

## **Influence of Teaching Methods on the Implementation of the Curriculum Content of Secretarial Education in Selected Colleges of Education in South-South, Nigeria**

Dr. (Mrs.) Henrietta Abhameso Olumese<sup>1</sup> and Ediagbonya, Kennedy<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1&2</sup>Department of Vocational and Technical Education,  
Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State  
ediagbonyak@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*This research paper specifically investigated the influence of teaching methods on the implementation of the curriculum content of secretarial education in selected colleges of education in south-south, Nigeria. One research question and a corresponding hypothesis was formulated to be tested. The survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised 74 secretarial education teachers and they were used as the sample for the study. The instrument used was the structured questionnaire and it was validated by experts in the field. The test re-test method of reliability was used in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument and it yielded a co-efficient of 0.82. The mean, standard deviation and t-test were used in analyzing the data collated and some of the findings include: teachers sometimes use the prescribed teaching methods. One of the major recommendations advanced in this paper was that secretarial education teachers need a re-training in the use of all teaching methods.*

**Keywords:** Secretarial Education, Teaching Methods and Curriculum

---

### **Introduction**

Business education which is a subfield of vocational and technical education is considered as the study of the pedagogical, skills, knowledge, attitude, values and competencies needed to operate in a teaching field and business world in organized institutions or environment. Anunike (2010) confirmed that the concept of business education has been explained in diverse ways. While some scholars refer to it as commercial education, others see it as both office education and general education. In whatever way we approach it, business education is the subfield of vocational and technical education which prepare the recipient for gainful employment (whether paid or self employed) through the acquisition of skills, values, competence and knowledge needed to operate in a business world. The process of imparting and acquiring these necessary skills take place in an organized environment.

Business education, according to Osuala (1981), cited in Ibe (2009), is a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: (1) Office Education, a Vocational Education programme for office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education; and (2) General business education, a programme that provides students with information and competencies which are needed in managing personal business affairs in using the service of business. General education is an identified group of educational experiences selected in order to develop in individuals, those competencies that are characteristic of a responsible citizen. General business subjects consist of skill and non-skill subjects. Skill subjects include book-keeping, accounting, shorthand, typewriting, office practice, computer education, marketing, record-keeping and transportation systems. The non-skill general business subjects include economics, consumer economics, business mathematics, business organization, business communication, and retailing.

The 2002 and 2008 revised minimum standards for Nigerian Certificate in Education have been found to contain same teaching methods with the exception of fieldtrip as found in 2008 (4<sup>th</sup> edition) 6 years later. In the past two decades however, there has been new developments in the re-conceptualization of Secretarial Education and the development and adoption of a new Secretarial Education curricula in schools. According to Amoor (2009) the concept of Secretarial Education is seen as vocational programme that is offered in secondary schools, polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Universities. In Colleges of Education and Faculties of Education where the programme of business education is mounted, secretarial education is taught primarily to educate and train students to become secretarial teachers and administrators with the appropriate skills and competencies to take up a career in teaching, office occupation and business. In polytechnics, secretarial education is offered as a component of vocational education that provides knowledge and skills for would-be confidential secretaries that are expected to perform effectively in the world of work. Secretarial Education plays an important role in national economic development. It is also a vital tool for government at the federal, state and local government levels, that should be used to combat unemployment crisis and a tool to alleviate poverty (Ilo, 2002; Udoh, 2008; Usman, 2008). Secretarial Education is also very useful to private organizations and individuals in terms of employment job creation and self reliance.

Despite the relevance of the programme and the existence of a common minimum standard for all NCE programmes in colleges of education, the researcher is concerned about intended changes and actual classroom practices. Therefore the gap the researcher intends to fill is the degree of implementation of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) Secretarial Education Curriculum particularly in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Teachers are expected to adhere to the NCCE minimum standards in their teaching. It has become necessary to know whether teachers actually follow the NCCE minimum standards as planned, especially as it relates to teaching methods. Teaching is a deliberate effort by a qualified and experienced person to impart information, knowledge, skills, attitudes, values to students, ensuring that the content to be taught is worthwhile and that the procedure is educationally acceptable necessitating the required feedback.

Nwachukwu (2001) pointed out that the task of organizing for effective teaching is crucial in any educational setting. Effective teaching is that which produces result in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the students. Effective teaching depends on the teacher's use of appropriate instructional methods and techniques (Cabren & Lanase, 2002). In Vocational and Technical Education which secretarial education rightly belongs, teaching methods and techniques are aimed at developing in the learners the ability to acquire the knowledge and skills useful for work (Nwachukwu, 2001). These methods and techniques can vary in depth and time depending on the level of students and the materials available for instruction. Nwachukwu (2001) maintained that how to teach the selected element at the classroom level depends on the teacher. Teaching methods are used by all teachers to present skills, knowledge, and appreciations to the learners in the classroom and to engage learners in the tasks involved while teaching techniques are processes adopted by veteran teachers to inject variety in their teaching, stimulate it and maintain the learners' interest in it (Nworgu, 2006). They maintained that instructional techniques are subsumed in teaching methods as ancillaries or adjuncts to ensure the effectiveness of the method. However, the common teaching methods used in vocational and technical education of which technical colleges is one, includes lecture methods, project methods, demonstration methods, discussion methods and field trip methods (Oranu, 2003).

Lecture method is the commonest form of teaching used in higher institutions. However, it is used badly and teaching is emphasized at the expense of learning. In most schools' environments, learners are seen as a "Tabula Rasa" and all that they need is to listen to the teacher to give all that they require. Such methods are still being used in our present educational institutions, but with modifications. Olayede (2011) citing Nwosu (1998) recommended the inclusion of reciprocity in lecture method. He supported the idea of teachers exposing the content of lessons to students in an orderly procedure, and allows students to reciprocate and it is only on that note that one can be certain that the teacher has successfully transferred knowledge. In support of Nwosu's (1998) view, Kayode (2001) emphasized the need for the teacher to adopt a technique that would explore the content of a subject in its entirety, thereby making learning a worthwhile process.

Kayode (2001) reaffirmed that teachers have the potentials through training and experience to change the behaviour of a learner irrespective of the learner's characteristic disposition. This method according to Nwaiwu and Ama (2014) involves the systematic presentation of information or instruction through oral exposition by the teacher, supplemented by the use of appropriate teaching aids or instructional materials. They further stressed that it can be used to give maximum amount of information within a limited time. Thus, it promotes transfer of learning because the learner can draw experiences from wider subject areas to solve contemporary problems. The comprehensive knowledge it provides serves as a good entering behaviour for further studies in affected subject area.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The teaching of secretarial education in Nigerian Colleges of Education stimulates curiosity regarding the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation. Udoh (2003) noted a serious

gap between the intended changes and actual classroom practices in Secretarial education in colleges of education despite the existence of a common minimum standard for NCE programmes. These intended changes some say could be viewed as: teaching styles/method, evaluation techniques, tasks such as field trips, role relationship, instructional materials/equipment and their availability. Commitment to goals/objectives and adherence to teacher-student ratio and class size will lead to the attainment of the objectives. A research report (Aina, 1986) confirmed that there still exists a huge gap between policy and practice in the education industry. Practice, as observed, is almost a complete opposite of stated goals and objectives. Implementation has remained the missing element between elegant government policies and programmes (Okebukola, 2000). These observations suggest that there are problems between the curriculum as documented and the experience at the level of implementation. There is no doubt that the quality of the teacher-trainees is dependent on the professional training received from these colleges of education. The NCCE provides the curriculum upon which the colleges train their students. There is the need therefore, to determine the veracity and the implementation of the curriculum by the colleges in order to determine the quality of teachers produced.

It is a fact that secretarial education instruction in all Colleges of Education in Nigeria has been based on the NCCE curriculum which is being implemented by the teachers throughout the nation. What is not yet fully known is the degree of its implementation in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. It is observed that non-specialist lecturers teach secretarial courses as against NCCE's recommendation. Are teacher-trainers interested in the implementation of the programme and have they seriously imbibed the philosophy or internalized the values of the curriculum? It is questionable whether secretarial education lecturers use the appropriate teaching methods in the course of implementing the curriculum. It is upon the above premise that this study was carried out.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to find out Secretarial Education teachers' use of prescribed teaching methods.

### **Research Question**

1. Do secretarial education teachers use prescribed teaching methods in teaching secretarial education courses in the classroom?

### **Hypothesis**

1. The Secretarial Education teachers with acceptable score on the use of prescribed teaching methods, is not significantly less than 50%.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The research design that was adopted for this study is survey method which involves collecting information from teachers who are in charge of the implementation of the curriculum and the observation of Secretarial Education classroom teachers.

### **Population of the Study**

The target population of this study was 74 which were from the nine colleges of education in the South-South zone of Nigeria.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The researcher used the entire seventy-four (74) Secretarial Education lecturers in Colleges of Education in the South-South zone of Nigeria to solicit responses to the questionnaire being the first instrument. For the purpose of classroom observation, a random sampling technique was used to select three lecturers from each college and one in a particular college totalling twenty-five (25) Secretarial Education lecturers.

### **Research Instrument**

Two instruments were used in this study namely; the Lecturers' Questionnaire and Classroom Observation Schedule. The questionnaire was organised into two sections (A and B). Section A contains four items on lecturers' personal data. Section B, 16 items on prescribed and other appropriate teaching methods.

### **Validity of the Instrument**

The two instruments used were subjected to content validity. The questionnaire and the observation checklist were given to three experts in University of Benin.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

To determine the reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was carried out. The lecturers' questionnaire was administered to ten (10) Secretarial Education lecturers at colleges of education in Ondo and Ekiti States. These lecturers were not involved in the main study. The responses of the lecturers were scored and data collected on the last three sections of the instrument were used separately to obtain the reliability co-efficient using Cronbach Alpha techniques to determine the internal consistency. The reliability co-efficient of Section B was found to be 0.82.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The lecturer questionnaires were administered by the researcher and two research assistants. Secondly, for direct classroom observation of secretarial education lecturers, the investigator with the research assistants visited the colleges of education used for classroom observation to observe the teachers as they teach. An observational schedule and rating scale developed for this purpose was used for the classroom observation.

### **Data Analysis**

Data collected in this study were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics as appropriate for the research questions and hypotheses. The first four research questions were answered using descriptive statistic of mean and standard deviation. The criterion for decision was based on real limit of values of mean such that mean values ranging between 0 – 2.0 is low/never, between 2.0 – 3.0 is moderate/sometimes and 3.1 – 4.0 is high/often.

## **Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings**

### **Research Question**

Do secretarial education teachers use prescribed teaching methods in teaching secretarial education courses?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the use of methods in teaching Secretarial Education courses:**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std Dev	Decision
1	Lecture method	2.99	.12	Often
2	Textbooks	2.95	.22	Often
3	Question method	2.92	.27	Often
4	Simulation	1.48	.53	Sometimes
5	Tutorial	1.63	.51	Sometimes
6	Resources persons	1.43	.50	Sometimes
7	Model office practicals	2.24	.94	Often
8	Shorthand laboratory practicals	1.41	.74	Sometimes
9	Typewriting/word processing practicals	2.73	.58	Often
10	Case studies	2.89	.31	Often
11	Discussion	2.19	.65	Often
12	Demonstration	2.79	.47	Often
13	Project	2.40	.55	Often
14	Field trips	2.00	.61	Often
15	Problem solving	2.32	.50	Often
16	Group work	2.64	.51	Often

key: 0-2.0 = Low/never, 2.1-3.0 = Moderate/sometimes, 3.1 – 4.0 = High/often

The data presented in Table 1 showed the mean of the use of teaching methods by secretarial education teachers in colleges of education. The mean values range from 1.41 to 2.99 deviation range from .12 to .94. The mean values revealed that the secretarial education teachers only sometimes use four of the prescribed teaching methods which are simulation, tutorials, resource persons and shorthand laboratory practicals. However, the table also revealed that teachers often use twelve (12) of the teaching methods which are lecture method, textbooks, question method, model office practicals, typing pool/computer practicals, chalkboard, discussion, demonstration, project, field trips, problem solving and group work.

### **Hypothesis**

The secretarial education teachers with acceptable score on the use of prescribed teaching methods, is not significantly less than 50%.

**Table 2: One-Sample t-test Analysis of teachers with acceptable score on the use of prescribed teaching methods**

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	Df	t-cal	P-value
Use of Prescribed teaching methods	74	36.97	2.27	73	18.851	0.000

*Test-value= 32; P < 0.05,*

The t-test results presented in Table 2 shows a calculated t-value of 18.85 and a p-value of .000, testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is less the alpha level. So, the null hypothesis which states that the Secretarial Education teachers with acceptable score on the use of prescribed teaching methods is not significantly less than 50% is rejected. Since the mean value of 36.97 is greater than the test-value of 32, the teachers who had acceptable score on the use of prescribed teaching methods is significantly more than 50%.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings on the use of teaching methods revealed that teachers only sometimes use four of the teaching methods but often use twelve (12) others that are either prescribed or appropriate such as: tutorial, simulations and shorthand laboratory practical. Practical shorthand which secretarial education teachers sometimes use is among the methods prescribed by the National Commission for Colleges of Education. The findings in particular revealed a weakness in the ability of the teachers to teach practical shorthand which is a core course in the colleges of education that offer secretarial education. Teaching shorthand practical's only sometimes cannot be effective and also not employing tutorials and simulations to teach secretarial education courses could make the secretarial teachers to be ineffective as teachers are expected to ensure that the procedure of imparting knowledge is educationally acceptable necessitating the required feedback. This finding is in agreement with Nwachukwu (2001) who maintained that the task of organising for effective teaching is crucial in any educational setting. Nwachukwu (2001) further emphasized that teaching methods and techniques are aimed at developing the learners' ability to acquire the knowledge and skills useful for work. Also (Nworgu, 2006) maintained that teaching methods supported with teaching techniques are processes adopted by veteran teachers to inject variety in their teaching, to stimulate and maintain the learners' interest to bring about effectiveness.

The findings also agreed to a reasonable extent with Oranu (2003) who affirmed that lecture methods, project methods (case study) demonstration methods (practicals) discussion methods and field trip (excursions) are the common teaching methods used in vocational and technical education. The researcher has shown that the other teaching methods investigated in this study should be used by the secretarial education teachers in order to be able to implement the curriculum as planned by the designers. It is the role of the teacher to utilise all the teaching methods and this obviously calls for granting in-service training to the teachers to enhance their skills. Subsequent to this, Olayede (2011) recommended the

inclusion of reciprocity in lecture method, which is participatory. This he says allows for certainty that the teacher has successfully transferred knowledge in order to develop the learners' cognitive, effective and psychomotor skills.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the teaching methods found to be ignored such as simulation, tutorials, particularly shorthand laboratory practical, which is compulsory were only sometimes used or never used, seriously deserve the attention of the teachers to empower them more in the implementation of secretarial education curriculum as intended by the NCCE, to bring about the needed changes. Could it be that the teachers themselves are not knowledgeable in the rules and techniques of graduating shorthand passages/ materials for dictations into syllabic intensity;  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , 1-5 minutes timing, using stop watches which ought to have been taught and learned in their special methods classes while they were in training?

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions of this study:

1. As a matter of urgency, teachers need to undergo serious re-training in the use of instructional materials/equipment with particular reference to those materials housed in shorthand laboratories and model offices.
2. Secretarial education teachers need a re-training in the use of all teaching methods.
3. teachers should be encouraged to internalize the characteristics of the curriculum and show commitment in the continual implementation of the above curriculum.
4. the NCCE is therefore required as a matter of urgency to overhaul the 2008 secretarial education curriculum and review it to pattern its current statement of objectives in Modula form fashioned after the NBTE Minimum Guide.
5. teachers should be encouraged to attend conferences in order for them to update themselves as regards teaching methodologies.

### **References**

- Aina, O. (1986). Report on technical Teacher Production. F.M.E., Lagos.
- Amoor, S.S. (2009). An Evaluation of Challenges of Secretarial Education Programme in Nigerian Universities between 2000 – 2009. *The information manager*, 9(1), 5 – 25
- Anunike, P.E. (2010). Problems in business education research; Association Business educators of Nigeria, Book of Readings: 1(10) 109-112.
- Caberera, C.M. and La Nassa, J.S. (2002). *Secondary and middle school teaching methods*, New York: Macmillan.
- Ibe, I.I. (2009) secretarial education, its origin and transformation: an Inaugural Lecture presented at Abia state polytechnic, Aba, Abia state on 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 2009.

- Ilo, N.H. (2002) Secretarial Education and Poverty Alleviation. *Business Education Journal*. 3(5), 44-46.
- Kayode, B.(2001) *Introduction to History of Nigeria Education*. Lagos: Dedun Educational Publishers.
- Nwachukwu, C.E, (2001).*Designing appropriate methodology in Vocational and Technical Education for Nigeria*. Nsukka: Falladu Publishing Company.
- Nwaiwu, K.N. and Ama, F.N. (2014). Equipping office technology and management students for global employment in the mid twenty first century. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 2(1), 250-259
- Nworgu, B.G. (2006). *Educational Research: Basic Issues and Methodology*. Nsukka: University Trust Publishers.
- Olayede,O. B (2011) Factors Militating against effective implementation of electronic works curriculum in technical colleges in North central Zone and federal capital territory unpublished master's thesis, university of Benin.
- Okebukola, P. A. O. (2000). Policies Programme and Action Plan for a Decade of Technical and Vocation Education in Nigeria (2002 – 2010) a paper presented at the National Seminar on Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) in Nigeria: Vision and Action, Abuja, Nigeria.
- Oranu, R. N. (2003). Pre-service Preparation of Technical and Vocational Education Teachers, Paper Presented at the National Seminar on Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria: Vision and Action. Abuja, October 31 – Nov 2.
- Udoh, V. A. (2003) *Evaluation of Curriculum and Instructional Practices in Nigerian Schools*. Onitsha: Duo Publishers.
- Usman, H.N. (2008) Business Education in National Economic Reform Agenda. *Journal of Education Research and Development*.5(3), 289-290