thinking abilities. They are the various techniques that a teacher employ to accomplish various learning objectives. These teaching strategies help the students to develop independent learning abilities and also provide a suitable platform for strategic learning. They enable teachers to make learning fun and also help to arouse students' interest to learn (Ezeabii, Ekoh-Nweke & Agbo, 2022).

Ukata *et al.*, (2017) explained that students' interest, development level and experience are the factors teachers must consider when choosing a particular teaching method in order to enable students to self-accomplish their goals. These strategies can be teacher-centred (where the teaching and learning is actively carried out by the teacher while the students remain passive and are treated as empty vessels to be filled by the teacher) or learners-centered (where students are actively participating in the learning process with the teacher acting as the moderator in the learning process). Instructional strategies outlined by Ashwani (2022) and Theresa (2015) which are also employed in the teaching of Business Education undergraduates are discussion, demonstration, guided-discovery, project, field-trip/excursion and collaborative/cooperative learning methods.

To achieve the desired learning outcome using the various instructional strategies employed in Business Education, industry-academia collaboration can be used in the areas of engaging qualified personnel from industry as guest speakers to teach students, give talks or lectures in their various trade options, taking students on field trips to relevant industries for more understanding of concepts taught in the class, students visits to relevant industries through internship opportunities to enhance their practical skills, organizing seminars, workshops and conferences for



students using industry experts as facilitators, etcetera (Rufai *et al.*, 2015; Emeasoba, 2017; Ikelegbe, 2020; Thimmaiah & Karunakaran, 2021).

Industry-academia collaboration can help to ensure that instructional strategies are relevant, functional, up-to-date and effective in preparing students for the world of work. This will ensure that students are provided with a comprehensive education that combines academic learning with practical experience. Ikelegbe (2020) indicated in his study that industry experts should be invited by the institution as resource persons to demonstrate skills and production techniques to Business Education students. Emeasoba (2017) in a study agreed that knowledge transfer through seminars and workshops where business people will be involved as lecturers or resource persons in the teaching of Business Education students are part of the means of fostering industry-academia collaboration.

In particular, the findings of Rufai *et al.*, (2015) also revealed that part of the reasons for industry-academia collaboration is to provide institutions sometimes even on request, speakers from industries willing to give talks on industrial topics and during capacity building workshops/seminars. However, Joshua *et al.* (2015) in their findings suggest among others the need to bring in seasoned industrialists to participate in drawing curricula and also teach some practical courses on part time basis in Nigerian Universities. They concluded that efforts in this direction will equip Nigerian graduates with skills needed in the industrial sector of the economy with implications for their employability status.

Industry-Academia Collaboration and Career Development Effectiveness

Edokpolor and Chukwuedo (2018) and Edokpolor and Muritala (2018) defined a career as individual's lifelong progression in occupation and learning. Geoffrey, Gidraph and Kiragu (2021) also defined a career as an occupation, work or job undertaken by a person for a significant period of his or her life. Work entails an activity that is undertaken by an individual in order to accomplish a purpose or definite result. Career is the trade or vocation that an individual engage in to make a living. Career is the perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviors of an individual that is connected with work-related experiences and tasks over the span of an individual's life (Judy & Greg, 2012).

Career development is defined as an activity involving a formalized, planned and organized effort of developing an individual to be beneficial to himself/herself and also the organization (Folayan, Adebisi & Adeosun, 2020). Shaito (2019) referred to career development as the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future. It is a process that enables people who are productive to grow their skills, thus adding values to themselves and advancing the organization at large. Career development includes skill training, performance feedback, career mentoring and career coaching and can be enhanced via programs conducted throughout the entire lifetime of an individuals by career counselors, counseling psychologist, teachers, placement specialists, and career mentors or managers.

According to the National Business Education Association (NBEA) (2020), career development has a very great influence on a person's choice of education and occupation that affects standard of living and well-being. NBEA affirmed that career development should be incorporated into the entire higher institution's curriculum every year because the introduction of students to career exploration at an early stage will help them to acquire a progressive understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. This will give them the prospect to learn about various jobs that are related to their interests and to understand the importance of lifelong learning toward career success.

The effectiveness of Business Education undergraduates' career development could be significantly facilitated by industry-academia collaboration. This is achieved by connecting students



to industries in order to help them gain relevant skills, knowledge and experience needed for their desired career path. This collaboration will give industries the opportunity to gain early access to new talents that has unique skills, insights and perspectives. NBEA (2020) in its curriculum identified mentoring, job shadowing, informational interviewing and school-to-career initiatives as strategies for career development in the educational system.

Folayan *et al.*, (2020) in their study posited that career management workshops, speaking with career advisors, engaging guest speakers in the classroom, establishing link with employers, provision of career guidance, work experience, and career support programmes (like career week or fair), etcetera are part of the industry-academia collaboration that can be engaged to improve career development and employability of students. These activities enable the students to develop a high level of confidence that any assigned task can be carried out with little or no error. Speaking with a career advisor makes it a lot faster for some people to improve on their career development (Kumar, 2007 as cited by Folayan *et al.*, 2020).

As part of the effort to enhance graduates' employability skills through career development, Bridgstock, Grant-Imaru and McAlpine (2019) emphasized that integrating career development learning into the curriculum of institutions of higher learning will facilitate students' acquisition of skills required for gainful employment. They explained that career development learning equipped students with the strength and capacity required to navigate careers and the world of work.

Method

Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. It is a non-experimental quantitative research design, which aimed at gathering data from group of persons by way of questionnaire administration, and the results could be generalized to the general population.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population for this study comprised of 74 final year Business Education undergraduates and 8 lecturers of Business Education from public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample size of 65 Business Education students and 6 Business Education lecturers.

Research Instrument Validity and Reliability

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire and it was validity by two experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation and Business Education respectively. The reliability was ascertained using Cronbach's alpha reliability test method, which yielded the internal consistency index of 0.73, implying that the instrument is reliable and adequate for data collection.

Data Collection Procedure

After taking permission from the institutions used, the researcher explained the nature of the research and its objective to the respondents and the questionnaires were administered to the respondents.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents was analyzed using the mean and standard deviation for the research questions. A mean of 3.50 & above indicates Great Extent; 2.50-3.49 indicates



Moderate Extent; 1.50-2.49 indicates Low Extent; while less than 1.50 indicates Almost Non-Existent.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering the effectiveness of teaching practice in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Industry-academia collaboration and teaching practice effectiveness in Business Education programme in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

S/N	Teaching Practice	M	SD	Remark
1	Selected school principals are invited to interact with students during teaching practice orientation programme.	2.68	1.14	Moderate Extent
2	Students are sent to schools to observe professional teachers during the course on teaching.	3.24	0.99	Moderate Extent
3	Cooperating teachers mark the lesson plan of student teachers.	2.89	1.18	Moderate Extent
4	The institution provides supervision template for students' assessment to the teaching practice schools management.	3.27	0.87	Moderate Extent
5	Lecturers (supervisors) visit the TP schools at least three times before the end of the teaching practice exercise.	3.21	0.96	Moderate Extent
	Grand Mean	3.06		Moderate Extent

Table 1 shows the result of the analysis of the responses of the respondents on the extent to which industry-academia collaboration has been used for teaching practice in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria. The result showed that most of the respondents rated the following statements to a moderate extent: invitation of selected school principals to interact with students during teaching practice orientation programme, sending of students to schools to observe professional teachers during the course on teaching, marking of lesson plan of student teachers by cooperating teachers, and provision of supervision template for students' assessment to the teaching practice schools management by the institutions, and visitation of supervisors to teaching practice schools at least three times before the end of the teaching practice exercise. The finding, based on grand mean of the research question showed that industry-academia collaboration has been used for teaching practice in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent.



Research Question 2: What is the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering the effectiveness of instructional strategies in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Industry-academia collaboration and instructional strategies effectiveness in Business Education programme in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

S/N	Instructional Strategies	M	SD	Remark
6	Qualified personnel are employed from industry to teach students in their various trade options.	2.89	1.023	Moderate Extent
7	Students are taken to industries for field trips to relevant industries for more understanding of concepts taught in the class.	2.76	1.00	Moderate Extent
8	Students enhance their practical skills through visits to relevant industries.	3.24	0.88	Moderate Extent
9	Seminars are organized for students using industry experts as facilitators.	2.97	0.92	Moderate Extent
10	Workshops are organized for students using industry experts as facilitators.	2.89	1.02	Moderate Extent
11	Organization of conferences for students using industry experts as facilitators.	2.77	0.84	Moderate Extent
	Grand Mean	2.92		Moderate Extent

Table 2 shows the analysis of the responses of the respondents on the extent to which industry-academia collaboration has been used for instructional strategies in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding showed that most of the respondents rated the following statements to a moderate extent: employment of qualified personnel from industry to teach students in their various trade options, students being taken to industries for field trips to relevant industries for more understanding of concepts taught in the class, students enhancement of their practical skills through visits to relevant industries, organization of seminars for students using industry experts as facilitators, organization of workshops for students using industry experts as facilitators, and organization of conferences for students using industry experts as facilitators. The finding, based on grand mean of the research question, showed that industry-academia collaboration has been used for instructional strategies in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent.

Research Question 3: What is the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering the effectiveness of career development in Business Education in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Industry-academia collaboration and career development effectiveness in Business Education programme in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

S/N	Career Development	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Remark
12	Industry professionals are engaged to provide career guidance to students through seminars.	3.08	0.90	Moderate Extent
13	Students go to various industries for internship.	3.39	0.83	Moderate Extent
14	Students learn through apprenticeship.	3.42	0.76	Moderate Extent
15	Students are linked with mentors from the industries.	3.23	0.88	Moderate Extent
16	Career fairs are organized to network the students with industries.	3.04	0.86	Moderate Extent
17	Continuous career development programmes are organized for students with industry professionals as facilitators.	2.97	0.92	Moderate Extent Moderate
	Grand Mean	3.18		Extent

Table 3 shows the analysis of the responses of the respondents on the extent to which industry-academia collaboration has been used for career development in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria. The result showed that most of the respondents rated the following statements to a moderate extent: engagement of industry professionals to provide career guidance to students through seminars, going of students to various industries for internship, students learning through apprenticeship, linking of students with mentors from the industries, organization of career fairs to network the students with industries, and organization of continuous career development programmes for students with industry professionals as facilitators. The finding, based on the grand mean of the research question, showed that industry-academia collaboration has been used for career development in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent.

Discussion

The study established that industry-academia collaboration has been used for teaching practice in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent (see Table 1). The finding corroborates the study of Aglazor (2017) which states that the



success of teaching practice depends on the extent of collaboration that exist among cooperating teachers, university supervisors and aspiring teachers. However, there is still room for improvement in the collaborations to a very good or great extent.

In ascertaining the extent to which industry-academia collaboration has been used for instructional strategies in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria, the result in Table 2 showed that it was to a moderate extent. The findings of Joshua et al. (2015) that there is need to bring in seasoned industrialists to participate in drawing curricula and also teach some practical courses on part time basis in Nigerian Universities agrees to this finding. Efforts in this direction will equip Nigerian graduates with skills and competences needed to secure and sustain their employability status. Also, the research findings of Rufai et al. (2015), Emeasoba (2017), Ikelegbe (2020), and Thimmaiah and Karunakaran (2021) buttress the result of the study.

The result of the study in Table 3 also showed that industry-academia collaboration has been used for career development in Business Education undergraduate programme in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent. The findings of Folayan et al. (2020) that career management workshops, speaking with career advisors, engaging guest speakers in the classroom, establishing link with employers, provision of career guidance, work experience, and career support programmes (like career week or fair), etc are part of the industry-academia collaboration that are/can be engaged to improve career development and employability of students support this finding. If all these are embedded in the students' academic activities, they will stand a better chance to secure and remain employable.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, industry-academia collaboration has a great and potential role in fostering the effectiveness of teaching practice, instructional strategies and career development in Business Education programme in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent.

Recommendations

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

1. More effort should be made by the government, education sector, universities and other stakeholders to improve industry-academia collaboration in Business Education undergraduates programme in the area of teaching practice so as to equip the students with necessary skills and competencies required for sustainable teaching career.
2. The University Management should intensify more effort on industry-academia collaboration for instructional strategies in Business Education. This will give more room for qualified personnel from the industry to be engaged to teach students in some areas of their specialization.
3. Career development programmes such as career guidance, career management workshop, speaking with career advisors and mentoring should be incorporated into the academic programme of Business Education undergraduates.
4. Conferences, seminars, workshops, visit to relevant industries, internship, etc should be organized regularly for the training of Business Education students.



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