**Enrolment and Validity of Students’ Evaluation in Business Education in the Colleges of Education**

**In Oyo State**

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**Abstract**

*The study investigated the emerging challenges of students’ evaluation in business education at the Colleges of Education. Survey design was used for the study and the population comprised 86 lecturers of business education in the three Colleges of Education in Oyo State, Nigeria. The sample size was 60 drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling. Three research questions were raised to guide the study and data was collected through a 15 item questionnaire. The instrument was validated by experts in the field of education test measurement and evaluation of Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo. The reliability of the instrument was determined by a test-retest method which yielded a coefficient of 0.67 with an interval of two weeks. Analysis of data was done using frequency counts and percentage scores. Findings showed that examination malpractice, use of threat and ultimatum by school authorities on lecturers to submit students’ results and the increase in students’ enrolment distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education in a high extent. It was recommended that proactive measures should be evolved to check and prevent all kinds of examination malpractices and that lecturers should be given ample time to mark, compile and submit students’ results to reduce excessive work burden.*

**Keywords:** Examination Malpractice, Validity, Accuracy, Students’ Evaluation, Ultimatum

**Introduction**

Education is the most important instrument of change in this ever-dynamic world. Business education is a form of education that, in addition to offering general education, is designed for vocational preparation in office and business related - occupations. In the view of Nwanewezi (2014), business education encompasses education for office occupations, business teaching, business administration and economic understanding. Business education is offered in the tertiary institutions particularly in the colleges of education and faculties of education in universities.

However, business education at all levels of education enables the recipients to develop basic skills for personal use in the future and to .acquire the basic knowledge and skills of business education. It also helps to relate the knowledge and skills acquired to national development. Business Education also helps to develop basic skills in office occupation which prepare students for further training in business studies and provide orientation and basic skills with which to start a life of work for those who may not undergo further training. (Igboke, 2015).

However, evaluations are the final stage of curriculum development process. Currently education in Nigeria is faced with a number of reforms. Students’ evaluation is no doubt a unique part of the reforms. According to Adeola & Bolarinwa (2016), there is, therefore a need to evolve new, effective, and more practical ways of measuring, assessing and reporting students’ progress towards the various targets to guarantee quality education. Evaluation, according to Anikweze (2017) is the assessment process of investigating the status or standard of learners’ attainment with reference to expected outcomes specified as objectives. Evaluation of students is a regular practice in education and it is used to determine how far learners have learnt or mastered on educational task or knowledge or how well an educational process has addressed its set objectives.

Similarly, Iredia (2015) maintained that in schools, examinations are used to assess students’ level of assimilation of series of educational instructions and/or the extent to which a given concept or skill is mastered. In Nigeria, students’ evaluation is conducted at all levels of education either internally or externally. Students’ evaluation provides the necessary feedback that is required in order to maximize the outcomes of educational efforts. The assessment of learners gives objective evidence necessary in the decision making process in education. Njabili, Abedi, Magesse & Kalole (2015) added that the fundamental role of evaluation is to provide authentic and meaningful feedback for improving student learning, instructional practice and educational options. Evaluation of students entails testing, marking, measuring, grading and classifying students’ achievement to provide summative worth of products. According to Ikonta & Akunnabor (2018), the basic functions of evaluation include assessing the degree to which goals and objectives of programme are being achieved, assisting learners to know their learning and achievement progress and ascertaining whether measures used are actually effective.

Teachers engage in students’ i.e evaluation using various tools and strategies, such as tests, take-home assignments, projects, term papers, quizzes and other methods to assess learners. The essence of this measurement is for selection, placement, promotion, and certification of students. Teachers who are involved with students’ evaluation face a tedious challenge of preparing and administering tests/examinations, marking and scoring of student performance, classifying and recording of the results especially now in the face of ever increasing number of students in business education as a result of quest for higher education and discipline that prepares students to be self-reliant and productive. This is a great challenge to students’ evaluation in the Nigerian tertiary institutions.

**Statement of the Problem**

Education in Nigeria has become examination-conscious instead of productivity-conscious, because educational achievement is measured purely on the basis of the examinations passed. Due to this consciousness and the emphasis on examination, researchers (Ogunkola, 2020, Adeola & Bolarinwa, 2016) are of the view that students’ evaluation is faced with a lot of challenges in Nigeria tertiary Institutions. One of such challenges is the doubt of accuracy, authenticity and validity of evaluation as a high national practice. The use of threats and ultimatum to submit students’ results, an ever-increasing number of students without a corresponding increase of teachers’ strength amongst others. All these elements no doubt, distort and undermine the accuracy, validity and reliability of students’ evaluation. The result of this is the production of half-baked and ill-equipped graduates who carry certificates of high grades which they cannot defend. This is the worry of the study.

**Purpose of the study**

The study determines whether:

i. Examination malpractice distorts the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education.

ii. The use of threats and ultimatum by school authorities to submit students’ results distorts the validity and accuracy of students’ evaluation in business education

iii. The ever - increasing enrollment of students in business education poses a challenge to students’ evaluation.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

i. To what extent does examination malpractice distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education?

ii. To what extend does use of threat and ultimatum distorts the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education?

iii. To what extent does increase in students’ enrolment distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education?

**Method**

The study adopted a survey design to examine the challenges of students’ evaluation in business education in the colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study’s population consisted of 86 business education lecturers from the three colleges of education in Oyo State, as gathered from each of the departments.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

A sample of 60 business education lecturers was selected from the total population under study. This sample was arrived at by adopting proportionate stratifies random sampling.

**Instrument for data Collection and Analysis**

A questionnaire containing 15 items was used for data collection. The questionnaire, which has two options ‘high extent’ and ‘low extent’ was validated by three experts, one from business education and two from measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the questionnaire was established through Kudder-Richardson analysis which showed a co-efficient of 0.74. The questionnaire was administered and the data collected was analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores. Any item with less than 50% was regarded as low extent while items with 50% and above were regarded as high extent.

**Presentation of Results**

**Research Question 1:** To what extent does examination malpractice distort the validity and accuracy of students’ evaluation in business education?

**Table 1:** Analysis of responses on the effect of examination malpractice on the validity and accuracy of students’ evaluation in business education

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Items** | **High Extent** | **%** | **Low Extent** | **%** |
| 1. | Fore-knowledge of exam | 49 | 81.7 | 11 | 18.3 |
| 2. | Impersonation | 58 | 96.7 | 2 | 3.3 |
| 3. | Use of external materials | 36 | 60 | 24 | 40 |
| 4. | Exchange of ideas/scripts | 41 | 68.3 | 19 | 31.7 |
| 5. | Looping in exam by students | 28 | 46.7 | 32 | 53.3 |
| 6. | Compromising by lecturers | 25 | 41.7 | 35 | 58.3 |
| 7. | Use of threat by students on lecturers to obtain higher marks | 26 | 43.3 | 34 | 56.7 |
|  | **Average percentage** | **62.6** |  |  | **37.4** |

The results in table 1 show that examination malpractice is a serious challenge in students’ evaluation in business education. The analysis indicates that fore-knowledge of examination questions by students, impersonation, use of external materials, exchanges of ideas/scripts distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education in a high extent as indicated by their percentages while looping by students, compromising by lecturers and use of threat by students on lecturers to obtain higher marks distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education at a low extent as indicated by their percentages.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does the use of threat and ultimatum by school authorities to submit students’ results distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education?

**Table 2:** Analysis of responses on the use of threatand ultimatum and its distortion on students’ evaluation in business education

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Items** | **High Extent** | **%** | **Low Extent** | **%** |
| 1. | Use of ultimatum to submit results | 37 | 61.7 | 23 | 38.3 |
| 2, | Threat of delay in payment of salary | 43 | 71.7 | 17 | 28.3 |
| 3. | Threat of denial of salary | 31 | 51.7 | 29 | 48.3 |
| 4. | Threat of query | 33 | 55 | 27 | 45 |
| 5. | Threat of termination of appointment | 16 | 26.7 | 44 | 73.3 |
|  | **Average percentage** | **53.4** |  |  | **46.6** |

Table 2 analysis revealed that use of ultimatum to submit scores, threat of delay in payment of salary, threat of denial of salary, threat of query by school management distort in a high extent, the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education as indicated by their percentages while threat of termination of appointment by management constitute a low extent of distortion of the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation.

**Research Question 3:** To what extent does increase in student enrolment distort the accuracy and validity of students’ evaluation in business education?

**Table 3:**  Analysis of responses on increase in student enrolment and its distortion of students’ evaluation in business education.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Items** | **High Extent** | **%** | **Low Extent** | **%** |
| 1. | High number of student poses a challenge to accuracy and validity of student’s evaluation | 38 |   | 22 | 36.7 |
| 2. | High work-load on lecturers distorts the accuracy and validity of student’s evaluation | 18 | 30 | 42 | 70 |
| 3. | Increase in the number of student delays submission of result | 53 | 88.3 | 7 | 11.7 |
|  | **Average percentages** | 60.5 |  |  | 39.5 |

The analysis in table 4 showed that increase in students’ enrolment poses a serious challenge to submission of students’ scores and consequently students’ evaluation.

**Discussion of Findings**

Findings revealed that examination malpractice distorts the validity and accuracy of students’ evaluation in business education to a high extent hence, it portends a great challenge to the profession. This agrees with Olokoba (2020) who maintained that examination malpractices have pierced their ugly heads in both the internally and externally conducted examinations thereby rendering the purpose for which evaluation is held ineffective and virtually useless. The findings of the study also agreed with that of Kren-Kidi, (2017) who investigated the root and causes of examination malpractices in tertiary institutions and concluded that lack of seriousness on the part of students led to examination malpractices.

Similarly, the study found that the use of ultimatum and threats by school authorities for lecturers to submit students’ results affect their accuracy in assessment and compilation of scores as a result of the urgency. This supports the findings in Okafor (2015) who identified that time factors given to lecturers affected the compilation and assessment of students’ scores. The finding also agrees with the postulates of Olatunde (2003) which stated that teachers had limited time factor to prepare quality results for students in tertiary institutions.

The findings in research question three says that increase in students’ enrolments affected students’ evaluation. The findings of this study agrees with that of Anerua & Obiazi (2010) which revealed that the enrolment of business education students in tertiary institutions in Nigerian were numerous and thereby affecting the quality of assessments. This is similar to the findings in Ogunlana (2014) that the rate of students’ enrolment in business education has doubled the other vocational departments which may affect the quality of performance of students and lecturers. This is also a critical point of challenge in students’ evaluation in business education. The increasing number of students in business education has been found as a challenge to effective evaluation of students. This is as a result of increase in work-load of lecturers as described by Obiazi (2020). The author lamented that the work of lecturers is appreciably tedious as against the past when students’ number was small. So, examination malpractices, use of threats and ultimatum and increase in students’ enrolment are challenges to effective students’ evaluation in business education.

**Conclusion**

It was concluded that examination malpractice distorts the validity and accuracy of students’ evaluation, and that the use of ultimatum and threats by school authorities for lecturers to submit students’ results affect their accuracy in assessment and compilation, also that the increasing number of students in business education has been found as a challenge to effective evaluation of students. No doubt, students’ evaluation is one of the cardinal elements in the educational process. The essence of it is to determine students’ level of achievement in a given concept or subject area. This exercise has been greatly jeopardized by a number of challenges as found in this study.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were advanced: that examination malpractice distorts the validity and accuracy of students’ evaluation in business education in high extent hence, proactive measures should be evolved to check and prevent all kinds of examination malpractices, lecturers should be given ample time to mark, compile and submit students’ results and increase in students enrolment should be carefully matched with a corresponding increase in lecturers’ strength to reduce excessive work burden.

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