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# PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES UTILIZED IN OFFICE EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPING STUDENTS' MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IN DEGREE AWARDING INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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**ABSTRACT:** This study investigated pedagogical practices utilized in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. The study was completed using two research questions and two hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population and sample of the study comprised of 43 business education lecturers and 515 final year students during the 2022/2023 academic session from four tertiary institutions, namely: Rivers State University, University of Port-Harcourt, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Tech.), Omoku offering degree programme in business education in Rivers State. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by three experts, two experts were of Business Education and one expert of Measurement and Evaluation from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient test was used to test the instrument internal consistency, the computation done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 21 yielded a reliability index of 0.74 for the two clusters of the questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using mean (x) and standard deviation (sd) to answer the research questions, while independent t-test was used to test hypotheses raised at 0.05 level of significance. Out of the entire copies of questionnaire distributed, only 80% were properly filled and returned. The results revealed that both lecturers and students agreed that traditional and innovative pedagogical practices are being utilized for developing students' managerial skills. The traditional pedagogical practices used by the lecturers include lecture, case study, seminar and discussions; while the innovative pedagogical practices utilized include mentoring, experiential, inquiry, blended learning and team learning. The results also revealed that there is no significant difference between the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices utilized in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that workshops and conferences should be organized intermittently to refine the traditional and innovative pedagogical skills of office educators in order to enhance their students' managerial competencies.

**KEYWORDS**: Office Education, Pedagogical Practices, Traditional Pedagogy, Innovative Pedagogy.

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## INTRODUCTION

Office education as an integral aspect of Business Education has been designed for the purpose of helping interested recipients to develop requisite knowledge, skills, attitude and experiences for performance in the 21<sup>st</sup> modern office tasks. According to Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN) (2014), office education is that aspect of business education that is intended to expose the students to the knowledge related to technological development and its application in office functions, knowledge of different office equipment and their functions, and knowledge of office functions' automation, and the attendant effects as well as associated challenges with automation in developing countries. Olawole and Abuya (2011) defined office education as the education that exposes students to competencies related to six components which are office application, office technology, business and administrative management, numeric component, general studies and Student Industrial Work Experience (SIWES). Consequently, it is expected that those exposed to this form of education should be able to develop knowledge, skills and attitude for the effective and efficient management of modern offices operated with state-of-the-art technology.

Exposing recipients of office education to content that would enable them develop the requisite managerial competencies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century office before graduation to a large extent relies on the pedagogical practices of lecturers. According to Nawaz and Gomes (2014), pedagogy centers on the art and act of teaching used by educators to implement the content of course bearing in mind the attendant effects of choices made in enhancing students' learning. Similarly, Main (2022) noted pedagogy has to do with practices and theories adopted by a teacher in delivery course content. Chekwube (2016) also noted that pedagogy centers on how the teacher blends theoretical knowledge and practical skills of teaching to design and implement learning activities capable of helping students to develop content knowledge and skills related to the course. Therefore, office educators are expected to make a choice of appropriate pedagogical practices in order to assist their students to develop the appropriate office management competencies for job efficacy.

Pedagogy practices in office education may vary from educator to educator and also depends on what is to be learnt, the teacher's background knowledge, experiences and belief with regards to the effectiveness of the approach. In support of the above assertion, Barnard (2011) opined that each teacher has their pedagogical practices or method to teaching and learning a particular course in and out of the classroom. Similarly, Chinwe-E, Uteh and Nkoro (2019) noted that the use of any pedagogical strategy depends largely on the teacher's skills and knowledge of using different pedagogical strategies. However, since the choice may vary based on teacher's variables, it means that there would be many office education pedagogical practices utilized for developing students' competencies as there are many office educators. It is for this reason that Kozlinska, Rebmann, and Mets (2020) opined that all pedagogical practices utilized in education are best classified either as traditional or innovative pedagogy. Consequently, within the context of this study, pedagogical practices in office education for developing students' managerial competencies were considered based on two subheadings, namely: traditional pedagogy and innovative pedagogy.

Traditional pedagogy practices are based on the behaviorist and cognitivist principles of learning that are purely teacher-centered and include lecture method, seminar discussion method, case study and other typical in-class teaching practices (Kozlinska, Rebmann, & Mets, 2020). Crappell (2019) observed that traditional pedagogy as teacher-centered approach and

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strategy to teaching and learning only ensures that teacher gives lectures and share content through direct instruction which interprets to focusing on the teacher's knowledge and conveying that to students. Abdulkarim (2019) averred that traditional pedagogical practices, though good for content knowledge dissemination and cognitive skills development, have been found not to be sufficient for other competencies development. Inferring from this, it means that there is a need for office educators not to limit themselves to only traditional pedagogical practices.

The need for innovative pedagogical practices to teaching and learning office education in this 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be overemphasized given that Nawaz and Gomes (2014) averred that traditional pedagogy cannot be sufficient to attain the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning objectives, hence, suggested the need to always design and use innovative pedagogy. Chekwube (2016) noted that utilizing innovative pedagogy in office education enables students to develop competencies required for operations in the modern business world. Some of the innovative pedagogical models are mentorship and experiential pedagogy. Abdulkarim (2019) outlined some innovative strategies used in business education to include blended learning pedagogy, inquiry pedagogy, team learning and collaborative/cooperative pedagogy. Consequently, within the context of this study, the utilization of both traditional and innovative pedagogical practices is seen as a good blend that would enable students to develop the required managerial competencies for office work.

In today's dynamic business environment, managerial competencies is a must for every graduating office education who wants to be coordinated. This is because Bruwer, Coetzee and Meiring (2018) described managerial competencies as those knowledge, skills, experiences and attitudes required for effective performance of tasks relating to human and resources management functions. Shaikh, Bisschoff and Botha (2017) outlined six managerial competencies they identified through survey as priorities for office workers to include oral and written communication skills, creative problem solving, results orientation, teamwork skills, and customer focus. Similarly, Bruwer et al. (2018) noted that managerial competencies needed for office work include communication skills, problem solving, customer focus and the ability to work within a team. The implication therefore is that every graduating student of office education should be assisted to develop most if not all of these competencies using the appropriate pedagogical practices before graduation.

Many researchers have conducted studies to investigate pedagogical practices utilized in one aspect of office education or the other. Abdulkarim and Nwokocha (2012) reported that using integrated pedagogical practices that combine lecture method and experiential learning activities enabled office education students as well as their counterpart in accounting to develop multiple business competencies in creativity, communication, interpersonal relationship, problem-solving and management functions. Akpomi and Amesi (2013) reported that business teachers use a combination of pedagogical strategies such as case study, lecture, simulation and role play, discovery and demonstration for effective teaching and learning. Nawaz and Gomes (2014) reported that Business Education students developed management competencies required for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the use of innovative team learning pedagogy. Chinwe-E, Uteh and Nkoro (2019) reported that innovative pedagogical practices relating to problem-based learning, work-based learning and digital based methods are the most appropriate for delivering office technology and management education that would produce graduates with requisite managerial competencies for global competitiveness. A cursory examination of the existing literature revealed that none of the empirical studies to the best of

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the researcher's knowledge has investigated pedagogical practices in office education for developing students' managerial competencies, especially focusing on degree awarding institutions in Rivers State, hence, this gap in literature informed the researcher's decision to embark on the present study.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Pedagogical practices are meant to be developed by educators in order to assist their students to learn in line with the predetermined learning objectives. The expectation is that such student should be able to use the competencies acquired to engage in productive activities after graduation. However, a situation where most of the graduating students of office education are finding it difficult to use their developed competencies to render office related services after graduation, makes one question how they were really trained while in school. Most especially as recent studies have identified inadequate competencies development as the factor hindering the students' abilities to be self-reliant (Otum, 2018; Aluko & Oba, 2021). Consequently, this brings to question the pedagogical practices of office educators for helping their students to develop requisite competencies such as managerial one. It is in view of the stated problem that the researcher is curious to find out the pedagogical practices in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1. What are the traditional pedagogical practices used in office education for developing secretaries' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State?
- 2. What are the innovative pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1. There is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.
- 2. There is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.

## **METHODS**

Descriptive survey design of a cross-sectional type was adopted for the study. This enables the researchers to collect responses from the different lecturers who are involved with office education in Rivers State tertiary institutions. Thomas (2022) opined that a cross-sectional descriptive survey allows the researcher to collect data from different subjects about variables that are not to be manipulated at a particular point in time. Consequently, since the data would

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be collected from lecturers based on their gender and years of experiences, this research design is deemed appropriate.

The study population comprised 43 business education lecturers and 515 final year students in the department of business education during the 2022/2023 academic year from the four degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. The population breakdown by institutions is as shown below:

**Table 1: Population Distribution** 

S/N	Name of Institution	Lecturers	Final Year Students
1.	RSU	10	216
2.	University of Port-Harcourt	06	56
3	IAUE	12	136
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4	Federal College of Education	15	107
	(Tech.), Omoku		
	TOTAL	43	515

Source: Heads of Department.

The entire 43 business education lecturers and 515 final year business education students who are offering office education courses were selected as the sample size of the study. The decision to use all the population for the sample is because the figure is a manageable one for the study. Researchers' designed structured questionnaire titled "Pedagogical Practices in Office Education for Developing Students' Managerial Competencies Questionnaire (PPOEDSMCQ) was used for the study. The questionnaire contained 12 items for the two clusters with response patterns based on 4 points rating scale of Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, and Strongly Disagree = 1 point. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by three experts, two experts were of Business Education and one expert of Measurement and Evaluation from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient test was used to test the instrument internal consistency using data from a pilot test with 15 business education lecturers and final year students from Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State. All computations were done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), yielding a reliability index of 0.74 for the two clusters of the questionnaire. The 558 copies of the instrument were personally administered by the researchers. However, only 32 of the lecturers' copies and 412 copies of the students' answered questionnaires were properly filled and returned. This constituted approximately 80% of the entire copies distributed.

Data collected were analyzed using mean ( $\underline{x}$ ) and standard deviation (sd) to answer the research questions, while independent t-test was used to test hypotheses raised at 0.05 level of significance. Decision rules: the following mean scales go with their corresponding judgment: Strongly Agreed - 3.50 - above; Agreed - 2.50 - 3.49; Disagreed-1.5 -2.49; and Strongly Disagreed - below 1.5. To test the hypothesis decision rule for data computed using SPSS computation which states that where the p value obtained is equal to or less than the p-value provided at 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. However, where the p-value obtained from the



computation is greater than the p-value provided at 0.05, the null hypothesis can be accepted (Kpolovie, 2011).

## RESULTS/DISCUSSION

**Research Question 1**: What are the traditional pedagogical practices used in office education for developing secretaries' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Summary of Mean and Standard Deviation on Traditional Pedagogical Practices Used in Office Education for Developing Students' Managerial Competencies in Degree Awarding Institutions in Rivers State

S/	ITEMS	Lectu	irers n	= 32	Students n = 412		
N		<u>x</u>	<u>Sd</u>	Decision	<u>x</u>	<u>Sd</u>	Decision
1.	Uses lecture to promote office managerial competencies development among students	3.34	0.71	A	3.15	0.84	A
2.	Seminar approach has always been utilized to guide to office managerial competencies development	2.43	0.86	D	3.01	0.63	A
3.	Classroom discussion is more convenient when teaching office managerial competencies development	2.48	0.64	D	2.51	1.10	A
4.	Uses case study to drive home meaningful learning when teaching office management competencies development	2.82	1.01	A	2.74	1.04	A
5.	Tutorial approach to office management courses has proven to be the best	1.56	0.56	D	2.15	0.67	D
	Mean	2.52	0.76	A	2.71	0.86	A

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 2 reveals that both lecturers and students agreed that lecture and case study are used to teach and promote office managerial competencies development with mean scores of 3.34, 3.15, 2.82, 2.74 and standard deviation of 0.71, 0.84, 1.01 and 1.04 respectively. In addition, both lecturers and students disagreed with the use of tutorial pedagogy in office education for developing managerial competencies with mean scores of 1.56, 2.15 and standard deviation of 0.56 and 0.67. However, while the lecturers disagreed to using seminar and classroom discussion to guide to office education managerial competencies development with mean scores of 2.43, 2.48 and standard deviation of 0.86, 0.64, their students agreed to using same pedagogical practices with mean scores of 3.01, 2.51 and standard deviation of 0.86 and 0.64.



Nevertheless, when the mean of the mean and standard deviation scores of 2.52, 2.71 and 0.76 and 0.86 for both lecturers and students are considered, it can be concluded that traditional pedagogical practices are used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2**: What are the innovative pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State?

Table 3: Summary of Mean and Standard Deviation on Pedagogical Practices Used in Office Education for Developing Students' Managerial Competencies in Degree Awarding Institutions in Rivers State

S/N	ITEMS	Lectu	irers		Students = 412		
		n = 32	n = 32				
		<u>x</u>	S <u>d</u>	Decision	<u>x</u>	S <u>d</u>	Decision
6.	Provides students with mentorship opportunity when guiding students to develop office managerial competencies	2.52	0.94	A	2.71	0.65	A
7.	Engages students with real life office management activities in order to develop their managerial competencies	2.43	0.76	D	2.51	0.45	A
8	Uses combination of classroom instruction and out of classroom learning exercises when guiding students to develop office managerial competencies	2.73	0.66	A	2.56	0.74	A
9	Uses group or team assignment to assist students develop office managerial competencies	2.73	0.61	A	2.88	1.03	A
10	Allows students to collaborate with office managers in order to learn office managerial competencies	2.11	0.64	D	2.31	0.56	D
11	Provide students with office management problems in order to enable them develop inquiry skills towards the solutions	3.12	0.64	A	3.31	0.51	A

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12	Provide students with simulation of prototype of office management tasks in order to develop their managerial competencies	2.06	0.66	D	1.64	0.71	D
	Mean	2.53	0.70	A	2.56	0.66	A

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 2 reveals that both lecturers and students agreed that students are provided with mentorship opportunity, use combination of classroom instruction and out of classroom learning exercises, use group or team assignment to assist students develop office management competencies, and provide students with office management problems in order to enable them develop office managerial competencies with mean scores of 2.52, 2.71, 2.73, 2.56, 2.73, 2.88, 3.12, 3.31, and standard deviation scores of 0.94, 0.65, 0.66, 0.74, 0.61, 1.03, 0.64 and 0.51 respectively. Similarly, both lecturers and students disagreed that students are allowed to collaborate with office managers in order to learn and provide students with simulation of prototype of office management tasks in order to develop their managerial competencies with mean scores of 2.11, 2.31, 2.06, 1.64 and standard deviation scores of 0.64, 0.56, 0.66, and 0.71. However, while the lecturers disagreed that they engage students with real life office management activities in order to develop their competencies with mean score of 2.43 and standard deviation score of 0.76., their students agreed to using same pedagogical practices to help them develop their managerial competencies with mean score of 2.51 and standard deviation of score of 0.45. Nevertheless, when the mean of the mean scores and standard deviation scores of 2.53, 2.56 and 0.70, 0.66 are considered, it can be concluded that both lecturers and students agreed that innovative pedagogical practices are utilized in office education to help students develop their managerial competencies.

## **Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1**: There is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.

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Table 4: Summary of Independent t-test on the Significant Difference in the view of Lecturers and Students on the Pedagogical Practices Used in Office Education for Developing Students' Managerial Competencies in Degree Awarding Institutions in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	Std Error	t	P-value Sign for 2 tailed
Lecturers	32	2.52	0.76	442	0.241	0.56	0.60
Students	412	2.71	0.86	442	0.341	-0.56	0.00

Table 4 shows t = -0.56, df = 442, p > 0.05 at 0.60. Therefore, since the p-value obtained at a 2-tailed test which is 0.60 is greater than the p-value provided at 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it means that there is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. This means that both lecturers and students have the same or almost the same views with regards to traditional pedagogical practices used in office education to assist students develop managerial competencies.

**Hypothesis 2**: There is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.

Table 5: Summary of Independent t-test on the Significant Difference in the view of Lecturers and Students on the Pedagogical Practices Used in Office Education for Developing Students' Managerial Competencies in Degree Awarding Institutions in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	Std Error	t	P value Sign for 2 tailed
Lecturers	32	2.53	0.70	442	0.24	-0.131	0.90
Students	412	2.56	0.66	<b>→</b> +∠	0.24	-0.131	0.70

Table 5 shows t = -0.131, df = 442, p > 0.05 at 0.90. Therefore, since the p-value obtained at a 2-tailed test which is 0.90 is greater than the p-value provided at 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it means that there is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. This also means that both lecturers and students have the same or almost the same view with regards to the innovative pedagogical practices used in office education to help students develop managerial competencies.

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## **DISCUSSIONS OF MAJOR FINDINGS**

The discussions of major findings of this study were done in paragraphs to address each of the research questions posed as follows:

The results related to research question one revealed that both lecturers and students agreed that traditional pedagogical practices are used in office education to promote the development of managerial competencies of students. The results also revealed that in addition, the lecturers and students agreed to the use of seminar and classroom discussion to guide students' development of managerial competencies. The results of a test of hypothesis relating to this revealed that there is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. This finding emanated from the fact that both lecturers and students have the same or almost the same view with regards to the use of traditional pedagogical practices in assisting students develop managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. The finding of this study is contrary to the position of Chekwube (2016) who opined that traditional pedagogy practices should not be used because they are not sufficient enough for business education courses that are skilled based. The assertion of Abdulkarim (2019) also negates the finding of this study when it averred that traditional pedagogical practices though good for content knowledge dissemination and cognitive skills development, have been found not to be sufficient for other competencies development. Consequently, it can presume that traditional pedagogical practices used by lecturers of office education for students' managerial competencies development may be to develop their cognitive managerial competencies.

The results related to research question two showed that lecturers and students agreed that mentorship opportunity, a combination of classroom and out of classroom learning exercises, group or team assignment are innovative pedagogical practices used to assist students develop office managerial competencies. The results also revealed that students are provided with office management problems in order to enable them develop managerial competencies. In addition, lecturers agreed that they engage students with real life office management activities in order to develop their managerial competencies. The results of a test of hypothesis relating to this showed that there is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students on the pedagogical practices used in office education for developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. This finding emanated from the fact that both lecturers and students are on the same or almost the same view with regards to innovative pedagogical practices used in office education to assist students develop managerial competencies. The finding of this study is supported by the finding of Abdulkarim and Nwokocha (2012) when they reported that using integrated pedagogical practices that combine lecture method and experiential learning activities enabled Business Education students to develop multiple business competencies for management functions. The finding of this study is also supported by the finding of Nawaz and Gomes (2014) when they reported that Business Education students developed management competencies required for success in the 21st century through the use of innovative team learning pedagogy. The finding of this study is also supported by the finding of Chinwe-E, Uteh and Nkoro (2019) when they reported that innovative pedagogical practices are the most appropriate for delivering office technology and management education that would produce graduates with requisite managerial competencies for global competitiveness.

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## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, it can also be concluded that both traditional and innovative pedagogical practices are being used in teaching office education courses aimed at developing students' managerial competencies in degree awarding institutions in Rivers State. It can be concluded also that the traditional pedagogical practices used by the lecturers include lecture, case study, seminar and discussions. It can also be concluded that the innovative pedagogical practices used include mentoring, experiential, inquiry, blended learning and team learning pedagogies. It can also be concluded that the use of any of these pedagogical practices in ensuring the development of managerial competencies such as communication, planning and administration, teamwork, strategic action, multicultural and workplace diversity and self-management competencies to a large extent cut across all the degree awarding institutions in Rivers State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are put forward for implementation:

- 1. Business education lecturers should continue to use a blend of traditional and innovative pedagogical approaches in teaching office education management courses in order to provide opportunity for the development of balance of cognitive and psychomotor managerial competencies for office functions.
- 2. Workshops and conferences should be organized intermittently to refine the traditional and innovative pedagogical skills of office educators for teaching office education management courses.
- 3. Business education administrators should provide support to any lecturers who desire to design and implement a blend of traditional and innovative pedagogical practices in office education management courses.

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