



COLLABORATION TEACHING TECHNIQUE FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION IN POST COVID – 19 ERA: BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

¹**OLUBIYI Samson Olugbemi,**
susannaholubiyi@yahoo.com
08034103192

²**AKINWUMI Festus Ayotunde**
08060408364
Department of Business education,
Federal College of Education, Abeokuta.

Abstract

The study is an opinion paper that examined collaborative teaching technique as it affects instruction delivery in business education programme at the college level. It focused majorly on the benefits accrued to and likely challenges that may confront and affect collaborative teaching method effectiveness in business education courses teaching. Some benefits of the teaching technique as identified by the study include; opportunity to identify the rate of assimilation of business education students, and improved capability of business education students for problems identification and evaluation. The identified problems as they are related to business education from the study include; that naturally, teaching skills will definitely differ from one business education lecturer to another. In view of this, a highly skillful and competent teacher with high level of subject matter mastery will surely prove his worth during instruction delivery. As such, the students might prefer his lesson to that of his counterpart who lacks teaching skill and without required level of subject matter mastery. This unhealthy situation will in no doubt result in psychological division of the class by the students, and cause inferiority complex, dejection, frustration, and academic imbalance on the part of the incompetent lecturer. The study recommended that business education courses should be allocated to lecturers based on their options and specialty so as to enhance a high level of subject matter mastery on the part of the paired teachers, it also recommended that paired business education lecturers for collaborative teaching should agree at the speed that the shared course outline should be going so that students' level of assimilation will not be negatively affected.

Introduction

According to Babalola (2018), teaching and learning is a key factor in education which enhances imparting of knowledge to learners in order to cause a positive and permanent change in learners for individual and societal needs. To achieve this, several methods and strategies have been adopted in the classroom to deliver instruction and

specifically for learners to understand the lesson for better performance, such teaching methods include; teacher – centered, learner – centered, content – focused, interactive/participative and collaboration. The joy of every teacher is to deliver instruction that will bring about positive changes in their learners in order to serve as a proof of achieving the stated behavioural and content objectives of any lesson taught.

In view of the above, the use of any one or combination of these teaching methods for successful instruction delivery depends largely on many factors such as the learning environment, educational policies, teachers' instruction delivery ability, students' readiness and content planning and arrangement. However, this study is conducted to examine collaboration teaching of business education in colleges of education in south west Nigeria.

Villa et al (2018) defined Collaborative teaching as a learning situation where two or more teachers are sharing teaching responsibility to educate students in a classroom. Collaborative teaching technique involves the distribution of teaching activities between two and three teachers in which the course contents are divided between the teachers for planning, instruction, and evaluation of students. In collaborative teaching, every teacher assigned to teach the same course would separately prepare a lesson plan for whatever topic assigned to him to teach from the course contents but the summative evaluation would be jointly carried out by all the assigned teachers in order to achieve what is known as instruction control.

Collaborative teaching method is also called co-teaching or team teaching, which has been around for quite a while. It first gained popularity in the 1950s, and then evolved during the 1960s before becoming widespread in the early 1970s, particularly in the open – plan primary schools, before enjoying something of resurgence in the 1980s. Collaborative teaching goes hand in hand with collaborative learning for the purpose of attaining instructional objectives.

In this respect, Iloal, Khatami – Kermanse – shali & Local (2014) said that Collaborative learning can be described as a situation where some group of students gather together to learn about a particular thing in relation to their course of study. This is quite different from individual learning because it involves relying on one another's resources, potentials and skills, in which information are being asked and given, ideas are being shared and evaluated and one another's work is being monitored. Collaborative learning lays more emphasis on the fact that knowledge can be created among group of students with no exception to business education students through their interactions and sharing of experience. It emphasizes on processes that include student's discussion and their active engagement with the subject in a group setting that can be monitored by a teacher.

For years, teaching and learning has been on with little or no disturbance of any kind in the Nigerian education sector until towards the tail end of year 2019 and early 2020 in the 21st century when there was an outbreak of a deadly disease called coronavirus 2019 or covid 19. The said disease ravaged the whole world and sent millions of people to their early grave to the extent that no nation in the entire world was spared from the corona pandemic.



In this regard, Nigeria as sovereign state has her own share of the global health crisis to the extent that substantial percentage of Nigerian human resources in the Nigerian economic sector was ravaged by the disease. In view of this, the economic sector of Nigeria was short down by both the state and federal government of Nigeria for months. The short down of the nation's economic sector however resulted in total crippling of the nation's education sector because students at all levels of the sector were given a sit at home order which put a halt to teaching and learning activities for a whole academic session. The order was given by the government so as to serve as a measure to curb the fast spread of the deadly virus.

Adeyemi (2020) observed that although, during the lockdown, some educational institutions made efforts to organize electronic class through internet which allowed teaching and learning to take place outside the classroom setting but observers' statistics revealed that this alternative teaching and learning method was not too effective due to the fact that Nigerian education sector does not have modern and enough internet facilities to put in place for meaningful electronic class objectives attainment. By and large, business education as an academic field also became a victim of ineffective electronic class during the aforementioned period because only little or nothing could be achieved in business education instructions from the e-class during the lockdown period.

Now that the lockdown is over, students have resumed back to schools and classrooms, and instructions have begun, therefore, the necessary steps or strategies to adopt in instruction delivery to make up for the teaching and learning losses during the pandemic lockdown is now a major concern to all the stakeholders in business education in colleges of education so as to serve as a means of reviving the instructional process of the programme. In respect of this, the study intends to critically look at the various benefits that collaborative teaching and learning method as a viable teaching technique may offer to revive instruction delivery in business education in post covid 19 era, and likely challenges it may confront, and the steps that must be taken to proffer solutions.

Benefits of Collaborative Teaching Technique in Business Education at Post Covid 19 Era.

The following benefits have been identified by various scholars in business education as they have positively affected business education programme in colleges of education in Nigeria at post covid 19 era.

c. Identifying the rate of assimilation

In view of the above, Okanlawon (2020) asserted that lecturers/teachers of business education should come together and examine how teaching collaboratively can have positive impact on business education students' learning and outcome. In view of this, if business education tutors in colleges of education can adopt collaborative teaching and learning technique of instruction, it is likely that there will be more room for business education lecturers to identify the rate of assimilation of their students in a co – taught classroom, which will help to engage them thoroughly towards achieving improved academic performance most especially, during and after covid19 era. This is because most lost grounds by business education students during the lockdown would be covered with

the team teaching method. This will eventually create an enabling environment for business education students' rapt attention from different teachers taking them the same course for more understanding in a variety of instructions towards achieving increased emphasis on cognitive strategies and study skills, social skills and improved classroom communities.

d. Improved capability for problems evaluation

Akande (2020) pointed out that team teaching method for business education courses in this post covid 19 era will likely result in business education students' improved capability to evaluate problems critically, argue substantively, and to apply effectively learned concepts to new situations or context. Also, the teaching method in question may bring out constructive criticism among business education lecturers in the face and post covid19 era which may later transform instruction delivery to a participative activity with critical review that will ensure quality assurance for better implementation of business education programme.

e. Tendency of curriculum coverage.

Okafor (2019) asserted that collaborative teaching technique is an instructional situation where a group of teachers forms a team to give instruction or teach business education students in a business education classroom setting. Hence, When two or more business education lecturers do combine together for a course in order to plan, teach, assess and take responsibility for business education students, taking an equal sharing of responsibility, leadership and accountability in a classroom setting during and after covid19 era, there is high tendency that more grounds or content areas will be covered in business education minimum standard, and the standard and goals of business education programme industrially, vocationally and economically will be easily attained. Not only this, the contribution of business education programme at the college of education level to the growth and development of Nigerian economy can be positively felt by all and sundry and without having much feeling of the academic effect of covid19.

Adenekan (2017) also identified the following benefits that business education programme can enjoy if co-teaching is adopted in delivering instructions in her courses in colleges of education in the south-west Nigeria.

- 1. Flexibility and creativity in instructional time usage.** The use of instructional time becomes flexible among business education teachers in collaborative instruction method. This is because individual teacher assigned to teach a subject together with one another takes time to plan his or her lesson, deliver the instruction and evaluate the lesson within the time frame allotted for that course on the departmental time table. The teacher also makes provision for extra class if a particular topic taught is not covered in a single lesson because he is aware that his counterpart taking other topics will equally strive to cover their areas as a way of covering more loss grounds in business education minimum standard during the school lockdown following the outbreak of corona virus This however, will result in instruction delivery healthy competition that allows natural coverage of the minimum standard towards achieving a good summative evaluation.



2. **Easy identification of students' learning difficulties:** Team teaching enables business education lecturers knowing more about their students learning abilities and discover learning difficulties of many business education students in a single subject which might have emanated from the school lockdown in most part of year 2020 due to corona virus pandemic, unlike when the course is handled by a single lecturer who is autonomous in instruction delivery without any check and balance from other teachers. When the students' learning difficulties are discovered by group of teachers, efforts to proffer solutions will jointly be proffered and invariably give the students soft landing in their assessment and academic progression after covid19 era.
3. **Shared ownership of students' learning and academic success.**
Collaborative teaching method in business education programme encourages business education lecturers to do whatever it may professionally cost them like time, efforts, research, and at times personal money to procure needed instructional materials that will enable them put in their best towards ensuring that stated objectives of every lesson taught and those of the entire course are maximally attained in spite of academic time loss caused by covid19 school lockdown. This is because they are all aware that the success or failure of any of the students will be attributed to every one of them taking the course. As such individual lecturer taking the same course is naturally made to be on his or her toes to perform maximally for the achievement of a common goal.
4. **Decreased teacher isolation, increased support and feeling valued by colleagues**
Collaborative teaching method in business education at post covid19 era will definitely result in decreased teacher isolation and increased support for each other. Since a single course will now be handled or taught by two to three lecturers, there is tendency that ideas and knowledge in different areas or content of the course will be shared among colleagues which will naturally lead into giving each other the required support for the success of instruction delivery and assessment in the course that binds them together which also will eventually and naturally make business education lecturers value and appreciate each other.
5. **Increased energy and greater enjoyment from teaching.** Team teaching in business education after covid19 era will in no doubt result in increased energy and teaching enjoyment on the part of business education lecturers. This is because the joint teaching success achieved by a team of business education teachers through collaborative teaching will serve as a motivational factor that will encourage them to put in more efforts towards achieving more instruction delivery at post covid19 era and make the teachers enjoy teaching more. When this happens, it will amount to unveiling the teaching potentials and traits of professionalism in business education lecturers.

Challenges of collaborative learning at Post Covid19 era.

Business education Scholars and experts are of the opinion that, creating a collaborative classroom can be a wonderful rewarding opportunity at post covid19 era, but it is also full of challenges and dilemmas. In view of this, Akinyele (2019) identified the following problems of the teaching method as they have affected instruction delivery in business education programme in colleges of education in Nigeria after corona pandemic era.

Teachers need to go at different speeds

In team teaching in business education there is no doubt that lecturers may likely deliver their instructions at different speeds. Therefore, while working at different speed, there is possibility that a lecturer is either slowed down or forced to catch up faster than he /she would have liked to. In the same vein, a lecturer may go too fast for some students he is taking while this set of business education students will feel lost and be left with the option of note taking. On the other hand, the fast learners in the class will prefer the class and instruction of other lecturer that meets learning speed demand. However, if this is known to these lecturers it may result in unhealthy rivalry that may distort the attainment of collaborative teaching technique that is ought to improve instruction in business education programme. Also, working at different speeds of the lecturers may slow down the minimum standard coverage within required limited time allotted for the course.

Exhibition of different teaching skills. Naturally, teaching skills will definitely differ from one business education lecturer to another. In view of this, a highly skillful and competent teacher with high level of subject matter mastery will surely prove his worth during instruction delivery. As such, the students might prefer his lesson to that of his counterpart who lacks teaching skill and without required level of subject matter mastery. This unhealthy situation will in no doubt result in psychological division of the class by the students, and cause inferiority complex, dejection, frustration, and academic imbalance on the part of the incompetent lecturer. This might further reduce his level of low productivity and invariably cause him speed progression on the job in terms of promotion.

Domineering factor in team teaching and learning.

In this scenario, a senior business education lecturer may decide to take over all the interesting and juicy topics in the course outline and leaving the most difficult and challenging ones to the junior colleague attached to him as a team member to co-teach a course. This is unfair because the junior colleague may not be experienced enough to handle these vital areas and if he manages to teach it, business education students will only be at the mercy of his competence and subject matter mastery level which may not be good enough to handle such difficult areas in the minimum standard. To further worsen the situation, the blame of business education students co-taught the course. This happening does not encourage and motivate junior business education lecturer and it also has an advert effects on the attainment of business education programme objectives through collaborative teaching method

Wrong allocation of business education courses

Team teaching in business education would have been so wonderful and rewarding if courses allocated to team lecturers are optionally relevant. Observations show that in some business education departments in colleges of education, courses are allocated to lecturers without considering their areas of specialization, such as; office and technology and management, accounting, entrepreneurship, and marketing. A situation where an accounting course is to be co-taught, and the course is allocated to a specialist in marketing and another in accounting, hence, there is no way that the two of them would perform equally. This is because one is a specialist in accounting but the other is not, definitely, the accounting specialist will always have inspiring and wonderful instructions while his marketing counterpart may not. Until this abnormality is corrected, team teaching may not be effective in business education programme at the college of education level.

Joint failure sharing. In co-teaching in business education, if a lecturer who is good, sound, and vibrant in instruction delivery with fantastic level of competence is paired alongside a lazy and incompetent one, there is no doubt that no tangible result will be achieved. This is because while the skilled, competent and vibrant lecturer is performing maximally in instruction delivery, the incompetent one will be busy skipping challenging topics in the course outline. However, when students fail, the two of them would be apportioned blame. This may invariably demoralize and demotivate the competent lecturer.

Johnson et al (2017) identified five (5) factors that must be given serious consideration towards enhancing quality collaborative learning among business education students at the college of education level:

1. **Clearly perceived positive independence:**
Business education students that form a class or learning group should inculcate the habit of relying on each other, believe in one another, and encourage team spirit to rule among them so that their common goal of academic exercise for which they gather to attain can be easily achieved. To achieve any learning goal, every business education in the group has one role or the other to play and failure for anyone to play his or her role maturely and seriously with all concentration may make their activities 'efforts in futility'. To achieve main goal of the group academically it is advisable that all exercises activities.
2. **Considerable Interaction:** Business education students that form a learning group they understand to themselves as a way of gathering and sharing knowledge. In addition, group members must be done interactively, providing each other with feedback, drawing challenging conclusions and reasoning.
3. **Individual Accountability and Personal Responsibility:** All business education students in a learning group would be accountable for their share of work and for all materials to be learned, as such, seriousness and concentration are required of them.

4. **Social skills:** To achieve a meaningful collaborative learning among business education students, business education lecturers should be in position to encourage the group towards acquiring ability and potentials to develop and practice trust – building, leadership, decision making, communication and skill management that will encourage more understanding among them.
5. **Group self - evaluating:** Business education students in learning group should set group goals, assess periodically what they are doing as team, and identify the changes that should be made in future for further learning improvement.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the first wave of covid19 that ravaged the whole world between 2019 and major part of 2020 caused a lot of damages to educational sector of Nigeria, most especially in the area of teaching and learning when the Nigerian government ordered a compulsory lock-down of all categories of educational institutions in the country. However, when schools were finally opened, delivery of instruction became paramount so that lost grounds in various academic programme of which business education is one, can be covered with little or no itches. Following this, Collaborative teaching technique is perceived by this study as a very good teaching method to solve instructional delivery problem caused by covid19 pandemic. This is because the teaching technique is an instructional method that involves two or more teachers to plan, instruct and evaluate the whole process of teaching approach in a single course in order to lead to learners improved capability, to evaluate teaching and learning problem critically, argue substantively and to apply effectively learned concepts to new situation or context. There are numerous potential benefits of collaborative teaching discovered by the study which include: social, academic, psychological and assessment advantages that stand the chance of serving as vital teaching tool that can bridge the gaps or vacuum in loss of learning period. However, having identified numerous advantages that are accrued to co-teaching along with its few challenges, the study is hereby concluding that for business education programme to maintain its identified standards and maximally attain its overall vocational, industrial and economic objectives, contributions of collaborative teaching method must not be undermined in business education instruction delivery most especially at post covid 19.

Recommendations. As suggestions to proffer solutions to some identified problems in the study, the following recommendations are hereby made

1. Paired business education lecturers for team teaching should agree at the speed shared course outline should be covered so that students' level of assimilation will not be negatively affected.
2. Different teaching skills in paired business education teachers should be exhibited objectively only, just for the purpose of attaining collaborative teaching method but not to spite or ridicule one another in their bid to deliver instruction.



3. Senior business education lecturers in a paired teaching team should allow fairness and equity when sharing the course outline with their junior colleagues so that domineering factor will not set in.
4. Business education courses should be allocated according to individual lecturer's option or area of specialization in business education programme so that no lecturer will feel inferior to another when they are paired together to co-teach a particular course.
5. Apportioning blames on students' poor performance from collaborative teaching should only be for the lazy and incompetent lecturer that caused it while competent one should be exonerated from the blame so that the latter can continue to always put in his best.

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