

## Effects of Engagement Learning Strategy on Academic Achievement of Business Education Students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State

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### Abstract

*The study utilized a quasi-experimental design, in which a group of 106 second-year business education students were used as intact classes. The primary tool for the study was the Student Academic Achievement Test in Entrepreneurship (SAATE). The pre-test was given to both the experimental and control group, after which the experimental group received engagement learning strategy treatment for six weeks. At the end of the treatment period, a post test was administered to both groups to determine the difference in their academic achievements. The results of data analysis showed that engagement learning strategy is more effective than the conventional (lecture) method, in teaching business education students in colleges of education ( $f=359.330$ ,  $df=1,102$ ,  $p=(0.000)<0.05$ ). Results also showed that there is no significant effect of gender on academic performance in both the control group and the experiment group ( $f=0.3966$ ,  $df=1,102$ ,  $p=(0.049)>0.05$ ). Based on the effectiveness of engagement learning strategy as found out in this study, it is recommended among others that, engagement learning strategy should be adopted as an effective learning strategy in order to improve students' academic achievement. Its usage will encourage the students to participate in the learning activities effectively and enhance learning.*

**Keywords:** Engagement Learning Strategy, Lecture Method, Academic achievement, Teaching Method and Gender.

### Introduction

Throughout human history, the act of imparting knowledge and acquiring new skills has been a fundamental part of life. The act of teaching has a special power to unlock the potential for learning. While it is undeniable that success in learning is influenced by a range of factors beyond teacher's control, the techniques and approaches employed by a teacher remain crucial in facilitating student achievement and academic progress.

The primary objective of teaching at any level of education is to bring about a fundamental change in the learner. (Tebabal & Kahssay, 2016). However, the traditional 'chalk and talk' method of teaching that has been used for hundreds of

years is not as effective as more modern teaching methods (Hightower, 2017). Many educational practitioners apply teacher-centered methods to facilitate knowledge, but the effectiveness of these methods on student learning has been debated in educational research (Pascarella, Seifert & Blaich, 2015).

In the context of business education, which encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitude required for promoting and administering a business enterprise, the goal of the program is to produce competent, the goal of the program is to produce competent, skillful, and dynamic business teachers, office administrators, and business people (Anao 2017; Odunaike & Amoda, 2018). However, traditional teaching methods such as lectures, question and answer sessions, and drills may not be effective in developing business skills, ideas, concepts, understanding, and interest. These methods only help students learn about the theory of business without teaching them how to apply that theory practically.

Inadequate teaching and limited teaching methods can negatively affect students' interest and views of practical concepts (Kiboss & Ogunniyi, 2018). Students have various interests that are closely related to teaching methods. The method of teaching used by teachers seems to affect students' interest toward classroom learning, can be the factor that most influences academic achievement (Sadi & Cakiroglu 2017).

Regular poor academic achievement by most students is fundamentally linked to application of ineffective teaching methods by teachers who impart knowledge to learners (Adunola, 2014). Research on the effectiveness of teaching is often reflected by the achievements of learners. Consequently, there exists the need to embrace more innovative method of teaching that would improve students' academic achievement. Hence the need for engagement learning.

Theresa and Akey (2016) defines engagement learning strategy as the level of participation and intrinsic interest that a student shows in school. Engagement in schoolwork involves both behaviors (such as persistence, effort, attention) and attitudes (such as motivation, positive learning values, enthusiasm, interest, pride in success). Thus, engaged students seek out activities, inside and outside the classroom, that lead to success in learning. Students are urged to engage not only in class, but also with the real world, analyze everything that happens in different life spheres, not only in internship or teaching practice but also economical, business and social life spheres.

Engagement learning seeks to apply and combine many learning theories that fall under the learning paradigm of constructivism, including, but not limited to, situated learning, collaborative learning, active learning, and cognitive apprenticeship. Each of these teaching philosophies encouraged the development of autonomous learners who are motivated to become, and responsible for being, in control of their own learning processes. Regardless of whether students work in groups (collaborative learning) or alone (independent study) students learn how to take responsibility for their own learning.

The term student engagement also known as engage learning is used by some in the literature to denote the readiness, need, desire and compulsion of students to actively participate in everyday school activities, both in and outside the class, involving things like attending classes, active participation in outside the classroom learning, adherence to instructor's directives in the class, and submitted required course works or assignments (Coates 2016). Ivala et al. (2013) define student engagement learning strategy as the amount of physical and psychological energy that students devote to educationally purposeful activities. Meanwhile, Kuh et al. (2018), student engagement learning strategy represents both the time and energy students invest in educationally purposeful activities and the effort institutions devote to using effective educational practices. Wawrzynski et al. (2012) added that the policies and practices that institutions use to induce students to take part in these educationally purposeful activities should be included in the definition of student engagement learning.

Therefore, Strydom and Mentz (2016) averred that student engagement has two components. The first is what students' do – the time and energy that they devote to educationally purposive activities. The second is what institutions do –the extent to which they employ effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things. To corroborate this, Tarantino and Mcdonough (2014) opined that student engagement learning represents both the time and energy students invest in interactions with others through educationally purposeful activities. Nelson et al. (2014) extended the definition of student engagement to non-academic activities when they argue that student engagement includes both the academic and non-academic activities of students' university experiences likely to generate high quality learning.

Unlike the conventional teaching methods, engagement learning strategy exposes students to the real world of life, an aspect of it involves student being taken to visit organizations where they will be able to witness how the knowledge that they are learning applied to the real world. The idea of engagement learning strategy is to get students engaged and connect their learning to the real world. If the teachers can show them how what they are teaching connects to the real world, then their own brain cells are going to connect them and associate them (Sonia, 2016). Engagement learning strategy is of interest because it forms a critical variable linking learning institutions and professional practice - the context in which educators have some control - and achievement and life outcomes which are the ultimate purposes of education. Research increasingly suggests that when learners are engaged in shaping and leading their own learning and education, this can result in benefits for all learners, educators, the institution and the education system as a whole (Crozier & Davies 2017).

The effects of engagement learning on academic achievements of students cannot be over emphasized. Past researches in this area increasingly suggest that

engagement learning strategy is critical for student success (Krause 2015; Kuh 2019). Academic achievement is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best measured or which aspect is most important (Schroeder, 2019). Individual differences have been linked to differences in intelligence and personality. Students with higher mental ability as demonstrated by intelligent quotient test and those who are higher in conscientiousness tend to achieve highly in academic setting (Allen, 2018). Student experiences, engagement, and academic achievement can also change over the course of a student learning career, and continuous encouragement of engagement activities should be the responsibility of teachers, family, and peer groups. Bulger et al. (2018) concluded that there is a casual relationship between engagement learning strategy and academic achievement and that for engagement learning to be established and sustained, it requires that instructors or teachers actively seek to create the conditions that foster engagement. There is no doubt about the fact that positive effects of engagement learning on academic achievement would help to better the performance and especially the interest of business education students. Engagement learning strategy, being more of a students centered method requires active participation of the students both within and outside the classroom settings, it is believed that, this would enable the business education students to be engaged and interested in their learning activities, regardless of their gender difference.

Gender is the property that distinguish organism on the basis of their reproductive roles as female or male (Abubakar & Uboh, 2010). One of the topical issues in the current debates all over the world has been that of gender difference and academic achievement among students in schools. Most studies show that, on average, girls do better in school than boys. Girls get higher grades and complete high school at a higher rate compared to boys (Jacobs, 2002). Females have been found by several studies to be more motivated and higher achievers than males (Abu-Hilal, 2003). Research have suggested that on an empirical level, girls perform better on reading and writing subjects while boys perform better on the more analytical subjects like mathematics and science (U.S. Dept of Education, 2012). In the same vein, some writers have noted that this may be because of bias against female in the educational system (Wadhwa, 2009).

It is also worthy to note that the learning behavior between male and female varies. Research have suggested that girls demonstrate a higher level of interest in classroom engaged learning strategies like, brainstorming, think aloud inquiry and think-pair-share, than boys (Shreiner, 2014; Kahu 2015). Although the data on male and female level of interest toward learning strategies and achievement gap are often inconsistent, but research on gender differences in academic achievement in teaching strategies are likely to offer educators information on implications and guidance on specific directions to take.

This learning strategy, besides its potential of improving students' academic achievement, also has the promise of delivering competent business education

graduates, enhance productivity, increase individual earnings, and engender exponential economic growth. On this background, this study is focused on engagement learning strategy, as it affect academic performance of business education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Business Education as an aspect of vocational education has the common objective of producing well equipped graduates who will be self-reliant. However, the evidently low academic achievement of the learners in key business subjects seems to have led to the production of graduates who cannot create and successfully manage their own business. Through, the researcher's interaction with the students, it was observed that many students find it difficult to achieve high grade in core business education courses because the teaching method seems not effective. Recently, there exist graduates of business education who achieved high grades and yet cannot deal with the more complex real-world business challenges they face in their work place. Many researchers attributed this failure to improper teaching method and low or negative interest of the students towards teaching methods. The challenges that business educators are facing in producing self-reliant graduates are so diverse that using or embracing innovative teaching strategies to improve students' academic achievement is more crucial than ever before. Hence, it is the quest of this study to determine the effects of engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of Business education students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to find out the effects of engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of business education students in Oyo State Colleges of Education. Specifically, this study sought to determine:

1. Effect of engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of business education students.
2. Effect of gender on academic achievement of business education students taught with engagement learning strategy.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant effect of engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of business education students.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant effect of gender on academic achievement of business education students.

## Methodology

The study utilized a quasi-experimental design, in which a group of 106 second-year business education students were used as intact classes. The primary tool for the study was the Student Academic Achievement Test in Entrepreneurship (SAATE). The SAATE instrument is a standardized instrument. This instrument has been moderated by external examiners. The pre-test was given to both the experimental and control group, after which the experimental group received engagement learning strategy treatment for six weeks. At the end of the treatment period, a post test was administered to both groups to determine the difference in their academic achievements.

## Results

This section present the analysis of data collected in the study based on the hypotheses.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant effect of engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of business education students.

**Table 1:** ANCOVA Summary of Treatment (Engagement Learning Strategy) on Academic Achievement of Business Education Students

Source	Type II Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Squared
Corrected Model	13032.535 <sup>a</sup>	2	6516.267	199.297	.000	.796
Intercept	8703.211	1	8703.211	266.183	.000	.723
PRETEST	489.926	1	489.926	14.984	.000	.128
GROUP	11748.769	1	11748.769	359.330	.000	.779
Error	3335.027	102	32.696			
Total	153602.000	105				
Corrected Total	16367.562	104				

Significant at .05 level; df = 1 & 102; Critical P < 0.05

The data presented in Table 1 summarizes the outcome of the ANCOVA analysis on the differences in performance on students between the control group and treatment groups. It compared the Pre-test and Post-test aggregate scores obtained by the Engagement learning strategy (treatment) group and the control group. The data shows that a calculated F-value of 359.330 resulted in statistically significant difference in performance between the control group and the treatment group. This calculated F-value of 359.330 is statistically significant since, the significant level of .000 is less than the alpha significant level of .05, given 1 and 102 degrees of freedom ( $F=359.330$ ,  $df=1,102$ ,  $P=(0.000)<0.05$ ). This implies that there is a significant difference between the academic achievements on aggregates, between the treatment group and the control group. Hence, the null hypothesis  $H_0$  stating "There is no significance effect of engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of business education students." was rejected.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant effect of gender on academic achievement of business education students.

**Table 2:** ANCOVA Summary of Gender on Academic Achievement of Business Education Student.

Source	Type II Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1.140 <sup>a</sup>	2	.570	2.326	.103	.044
Intercept	22.480	1	22.480	91.741	.000	.474
POSTTEST	1.126	1	1.126	4.596	.034	.043
GROUP	.972	1	.972	3.966	.049	.037
Error	24.993	102	.245			
Total	273.000	105				
Corrected Total	26.133	104				

Significant at .05 level; df = 1 & 102; Critical  $P > 0.05$

The data presented in Table 2 above summarizes the outcome of the ANCOVA analysis on the differences in gender performance of students between the control group and treatment groups. It compared the Pre-test and Post-test aggregate scores based on students gender results. The data shows that a calculated F-value of 3.966 resulted in a non-statistically significant difference in gender performance between the control group and the treatment group. This calculated F-value of 3.966 is not statistically significant since, the significant level of .049 is greater than the alpha significant level of .05, given 1 and 102 degrees of freedom, ( $F=0.3966$ ,  $df=1,102$ ,  $P=(0.049)>0.05$ ). This implies that there is no significant difference in gender performance in both the control group and the experiment group. Hence, the null hypothesis  $H_0$  stating “There is no significance effect of gender on academic achievement of business education students” was retained.

### Findings

The result of the data analysis on table one above showed that a significant effect exist between engagement learning strategy on academic achievement of business education students. This finding above is consistent with the finding of Luntungan (2012) who explored the effects of students' engagement learning academic performance. The respondents were 135 college students from an Indonesian university. Both the experimental and the control groups took the same course taught in two different sections. For two weeks, one teacher taught the two sections of the same course using different teaching methods. In the experimental group (n=58) the teacher used directed small group activities and lectured in the comparison group (n=77). Two-way ANCOVA statistics and t-tests results showed that while both teaching methods had a significant effect on students' academic

performance, the small group study group performed better. It is suggested that students engagement learning strategy can have a better effect on academic performance even in large classes.

The result of the data analysis in table two above showed that there is no significant effect of gender on academic achievement of business education students. This finding is consistent with the finding of Similarly, Abdu-Raheem (2012) examined gender differences and academic achievement and retention of students in social studies among Junior Secondary schools in Ekiti State. The study adopted quasi experimental pre-test, post-test control group design. The sample for the study consisted of 240 Junior Secondary school class II students selected from 6 schools, 3 boys only and 3 girls only in Ekiti State. Simple random sampling was used to select 40 students from each single-sex school. The data were analyzed using ANOVA and ANCOVA statistical analyses. The findings indicated that there is no significant difference between the achievement mean scores of male and female students in the experimental and control groups. There is no significant difference between the retention mean score of male and female students in the experimental and control groups. It was concluded in the study that gender does not play any significant role on students' achievement and retention in social studies.

### **Conclusion**

According to the study's result, it has been demonstrated that the engagement learning strategy is more effective than the traditional lecture-based approach in teaching business education courses at Colleges of Education. The engagement learning strategy offers the benefit of not only instructing, but also fostering and improving students' drive, enthusiasm, and accomplishments. Consequently, this approach can lead to more efficient learning, ultimately producing high-quality human resources in the workforce.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proffered:

1. Engagement learning strategy should be adopted as an effective learning strategy in order to improve student's academic achievement.
2. It is also recommended that engagement learning strategy should be adopted as a strategy for teaching for both male and female students.
3. Business education lecturers need to undergo further training to update their skills in teaching effectively. During training, importance of engagement learning should be emphasized.
4. School administrators should make provisions for engaging the students outside the class and ensure that it is done effectively.



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