



INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES ON SOFT SKILLS ACQUISITION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITIES

¹**OHAKA, Nyeche C.**

²**TIKU, Theresa EJOR**

*Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education,
Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo P.M.B 5080 Port-Harcourt*

Ohakanyeche1@gmail.com/tikutheresa@gmail.com

Abstract

The general aim of this empirical research is to determine the influence of cognitive pedagogical challenges on soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. The study was properly guided by three research questions which were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study is 1,325 under graduate Business Education students in Rivers State. The total population comprise of 691, 588 and 46 Business Education students from Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and University of Port-Harcourt respectively. The Taro Yamane sample size formula was used to determine the sample size of 307. The sampling technique used is the stratified simple random sampling technique. The face and content validation of the research instrument was meticulously carried out. Data for this study were collected using a self-designed compound questionnaire instrument which was developed from existing literature. The questionnaire instrument is entitled: "Cognitive Pedagogical Problems and Soft Skills Acquisition Questionnaire" (COPPSSAQ). COPPSSAQ is not a standardized instrument since it was developed personally by the researcher. The reliability of the instrument was established using Spearman Ranking Order. The computation produced a reliability coefficient of 0.82. 290 copies of questionnaire instruments were retrieved out of the 307 copies distributed. For the research question, data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were also analyzed using z-test statistics. Decision was taken on the basis that any mean above 2.50 was accepted and any mean score below 2.50 was rejected. The null hypotheses were accepted if the z-critical was greater than the z-calculated and rejected if the z-critical was lesser than z-calculated. The study reveals among other things that; lack of attention, loss of memory and the inability to comprehend ideas and concepts are among the cognitive pedagogical challenges stifling the soft skills acquisition of business education students in Rivers State universities. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that; Business education students should endeavour to reflect on the skills acquired immediately they are taught by the business educators.

Key Words: Pedagogy, Cognitive pedagogy, Pedagogical challenges, Skills acquisition, Business Education

Introduction

To ensure that Business Education is able to deal with global, technological and market changes, it is imperative for business education programmes to use well up-dated curricula, course materials, teaching/learning models and methods (pedagogical approaches) that are not only up-to-date but also globally competitive amidst the perceived pedagogical challenges that may ensue. Today, there seem to be a lack of focus on cognitive pedagogy for students aspiring to acquiring different soft skills in business education thereby, culminating in the inability of the students to become gainfully employed or even have the capacity to start his/her own venture/enterprise. No doubt, the core competencies of any business education programme should be predicated on its unique and innovative pedagogy. This is to enable meaningful learning and development of soft skills students that the industry players deem fit to employ. This is enhanced by placing an emphatic



emphasis on the theories, principles and practices pertaining to cognitive pedagogy.

In pedagogy, transfer of knowledge and skills is one of the two most significant aspects considered in cognitive pedagogy. The use of knowledge discovered by others was of utmost significance for changes introduced by human imitation has been essential for development, for the creation of innovation and adaption of humans to extreme natural conditions that humans have been confronted with in the course of the previous centuries. It has also had its impact on the creation of culture, which has also played an important role in building communities, human groups and relationships existing in them. The authorities of older people was rooted in the experience of many generations which resulted in the transfer of knowledge and skills on to the next generations as well as in their application in the processes of overcoming or mounting obstacles arising from dynamic changes present in nature. The five areas of cognitive pedagogy are; neuro-didactic, neuro-education, memetics, pedagogical anthropology and media pedagogy (Siemieniecki, 2016).

Pedagogy as a concept was adapted from French and Latin word which literary means a man having oversight and control over a child (Mortimore cited in Ceasar, 2010). Pedagogy is the heart of teaching involving the rules and principles that guides effective and efficient activities which leads to learning (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). Pedagogy is another word for education; the profession and science of teaching. It embraces the principles and methods of teaching (Vocabulary.com, 2020). Pedagogy develops from a range of factors including theories and research evidence, political drivers, evidence from practice, reflection from groups and individuals, expertise and experiences of the teacher and finally community expectations and requirements. It informs both curriculum and in-service teaching (Whiteside, n.d.). But it is worthy of note that the kind and nature of pedagogy adopted by business educators seems to have the capacity to; shape their actions and judgments, the quality of information to be garnered by the students, the quality of skills to be acquired and the robust teaching stratagem by taking into due cognizance theories of learning and teaching, understanding of students and their needs, the background and interest of individual students (Blueprint for Government Schools, 2017; Shulman, 2017). Hence, cognitive pedagogy could be regarded as a kind of pedagogy that could improve soft skills acquisition.

Cognitivism is a branch of psychology that is predicted on the study of mental processes. Cognitivism encompasses a broad range of subjects and also studies the mental processes of humans such as; reasoning, attention, thinking, judgment, mental imagery, creativity, perception, memory, making decision, making choices, metal-cognition, solving problems, concepts and recognizing numbers (Thomas, 2020). Cognition is not just about the thought of man but also how those thoughts influence individual behaviour. Cognitivism includes a lot of lucrative benefits that are not far-fetched. These benefits in the opinion of Thomas includes the process of; helping individuals have a good understand and perception of themselves and those around them, learn more effectively, make better life choices, refine behavioural pattern, moderate mood swing problems, comprehend previous traumas differently, remember past experiences and also put them in perspective with the individual's present lifestyle (Thomas, 2020).

Cognitive pedagogy which is sometimes misconstrued to be neuro-pedagogy, is a division of science that talks about all the aspects of educational phenomena which are analyzed from the position information-processing in the brain (Siemieniecki, 2016). Cognitive pedagogy seeks to describe phenomena and educational processes, as well as education, all of which takes into account generic and environmental factors, both considered inseparably. This means that, the phenomena and processes occurring as a result of the influence of educational and didactic activities are explicated on the basis of knowledge obtained from research on the structure and functioning of the human brain. Cognitive pedagogy also encompasses the problem of inter-connections between environmental, social and cultural (human environment) as well as generic condition. It explains the condition, processes and educational activities related to education on the basis of mechanisms involved in the collecting, processing, storing and presenting information in relation to the skills to be acquired (Siemieniecki, 2016).

Skill is seen as an attribute of performance which does not rely solely upon a person's fundamental capabilities but must through training, practice and experience. Skill acquisition are said to be necessary set of skills that further makes one to be a professional in one's chosen profession. Skill acquisition is the main engine for economic growth and development. Skill acquisition from the perception of Agoha (2011) is the ability to perform an activity that is related to some meaningful exercise, work or job. It is essential to practice the teaching and learning skills in order to become better teachers and learners. The acquisition of soft skills is especially required and effective in bringing about desired changes in students' behaviour. Although it seems cumbersome to equip the



students of business education with all the major soft skills due to some cognitive pedagogical challenges, at least Business Education students should be armed with the following significant soft skills; human relation, peaceful co-existence, team spirit, respect for co-workers and superiors, punctuality, hard-work, dedication to duty, accountability, responsibility, office practice, effective communication, loyalty to established authorities, organizational conflict management, critical thinking, problem solving, time management, effective decision-making process, among others. These skills identified above, if well acquired amidst the challenges that accompanies cognitive pedagogy can adequately prepare the business education students for the educational and industrial worlds respectively. Skills acquisition is one essential skill that can be made possible through school-industry partnership. Skill acquisition can be ascertained through inculcation of practical knowledge on Business Education students through an efficacious teaching and learning experiences within the classroom and school precinct. These acquired personal qualities that are relevant to business education such as, creativity, innovativeness and a spirit of imitateness can be considered useful to everyone in their working responsibilities and in their quotidian existence (Akpomi & Amadi, 2010; Palmer, 2020). It is an organized type of education and impartation of knowledge meant to inculcate into Business Education students those skills and attitudes that will enable them gain employment. It is an organized learning given to Business Education students that gives them the requisite ability to attract employment opportunities after graduation.

However, it is imperative to note that this paper provides disparate cognitive pedagogical challenges and models to be addressed so that Business Education students can be adequately rejuvenated and equipped via proper soft skills acquisition. Also, it exposes some cognitive pedagogical encumbrances that should be surmounted if Business Education students are to acquire the desired soft skills for professional practices in different spheres of life. Notwithstanding, the processes of surmounting these cognitive pedagogical challenges should be able to actually reflect how Business Education students learn. It must also reflect the world our students will move into. The present world is rapidly changing, connected, adapting and evolving. The cognitive pedagogy approach as a matter of necessity should be able to recognize the processes involved in teaching and learning in the 21st century. However, these cognitive pedagogical challenges in Business Education that are tending to impede soft skills acquisition of business education students may be broadly categorized into three (Ohaka, 2018); challenges relating to the cognitive abilities of the students, challenges relating to the cognitive capacity of the teachers and challenges relating the cognitive abilities of the programme administrators.

Similarly, Sitholei (2010) affirmed that to contain some of the cognitive pedagogical challenges found to be hampering the soft skills acquisition of business education students recommended that curriculum planners, educational authorities and school administrators should align their pedagogical practices by establishing a stipulated time bound and well set of syllabi that will be in-tandem with the cognitive abilities of the set of business education students for whom the skills are being taught. Joshi and Chugh (2009) also suggested that pedagogical issues, approaches and challenges in Business Education can be enhanced for effective soft skills acquisition of Business Education students by properly forming and developing their cognitive abilities to suit the pedagogical approaches. Also, to address the issues pertaining to cognitive pedagogical challenges, business educators should see to it that they develop a holistic teacher personality that is capable of sustaining an expected balance among contradictory teaching pedagogical approaches via professional training. This will ensure that soft skills are acquired for the betterment of business education students in particular and the economy as a whole. This is no doubt, in consonance with the ultimate goal of business education that talks about the preparation of students for the achievement of professional success in academics and education, industry practice, business development, business planning, business organization and business supervision.

This is the reason it is maintained that, Business Education as a programme of instruction should focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration to prepare the educational system for the management of the pedagogical challenges impeding soft skills development of business education students. Business Education is a program of study geared towards the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed in the work place and in the educational spectrum. One vital need in the current dispensation of business education program is the ability of the teachers and students to have adequate knowledge on the use of online platforms for online assessment and learning respectively. Business education is an aspect of general education that is predicated on equipping its target audience with distinctive skills, knowledge, aptitude and attitudes requisite for occupational competence in the areas of education and business. In Business Education,



knowledge gaining and skill acquisition for the business and educational world constitutes an integral element (Ohaka & Bupo, 2019; Ohaka & Onuoha, 2017; Akpomi & Ohaka, 2019). It could then be argued that fostering pedagogical change in business education for practical skills acquisition involves a process that has to do with the following stages; learning for knowing new knowledge, learning for doing/acting for survival, learning for living together in any situation, learning to continuously stand on champion position and learning for innovations through research.

One of the core impediments of soft skills acquisition of students in business education today is as a result of some pedagogical challenges and dearth of professional manpower with adequate soft skills and experiences in the specific areas of business education (Nwekeaku, 2013). It was also affirmed that the paucity of trained manpower and instructors with practical training and knowledge in the use of adequate pedagogical approaches has mostly impeded the practical skills development. The availability and utilization of instructional materials are one of the pedagogical challenges influencing functional business education in Nigeria, regretted to observe that the instructional materials used in teaching business education are not adequate in quality and quantity required to effectively address contemporary trends in business education (Nwekeaku, 2013). Inadequate funding from government and other relevant stakeholders has also brought about some modicum of pedagogical challenges which seems to be hindering the practical skills development of business education students.

Also, inadequate funding has limited the capacity of universities in providing quality business education for students. The negative perceptions and attendant false impression of business education for skill development by the society and majority of business education students in particular is another pivotal impediment to practical skills development that must not be taken for granted by all relevant stakeholders in the field of education at all levels of education (Okiridu, Azuma & Godspower, 2017; Ohaka, 2018). Considering the perceived cognitive pedagogical challenges tending to impede soft skills acquisition of students in business education as an academic programme, there is the dire need for the programme administrators to implement and practice their pedagogy by considering the pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, curriculum knowledge and faculty knowledge, with integration of creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. It appears that, in business education some cognitive pedagogical challenges occasioned by the rapid variations in competitive environment caused by liberalization, privatization, globalization, and internationalization and information age must have been faced. Following the perception of key industry players towards business education programme as that which is becoming too theoretical and less practical oriented, the dire desire to investigate the cognitive pedagogical challenges that are negatively influencing the soft skills acquisition of business education students in Rivers State becomes incredibly needful.

Statement of the Problem

Cognitive pedagogy is a principle and concept in general education that when adequately harnessed by all relevant stakeholders, contributes in the acquisition of skills among students. One of the core objectives of cognitive pedagogy particularly in business education is to accelerate the affective application of different teaching models, methods, resources, and approaches that makes for the improved skills acquisition of students. However, it is observed that the consistent sustainability of this objective of promoting skill acquisition seems to remain stifled by some cognitive pedagogical challenges in the part of the students such as; loss of memory, inability to comprehend ideas, lack of attention, poor perceptual ability, inability to think critically, poor reasoning potential, slow pace in decision-making, poor learning abilities, difficulty in understanding, among others.

Sequel to these perceived cognitive pedagogical challenges tending to stifle the soft skills acquisition of students in Business Education such as; punctuality, respect for authorities, team spirit, effective communication, diligence, creativity and innovation, office organization and management, among others; the effects have left much to be desired. This is it now appears that some Business Education students approach the labour market with little or no soft skills acquired thereby, making them some of them not to be able to feature competently in the world of work. Concerned about this observed deficit in the educational and industrial system, the researchers considered it germane to embark on this study.



Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study;

1. To what extent does loss of memory influences soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities?
2. To what extent does inability to comprehend influence soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities?
3. To what extent does lack of attention influence soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance;

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students on the extent to which loss of memory influences soft skill acquisition of business education students in Rivers State universities.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students on the extent to which inability to comprehend influences soft skill acquisition in business education in Rivers State universities.

Methods

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The total population of the study is 1,325 under graduate Business Education students in Rivers State. The total population comprise of 691, 588 and 46 Business Education students from Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and University of Port-Harcourt respectively. The Taro Yameme sample size formula was used to determine the sample size of 307. The sampling technique used is the stratified simple random sampling technique. The research instrument was validated by two experts from the department of Business Education and measurement and evaluation. Data for this study were collected via the means of a self-made questionnaire instrument called: "Cognitive Pedagogical Problems and Soft Skills Acquisition Questionnaire". 290 copies of questionnaire instruments were retrieved out of the 307 copies distributed. The research instrument contains two broad sections. Section "A" and "B". Section "A" contains the demographic data of the respondents while section "B" contains 3 clusters (sections) with a total of 20 items. The reliability of the instrument was established using Spearman Rank Order and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions, while the null hypotheses were also analyzed using z-test statistics. Decision was taken on the basis that any mean above 2.50 was accepted and any mean score below 2.50 was rejected. The null hypotheses was accepted if the z-critical was greater than the z-calculated and rejected if the z-critical was lesser than z-calculated.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does loss of memory influence soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation scores of the respondents on the extent to which loss of memory influence soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities

SN	Items	RSU (180)			IAUOE (110)		
		X	SD	RMKS	X	SD	RMKS
1.	It leads to inadequate exploration of skills acquired.	3.86	.18	VHE	3.91	.09	VHE
2.	It brings about retardation in the process of skills acquisition.	3.61	.91	VHE	3.89	.10	VHE
3.	It does not significantly influence the quality of skills acquired.	2.22	.39	HE	1.95	.09	VLE
4.	It brings about the inability of teachers to impact skills on learners.	3.78	.28	VHE	3.99	.01	VHE
5.	It does not engender the ability to recall vividly	1.78	.42	VLE	2.18	.25	HE
Total Mean/SD		15.2	2.18		15.9	.54	



Grand Mean/SD **3.05 0.44 VHE 3.18 0.11 VHE**

Source: Field Survey (2020).

The results in table 1 shows how loss of memory as an index of cognitive pedagogy challenge influences soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State University. With the grand mean responses of 3.05 and 3.18 from Rivers State University students and Ignatius Ajuru university of Education students respectively, it shows that loss of memory posses a significant negative influence on the soft skill acquisition of business education students in Rivers State universities. The implication of this finding is that for there to be continuous improvement in the quality and quantity of soft skills acquired by business education students in Rivers State universities, issues pertaining to cognitive pedagogies should be given utmost priority in the planning of business education curriculum.

Research Question 2: To what extent does inability to comprehend influence soft skill acquisition of business education students in Rivers State Universities?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation scores of the respondents on the extent to which the inability to comprehend influence soft skill acquisition of business education students in Rivers State Universities

SN	Items	RSU (180)			IAUOE (110)		
		X	SD	RMKS	X	SD	RMKS
6.	It promotes students' inability to understand the theories and principles pertaining to the skills to be acquired.	3.50	.36	VHE	3.73	.20	VHE
7.	It gives students the inability to make judgments about the skills to be acquired.	3.53	.31	VHE	3.68	.31	VHE
8.	It promotes students' inability to make meaning out of the skills acquired.	3.57	.27	VHE	3.72	.33	VHE
9.	It promotes the inability of students to identify simple facts about the skills to be acquired.	3.83	.14	VHE	3.53	.50	VHE
10.	It enhances the inability of students to develop improved knowledge and skills.	3.17	.14	VHE	3.55	.25	VHE
11.	It makes students to lose confidence in their ability to acquire soft skills.	3.11	.10	VHE	3.59	.24	VHE
12.	It brings about poor reflection on the skills learnt which retards skills acquisition.	3.21	.32	VHE	3.30	.33	VHE
13.	It brings about difficulty in decoding information about the skills to be acquired.	2.58	.36	HE	3.35	.26	VHE
Total Mean/SD		26.5	2.41		28.5	2.42	
Grand Mean/SD		3.31	0.20	VHE	3.56	0.30	VHE

Source: Field Survey (2020).

In table 2 the results shows how the inability to comprehend as an index of cognitive pedagogy challenge influences soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. With the grand mean responses of 3.31 and 3.56 from Rivers State University students and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students respectively, it simply shows that the inability to comprehend concepts and ideas posses a high level of negative influence on the soft skill acquisition of business education students in Rivers State universities. This means that there is the dire need for business educators to include in the curriculum content strategies on to also improves the comprehension abilities of students as they teach for the soft skills acquisition of students.

Research Question 3: To what extent does lack of attention influence soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities?



Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation scores of the respondents on the extent to which lack of attention influence soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities

SN	Items	RSU (180)			IAUOE (110)		
		X	SD	RMKS	X	SD	RMKS
14.	It increases students' inability to focus awareness on the skills to be acquired.	3.57	.27	VHE	3.72	.33	VHE
15.	It gives students the inability to put their mind on a particular important aspect of the skills being acquired.	3.53	.31	VHE	3.68	.31	VHE
16.	It promotes students' inability to understand and overcome the neurological problems that hinder skills acquisition.	3.83	.14	VHE	3.53	.50	VHE
17.	It increases students' inability to channel all their energy towards the realization of the skills acquisition process. .	3.11	.10	VHE	3.59	.24	VHE
18.	It enhances the inability of students to develop improved knowledge and skills.	3.17	.14	VHE	3.55	.25	VHE
19.	It leads to a decreased ability of students to acquire the desired skills.	3.50	.36	VHE	3.53	.50	VHE
20.	It makes students to pay more attention to side attractions that hinders them from acquiring the skills.	3.21	.32	VHE	3.30	.33	VHE
		29.99	2.41		30.60	3.05	
		3.33	0.27	VHE	3.40	0.34	VHE

Source: Field Survey (2020)

In table 3 the results shows how lack of attention as an index of cognitive pedagogy challenge influences soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. With the grand mean responses of 3.33 and 3.40 from Rivers State University students and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students respectively, it simply shows how lack of attention poses a high level of negative influence on the soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. This is to imply that if high level of attention is given to the process of soft skills acquisition by Business Education students improved soft skills acquisition will be achieved desirably.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students on the extent to which loss of memory influences soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities.

Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis on the extent to which loss of memory influences soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	P. value	Std error	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
RSU	180	3.05	0.44						
				288	0.05	0.15	-0.87	1.96	Accepted H₀
IAUOE	110	3.18	0.11						

Source: Research Data (2020)

From table 4, it is observed that the calculated z-value of -0.87 is below the critical z-value of 1.96 at 0.05 levels of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is to be accepted meaning that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of the RSU and IAUOE Business Education students in Rivers State universities on the extent to which loss of memory influences soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students on the extent to which inability to comprehend influences soft skills acquisition in of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities



Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis on the extent to which inability to comprehend influences soft skills acquisition in of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	P. value	Std error	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
RSU	180	3.33	0.27	288	0.05	0.32	-0.78	1.96	Accepted H₀
IAUOE	110	3.40	0.34						

Source: Research Data (2020)

From table 5, it is observed that the calculated z-value of 0.32 is below the critical z-value of 1.96 at 0.05 levels of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. This is to infer that, there is no significant relationship in the mean responses of RSU and IAUOE Business Education students in Rivers State universities on the extent to which the inability to comprehend ideas and concepts influences soft skills acquisition in of Business Education students in Rivers State Universities.

Discussion

The results in table 1 above shows the extent to which loss of memory as an index of cognitive pedagogy challenge influences soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State University. With the grand mean responses of 3.05 and 3.18 from Rivers State University students and Ignatius Ajuru university of Education students respectively, it shows that loss of memory possess a significant negative influence on the soft skill acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. The implication of this finding is that for there to be continuous improvement in the quality and quantity of soft skills acquired by Business Education students in Rivers State universities, issues pertaining to cognitive pedagogies should be given utmost priority in the planning of business education curriculum. The findings of this study is in consonance with that of Surruya and Kahana as cited in Ishak, Jufri, Lubis, Saat, Omar, Arlin & Mohamed (2012) who expressed that lack of memory does not enable students to organize and associate all the information received and generate it into long term memory.

In table 2 above the results shows the extent to which the inability to comprehend as an index of cognitive pedagogy challenge influences soft skills acquisition of business education students in Rivers State universities. With the grand mean responses of 3.31 and 3.56 from Rivers State University students and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students respectively, it simply shows that the inability to comprehend concepts and ideas possess a high level of negative influence on the soft skill acquisition of business education students in Rivers State universities. This means that there is the dire need for business educators to include in the curriculum content strategies on to also improves the comprehension abilities of students as they teach for the soft skills acquisition of students. This finding is in total agreement with the works of Texas Education Agency (2020) and Vanderbilt University (2020) whose studies found out that poor comprehension ability makes students to lack the ability to extract meanings and make sound judgment about the skills they have acquired.

In table 3 above the results shows the extent to which lack of attention as an index of cognitive pedagogy challenge influences soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. With the grand mean responses of 3.33 and 3.40 from Rivers State University students and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education students respectively, it simply shows the extent to which lack of attention possess a high level of negative influence on the soft skills acquisition of Business Education students in Rivers State universities. This is to imply that if high level of attention is given to the process of soft skills acquisition by Business Education students improved soft skills acquisition will be achieved desirably. The discoveries are in consonance with the work of Taylor (2014) who ascertained that lack of attention brings about the decreased ability of students to acquire desired skills that will bring about their professional development.



Conclusion

Like the affective and psychomotor pedagogies, the principle and practice of cognitive pedagogy also remains central and key in the process of skills acquisition and utilization of business education students in Rivers State. Through the interrelation of cognitive pedagogy with affective and psychomotor pedagogies the process of skills acquisition is enhanced. Cognitive pedagogy serves the basis for the structuring, organization and coordination of the skills to be acquired and how they are to be channels into meaningful avenues. However, pedagogical challenges will continue to negatively influence how and when soft skills should be acquired if not adequately contained. In view of this, the researchers concludes that, loss of memory, inability to comprehend and lack of attention as parts of the cognitive pedagogical challenges constitutes a huge but surmountable negative influence in the skills acquisition.

Recommendations

Based on the findings made, the researchers recommends as follows:

1. Business education students should endeavour to reflect on the skills acquired immediately they are taught by the business educators. This will help to ensure that such acquired skills are properly stored in their mind and utilized for the purpose in which they were acquired when the need arises.
2. Business educators should see to it that the skills acquisition programmes and activities are being carried out with utmost consideration of the comprehension abilities of students. This is to enable the students have a full grasp of the skills being impacted by the business educator.
3. There should be a consideration on the review of the curriculum content of skills acquisition programmes in business education to include aspects that has to do with measures necessary for containment of the pedagogical challenges that is tending to hamper on the soft skills acquisition of business education students inn Rivers State universities.

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