



## CHALLENGES TO THE UTILIZATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*The study ascertained the challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was used. Area of the study was South East Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Population for the study comprised 54 business educators in seven public universities in South East Nigeria. Due to the manageable size of the population, there was no sampling. The instrument for data collection was a 33 item structured questionnaire. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and a coefficient of 0.69 was realized. Out of 53 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 52 copies were retrieved representing 98.11% return rate. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviations while the hypotheses were tested using t-test at .05 level of significance and at 50 degree of freedom. Finding indicates among others: poor funding of ICT facilities in universities, inadequate knowledge of new technologies by business educators. The recommendations include: government should increase their allocations to business education for purchase of facilities; lecturers should try and update their knowledge on new technologies through seminars and conferences.*

**Key words:** *Challenges, Utilization, Technologies, Business Education.*

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## **Introduction**

Business education programme is a valuable programme for skills acquisition required by graduates to demonstrate in 21<sup>st</sup> century that is highly competitive and technology-driven. Business education according to Okoli (2010) is that aspect of the educational programme that provides the knowledge, skill, understanding and attitudes needed to perform effectively in the business world as a producer and/or consumer of goods and services that business offer. Nwachukwu (2012) saw business education as an umbrella name concerning those educational processes involving the study of techniques, related science and acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and knowledge relating to occupation in vocational sectors of the economic and social life of a people.

In other words, with degree in business education, one can be employed in secretarial offices, administrative offices, banks and marketing sectors. One can also be an entrepreneur and create employment for others. Business education program aims at imparting saleable skills in the recipients. Asoqwo (2005) in Ezeabii (2016:69) outlined the objectives of business education as follows:

- To provide opportunity for practical job preparation or vocation studies for students/masses in order to make them render effective and efficient services in office, distributive and services occupation.
- To provide opportunity for students and the public to develop an understanding of the business and economic system of the nation so as to enable them participate actively as producers and consumer of goods and services.
- To enable students/individuals have career consciousness and economic understanding of the free enterprise system.
- To prepare students/individuals based on their interest and aptitude with the skills, knowledge and attitudes, needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it.
- To develop in the students and the public the basic awareness of the contributions which business, government and office employee make to the economy.

For business education programme to remain relevant in providing the needs of individuals and that of the society, it must embrace current trends in the academic and economic demands of the society. This type of programme is offered at different



levels of education (Primary to tertiary). Business education programme is offered in public and private universities in Nigeria. The public universities are those universities owed/funded and controlled by the federal and state government. They are different from private universities which are owned, funded and controlled by private individuals and organizations. Business education is offered in public universities in South East Nigeria. South East is one of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. It comprises of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States.

Business education courses are taught by both male and female lecturers in universities. Ezeabii (2017) observed that there is no gender bias in teaching and learning of the course in the universities, both male and female students enrol for the programme and are exposed to the same skills. Therefore, for business education to achieve its aims and objectives, it must embrace current trends in new technologies which are needed for academic and economic pursuits. New technologies are tools which people and organizations apply to get things done more quickly, easily and effectively. Okorocho and Nwadiani (2015) defined new technologies as the machine and equipment which are introduced in the work place to facilitate work processes. The authors further defined it as the use of scientific knowledge to produce goods and services useful to man. In other words, new technologies are current (different from obsolete) equipment and tools used in facilitating work processes for efficiency and effectiveness.

The use of these new technologies can help the students and teachers develop the competencies needed for the twenty-first (21<sup>st</sup>) century. Okafor (2017) further opined that business education in public universities in South East Nigeria would achieve the goals of teaching if such modern technological teaching aids like computers, electric typewriters, television sets, projectors, internet facilities among others are adequately utilized. Other technological devices available for teaching and learning according to Osuala (2009) include media typewriter or processor, video tape recorder, advanced calculators and digital library.

The relevance of new technology in teaching are numerous as the knowledge acquired may be used in distributing, buying, selling, marketing and servicing of products in e-commerce or via electronic system. New technology is relevant as it allows faster feedback, improved collaborative efforts between large groups of people, make distance and open learning easier. Eze (2015:36) pointed out that the benefits of new technologies in teaching include:



- The use of new technology is more effective for teaching low cognitive materials than cognitive materials.
- It is more suitable for teaching young people at digital age than old ones.
- Economic disadvantaged students benefit more from the use of modern technologies than with conventional aids.
- Students retain what they have learned better with new technologies than ordinary teaching aids.
- It leads to more positive attitudes and independent learning in e-learning world.
- The use of new technologies acts as a supplement to conventional instruction for higher achievement.

Despite the numerous benefits of utilizing new technologies in teaching and learning, some universities, even those in South East Nigeria still make use of old methods of teaching that encourage rote learning. Lecturers are still seen as source of content and the programme is still teacher-centred instead of student-centred. Sequel to that, Ezeabii and Agomuo (2017) observed that some lecturers do not make use of ICT facilities in teaching and this is not acceptable. In addition, it seems that these new technologies are not even available or where available not in sufficient quantity for use in the universities. Ezeabii and Agomuo found out that the ICT facilities are not available to a high extent in the universities in Nigeria for teaching and learning.

However, these new technologies are supposed to be provided in the universities by the government, universities administration, communities where these institutions are situated, lecturers and so on. In fact, all stakeholders have parts to play. The question is: are these stakeholders playing their part? Uwaifo (2009) noted that government contributions to education has not yielded a positive correlation with the population of students, dilapidation of existing facilities and improvement in ICT based learning. Also, Okeke (2017) opined that these government related challenges have influenced the availability and utilization of new technologies in schools.

In the provision and utilization of these new technologies, lecturers are also stakeholders. Their positive or negative contributions will make or mar the utilization of these new technologies in our institutions. Regrettably, Mbah, Obi, Ehimen and Onyebuenyi (2018) observed that teachers lack the skills and knowledge to effectively utilize new technologies in teaching in contemporary society. Subsequently, Agwazia, Ayembre and Ukor (2014) stated that the teachers'



challenges on the use of ICT in teaching students include lack of relevant facilities, lack of supporting staff, poor funding and lack of ICT pedagogical importance. In effect, when a lecturer is deficient in the use of instructional aids for a programme, the programme, will suffer.

Nevertheless, these anomalies do not augur well for the achievement of business education objectives. It may lead to production of theoretical graduates who lack the practical aspects and as such cannot function in automated offices in this E-world. The graduates will be irrelevant to the demands of the current society. This suggests that the utilization of the new technologies is facing some challenges. Challenges may be seen as a process or action to take possession or convince one to act. Okeke (2015) viewed challenges as the situation of being faced with something that needs greater mental or physical efforts in order to be done successfully and therefore tests a person's ability. Business education programme seems to be facing a lot of challenges in this technological era with respect to using new technologies in teaching and learning. No wonder their graduates roam about the streets in search of jobs. Some employed cannot even make use of the automated office well. Lecturers still make use of the old methods and equipment instead of new technologies. Hence, the need to identify the challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria?
2. What are the lecturers-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses guiding the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.



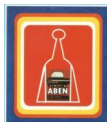
2. A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on lecturers-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. Descriptive survey research according to Nworgu (2015) is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people or entire group. The design is suitable for this study because data will be collected and analysed from business educators in South East Nigeria. The area of the study is South East Nigeria. South East is one of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. It is made up of five states (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo). The population for the study consists of 53 business educators in the public universities in South East State of Nigeria. Due to the manageable size of the population, the entire number was used, hence no sampling was done.

A 33 item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers through extensive literature review was the instrument for data collection. It was divided into two parts. Part 1 was on biodata while part II had two sections based on the two research questions. Four point rating scale of strongly (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used. The instrument was face validated by three experts from Enugu State University of Science and Technology Enugu. While one expert was from measurement and evaluation unit of Science and Computer Education Department, the other two were from Business Education Department. To determine the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of it was administered to business educators in Rivers State University and Federal University of Port-Harcourt Rivers State South East Nigeria. The data collected were analysed using Cronbach Alpha. The overall Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was 0.69 indicating high reliability of the instrument. Three research assistants conversant with the area of the study were briefed and used to administer and collect the questionnaire. However, 52 out of 53 copies of the questionnaire distributed were retrieved representing 98.11% return rate.

Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Weighted means and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used for hypothesis testing. Decision rule with regards to research questions were based on real limits of the mean on a four point scale. The four point scale was coded as follows:



Strongly Agree	=	3.50	4.00
Agree	=	2.50	3.49
Disagree	=	1.50	2.49
Strongly Disagree	=	1.00	1.49

Standard deviation was used to determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the opinions of the respondents. For decision rule on null hypotheses, t-test of no significant difference was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance and at appropriate degree of freedom. The null hypothesis was significant where the probability value was less than the .05 significant level at appropriate degree of freedom, otherwise the null hypothesis was not significant.

### Results

The result of the study were presented based on the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

#### Research Question 1

What are the government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Mean ratings and standard deviation of business educators on the government related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

S/N	Government Related Challenges to the Utilization of New Technologies in Business Education Programme Include:	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Poor funding of ICT facilities in the universities	2.98	0.94	Agree
2	Politicization of new technology projects in the universities	2.90	0.98	Agree
3	Lack of government support on innovative teaching approaches in business education	2.65	1.01	Agree
4	Low level of supervision of tertiary education programme by relevant authorities	2.83	0.76	Agree
5	Lack of legislative framework on the utilization of new technologies in the universities	2.87	0.99	Agree
6	High level of political bottleneck on the implementation of ICT projects	2.85	0.89	Agree
7	High level of corruption in the government system	2.81	0.86	Agree
8	Employment of in experienced business educators to the universities to teach	2.87	0.97	Agree
9	Appointment of unqualified administrators	3.00	0.92	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.86</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>Agree</b>



The analysis of data presented in Table 1 above shows mean ratings ranging from 2.65 to 3.00 depicting agree. This means that the respondents agreed to the items as the government related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. The overall cluster mean of 2.86 further attests to that. The low standard deviation of 0.92 indicates that the respondents have similar opinions to the items.

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant deference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

**Table 2:** Summary of t-test analysis on mean ratings of male and female business educators on government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

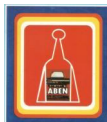
Variables	N	t	df	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Male	17	1.211	50	0.232	2.03193	1.67780	Not
Female	35						Significant

The result of t-test analysis in Table 2 shows that the t-value at .05 level of significance and 50 degree of freedom for the 9 items is 1.211 with a significant value of 0.232. Since the significant value of 0.32 is more than .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference regarding the 10 items on the mean ratings of male and female business educators on government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

### Research Question 2

What are the lecturers-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Mean ratings and standard deviations of business educators on the lecturers-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.



S/N	Lecturers'-Related Challenges on the Utilization of New Technologies in Business Education:	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
10	Inadequate knowledge of the new technologies by business educators	2.92	.097	Agree
11	Laziness on the part of the lecturers in using the new technologies	2.88	1.02	Agree
12	Absence of interest in attending seminars/conferences in new technologies	2.87	1.07	Agree
13	Mal-handling of the new technologies resulting to spoilage of them	2.94	1.07	Agree
14	Poor cooperation of the administrators to the needs of new technologies	2.96	1.04	Agree
15	Unwillingness of some lecturers to adopt new technologies	2.90	1.10	Agree
16	Unwillingness in sponsoring themselves for new technologies	3.08	0.97	Agree
17	Non-relatedness of the available new technology facilities to the lecturers instruction	3.06	0.92	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.95</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The data presented in Table 3 above shows that the mean ratings for the items ranges from 2.92 to 3.08 indicating agreed. This shows that the respondents agreed to the items as the lecturers related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. The low standard deviation of 1.02 depicts that the respondents did not differ remarkably in their opinions with respect to the items.

### Hypothesis 2

A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on lecturers-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

**Table 4:** Summary of t-test analysis of mean of male of female business educators on lecturers-related challenges in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria.

Variables	N	t	df	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Male	17	1.324	50	0.192	2.32353	1.75515	Not
Female	35						Significant



The data obtained from the t-test analysis in Table 4 shows that the t-value at .05 level of significance and 50 degree of freedom for the items is 1.324 with a significant value of 0.192. Since the significant value of 0.192 is more than the .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that a significant difference does not exist with respect to the eight items on the mean ratings of male and female business educators on lecturers'-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programmed of public universities in South East Nigeria.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study according to research question one identified the government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. These challenges include: poor funding of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities in the universities, politicization of new technology projects in the universities, lack of government support on innovative teaching approaches in business education, low level of supervision of tertiary education programme by relevant authorities, lack of legislative framework on the utilization of new technologies in the universities and so on. The findings of the study are in agreement with Uwaifo (2009) who noted that the government contributions to education has not yielded a positive correlation with the population of students, dilapidation of existing facilities and improvement in ICT based learning. It also agrees with statement of Okeke (2017) which opined that these government related challenges have influenced the availability and utilization of new technologies in schools. The implication of the findings is that the government related challenges hinder the utilization of new technologies in business education programme.

The result of null hypothesis one showed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on government related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. This depicts that gender of the respondents has no influence on the identified government-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme. The findings are in line with Ezeabii (2017) who observed that there is no gender bias in teaching and learning of the course in the universities and both male and female students enrol for the programme and are exposed to the same skills.



The result of the study in research question two identified the lecturers' related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in teaching business education in universities in South East Nigeria. These challenges include: inadequate knowledge of the new technologies by business educators, laziness on the part of the lecturers in using the new technologies, absence of interest in attending seminars and conferences in new technologies, mal-handling of the new technologies resulting to spoilage of them, poor cooperation of the administrator to the needs of new technology, unwillingness of some lecturers to adopt new technologies, unwillingness in sponsoring themselves for new technologies training, non-relatedness of the available new technology facilities to the lecturers instruction. The findings of the study depicts that the identified challenges hinder the utilization of new technologies in business education the identified findings are in agreement with Mbah, Obi, Ehimen and Onyebuenyi (2018) which observed that teachers lack the skills and knowledge to effectively utilize new technologies in teaching contemporary society. In addition, Agwazia, Ayembre and Ukor (2014) stated that the teachers' challenges on the use of ICT in teaching students include lack of relevant facilities, lack of supporting staff, poor funding and lack of ICT pedagogical importance. The implication of the findings is that when teachers are deficient in instruction and use of instructional aids, the students tend to suffer.

The findings of the study on hypothesis two indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on lecturers-related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. This implies that gender of the business educators has no influence on the identified challenges.

### **Conclusion**

The study identified the government-related and lecturers related challenges to the utilization of new technologies in business education programme of public universities in South East Nigeria. The result of the study has numerous implications. It will expose to the government their lapses in business education programme as a major stakeholder. It will spur the government to allocate adequate amount of money to business educating programme for acquisition of the new technologies provide the needed infrastructures for the new technologies and review business education programme of universities to reflect the current technological changes-the society.



The findings will spur the lecturers of business education to update their knowledge on new technologies and become digital for this era of technological advancement. Therefore the conclusion of this study is that the identified challenges should be considered so that barriers will be dealt with and new technologies utilized effectively for business programme to be relevant and meet up with the technological advancement.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. The government of Nigeria should increase their allocations to education and business education in particular for the purchase of new technological facilities.
2. Government should supervise tertiary institutions through relevant authorities to see that the new technologies are utilized effectively for the achievement of business education objectives.
3. Lecturers should try and update their knowledge on new technologies through seminars and conferences.
4. Lecturers should try and increase their interest in utilization of new technologies in teaching and abhor laziness on that.

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