



*Lecturers' Perception and Efficacy of Experiential Pedagogy on ... Igumbor, F. F., Et. al. (2026)*

## Lecturers' Perception and Efficacy of Experiential Pedagogy on Industrial-Relevant Skills Acquisition among Business Education Students in Delta State, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigated lecturers' perspectives on the efficacy of experiential pedagogy, specifically internships, mentorships, and teaching strategies, in fostering industry-relevant skills among Business Education students in Delta State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised all 136 Business Education lecturers across five public tertiary institutions in the state. A census sampling technique was utilized, meaning the entire population was studied. Data were collected using a validated "Curriculum Design, Teaching Methods, and Employability Skills Questionnaire" with a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for research questions, while t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Results revealed that modern instructional technologies, collaborative projects, and role-playing are considered highly effective teaching methods. Furthermore, internships and mentorships are viewed as critical for career readiness, with these perceptions remaining consistent regardless of the lecturers' age, gender, or academic qualifications. The study concludes that while educators actively use student-centered strategies to bridge the theory-practice gap, systemic institutional backing is essential for maximum impact. Therefore, it is recommended that tertiary institutions formally institutionalize guest lectures and joint research with industry professionals to facilitate real-world knowledge transfer.*

**Keywords:** Experiential Pedagogy, Industry-Relevant Skills, Teaching Strategies, Internships, Business Education.

### Introduction

The contemporary global workforce is experiencing a significant paradigm shift, propelled by technological breakthroughs, globalization, and the fluid nature of industrial requirements. In this modern era, holding an academic certificate is no longer the sole indicator of employability; rather, professional readiness encompasses a wider array of traits, including technical proficiency, interpersonal abilities, and the agility to adjust to changing work settings. Consequently, higher education institutions worldwide face substantial pressure to move away from conventional, lecturer-dominated methods toward experiential pedagogy, an approach that prioritizes "learning by doing" to ensure academic programmes match labor market needs. As highlighted by Biggs and Tang (2022), successful instruction in this evolving environment requires that teaching strategies be tightly integrated with specific learning outcomes. This ensures that students gain not just theoretical understanding but also the functional competencies essential for career success, thereby preparing graduates to manage the intricacies of the 21st-century economy. Fundamentally, Business Education is a vocational and technical discipline intended to provide learners with the pedagogical and technical capabilities required for either entrepreneurship or effective participation in the workforce. Umo and Okon (2023) note that this field is a synthesis of diverse elements, such as accounting, secretarial administration, and entrepreneurship, each demanding distinct instructional methods to nurture skill acquisition. Unlike purely academic courses, Business Education acts as a conduit between the classroom and the corporate world; thus, its efficacy relies heavily on the delivery method of these components. Oguejiofor and Iyoha (2023) argue that fostering employability skills within this discipline is not merely a byproduct of the curriculum but a direct result of efficient knowledge transfer and global competitiveness. Therefore, for Business Education to maintain



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relevance within Delta State's tertiary institutions, a conscious transition is required from rote memorization to a functional, competency-driven instructional style that reflects the realities of modern business environments. The impact of Business Education is frequently gauged by how well academic lessons translate to practical settings, a notion deeply grounded in established theories regarding the acquisition of practical skills and their translation into economic worth. Central to this is the Experiential Learning Theory, championed by Kolb (1984), which suggests that knowledge is generated through the transformation of experience. This implies that for business students to become genuinely "employable," they must traverse a cycle involving concrete experience, reflective observation, and active experimentation. Expanding on this, the Constructivist Learning Theory, pioneered by Piaget (1952) and further advanced by Vygotsky (1978), asserts that learning is an active process where individuals build knowledge through social interaction, reflection, and experience, rather than through passive absorption. This theory is crucial for modern Business Education, dictating that for students to become "work-ready," they must participate in active experimentation, such as collaborative projects, simulations, and internships, that replicate the complexities of the real world. Mbise and Lekule (2023) contend that such constructivist methods establish active learning environments that are essential for developing workplace skills, placing a premium on real-world application and collaboration. Within the Nigerian landscape, Oluwadare (2016) argues for a transition from conventional instruction to interactive learning models that bolster employability, positing that students bridge the divide between abstract theory and practical application by actively "constructing" their professional identities through hands-on tasks. Complementing this pedagogical view is the Human Capital Theory, established by Becker (1964), which offers the economic rationale for these educational investments by viewing training and education as investments that increase an individual's economic value and productivity, similar to physical capital. Applying this to Delta State, effective teaching methods and robust curricula serve as vital investments in the human capital of students, nurturing competencies such as digital literacy and critical thinking that are directly linked to national development. This perspective is further supported by observations that Business Education programmes utilizing experiential learning significantly boost human capital by connecting theoretical knowledge with practical skill application. Ultimately, this duality creates a comprehensive framework: Constructivism outlines how skills are best acquired via experience, whereas Human Capital Theory defines why these competencies are essential for economic productivity.

While the foundational curriculum sets the academic stage, Ornstein and Hunkins (2022) define curriculum design as the structured planning of educational content, which must remain adaptable and dynamic to meet societal demands. However, the success of even a robust curriculum is highly contingent upon the delivery methods employed. Historically, Nigerian Business Education has faced criticism for utilizing teacher-centric methods prioritizing rote memorization, which Biggs and Tang (2022) warn results in only a "surface" understanding of material. When teaching methods fail to replicate industrial complexities, a "competency gap" inevitably emerges, resulting in graduates who hold theoretical credentials yet lack the functional ability to operate in contemporary business offices. Conversely, modern experiential pedagogy, incorporating digital simulations, case studies, and problem-based learning (PBL), converts the classroom into a simulated professional environment. Empirical evidence within the region underscores the value of this shift; Ito and Okpue (2025) found that PBL specifically fosters risk-taking and creativity, enhancing entrepreneurial mindsets among Business Education students at Delta State University, Abraka. Furthermore, to solidify these competencies, Connolly et al. (2023) highlight the importance of authentic assessment, where students are evaluated via tasks mirroring real-life challenges to provide tangible proof of employability. Stepping outside traditional lecture halls, internships and mentorship initiatives act as essential "clinical laboratories" for Business Education. These platforms offer environments where academic theories are rigorously tested against industrial realities, fostering soft skills and technical expertise that cannot be fully replicated within a classroom setting. Internships facilitate "situated learning," allowing students to transition smoothly from academic environments to the professional world. In the context of Delta State, Umeh and Iyoha (2024) observe that the development of global employability skills is vastly improved when students encounter real-world business activities through organized industrial attachments. Furthermore, mentorship accelerates the formation of a professional identity, enabling students to gain direct insights from experienced practitioners. Ofor-Douglas (2024) maintains that coordinating university education for employability in a competitive environment demands strong collaboration between academic institutions and industry stakeholders to enable these critical mentorship avenues. Without this synergy, the educational journey remains fragmented, producing students who understand the theoretical "know-what" of business concepts but lack



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the practical "know-how" essential for high-level corporate performance. However, the successful deployment of these experiential elements faces significant challenges. Ukwadinamor et al. (2024) identify major systemic hurdles, such as funding deficits and staffing shortages, which impede the effective integration of these programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Consequently, without adequate industrial attachment durations and structured mentorship, the curriculum's potential to foster human capital is severely reduced. The ultimate objective of these experiential interventions is employability, a complex concept involving soft skills, digital literacy, and adaptability, beyond mere job acquisition. Erhivwiohwovie and Okoro (2023) note that digital tools and e-learning positively impact performance and employability in Delta State, preparing students for the digital economy. Despite this, empirical data shows a persistent gap. Agwazie and Eziechine (2025) discovered that while graduates in Delta State require generic and managerial skills, there is a critical need for increased hands-on training to fully bridge the learning-work divide. Ikenga and Okpuzor (2025) similarly report high employer demand for digital skills like digital marketing and data analysis, which many graduates lack due to theory-heavy curricula. Oguejiofor and Iyoha (2023) corroborate this misalignment, arguing that improving employability necessitates a deliberate "widening" of the curriculum to embrace practical knowledge transfer strategies for global competitiveness. Recent educational reforms in Nigeria, such as the shift from BMAS to CCMAS, attempt to address these issues by permitting 30% institutional flexibility. Emaziye (2025) views this as a chance for institutions like Delta State University to utilize innovative learning approaches despite resource limitations. However, Adamu et al. (2025) warn that funding and mentorship gaps can still stifle entrepreneurial success despite curricular reforms. Consequently, Umo and Okon (2023) conclude that while practical curriculum components aid skill development when delivered effectively, stakeholder involvement in reviews is absolutely essential. While the existing literature extensively affirms the positive link between employability and experiential pedagogy, it exposes a significant gap in research specific to the educator's perspective within Delta State. Most prior studies have concentrated on employer or student perceptions, or general curriculum assessments. Although the significance of practical pedagogy is widely acknowledged, there is a scarcity of empirical data regarding how lecturers in Delta State tertiary institutions specifically view and prioritize these experiential teaching methods over standard curriculum execution. Specifically, there is a lack of targeted inquiry into how lecturers employ pedagogical "bridging" strategies, such as mentorship coordination and simulations, to resolve the theory-practice dichotomy and translate theoretical lessons into professional skills. Consequently, this study aims to address this void by evaluating lecturers' perspectives on experiential pedagogy. By isolating these instructional variables, the research offers a novel viewpoint on resolving the theory-practice disconnect, aiming to reposition Business Education to produce competent professionals prepared for Delta State's competitive industrial environment.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

While the existing literature extensively affirms the positive link between employability and experiential pedagogy, it exposes a significant gap in research specific to the educator's perspective within Delta State. Most prior studies have concentrated on employer or student perceptions, or general curriculum assessments. While prior research, such as Oteri et al. (2025), has examined the general impact of curriculum design and teaching methods, there is a noticeable gap in empirical data regarding the operational effectiveness of experiential instructional strategies, specifically from the viewpoint of the educators. There is a lack of targeted inquiry into how lecturers employ pedagogical "bridging" strategies, such as mentorship coordination and simulations, to resolve the theory-practice dichotomy and translate theoretical lessons into professional skills. Consequently, this study aims to address this void by evaluating lecturers' perspectives on experiential pedagogy. By isolating these instructional variables, the research offers a novel viewpoint on resolving the theory-practice disconnect, aiming to reposition Business Education to produce competent professionals prepared for Delta State's competitive industrial environment.

### **Objectives of the study:**

1. Identify the teaching methods considered most effective by Business Education lecturers for fostering practical and industry-relevant skills.
2. Evaluate the perceptions of Business Education lecturers regarding the integration of internships, mentorship programmes, and experiential learning opportunities in enhancing students' employability.
3. Examine the specific teaching strategies adopted by lecturers to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills application in Business Education.



## Research Questions

1. What teaching methods do Business Education lecturers consider most effective for fostering practical and industry-relevant skills?
2. What is the perception of Business Education lecturers on the integration of internships, mentorship programmes, and experiential learning opportunities in enhancing students' employability?
3. What specific teaching strategies do lecturers adopt to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills application in Business Education?

## Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers about teaching methods considered most effective for fostering practical and industry-relevant skills based on age.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers on the role of internships, mentorship programmes, and experiential learning in enhancing students' employability based on academic qualification.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers on the specific teaching strategies adopted by lecturers to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills application in Business Education based on gender.

## Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the viewpoints of the targeted group. The population for the study comprised all 136 Business Education lecturers sourced from the five public tertiary institutions offering the programmes in Delta State, Nigeria (Delta State University, Abraka; the University of Delta, Agbor; the Colleges of Education in Warri and Mosogar; and the Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba). Because the total population was of a manageable size, a census sampling technique was utilized, incorporating the entire population of 136 lecturers. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled the "Curriculum Design, Teaching Methods, and Employability Skills Questionnaire (CDTMESQ)". The instrument featured structured items evaluated on a 4-point Likert scale. The psychometric property of the instrument was established first through face and content validity by a panel of three experts from Delta State University, Abraka. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot study utilizing the test-retest technique with 30 lecturers outside the main study area. The analysis of the pilot data yielded a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient of 0.81, signifying high internal stability. The administration of the instrument was facilitated by five research assistants, resulting in a 100% recovery rate of the 136 distributed questionnaires. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Descriptive statistics, specifically mean and standard deviation, were used to answer the research questions, with a decision threshold mean score of 2.50 established as the point of agreement. Inferential statistics were utilized to test the formulated null hypotheses; specifically, an independent t-test was conducted for gender-based variables, while a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to assess differences based on academic credentials and age at a 0.05 probability/confidence level of significance.

## Presentation of Results

**Research Question 1:** What teaching methods do Business Education lecturers consider most effective for fostering practical and industry-relevant skills?

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics on Teaching Methods Considered Most Effective for Fostering Practical and Industry-Relevant Skills

S/N	Variable Name	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1	Lecturers incorporate practical teaching methods that enhance students' employability.	3.12	0.73	Agreed
2	The use of real-life business case studies improves students' problem-solving skills.	3.04	0.71	Agreed



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3	Group projects and collaborative learning activities help students develop teamwork skills.	3.09	0.55	Agreed
4	Interactive teaching methods such as role-playing and simulations improve learning outcomes.	3.15	0.64	Agreed
5	Industry professionals are frequently invited for guest lectures and mentorship.	2.60	0.93	Agreed
6	The use of modern instructional technologies (e.g., multimedia, virtual labs) enhances skills acquisition.	3.18	0.68	Agreed
7	Hands-on training is prioritized over theoretical instruction in Business Education.	2.93	0.68	Agreed
8	Problem-based learning methods are effectively used to develop critical thinking skills.	3.05	0.66	Agreed
9	Continuous assessment methods (e.g., projects, and presentations) help students apply their knowledge.	3.12	0.63	Agreed
10	Experiential learning, such as field trips and industry visits, are effectively incorporated.	2.71	0.84	Agreed
11	Lecturers frequently use case studies to bridge the gap between theory and practice.	2.86	0.89	Agreed
12	Students are encouraged to engage in research-based learning to develop analytical skills.	3.15	0.73	Agreed
13	The use of business simulations in teaching improves students' decision-making abilities.	3.18	0.67	Agreed
14	Digital-based instructional methods, such as online tutorials, are effectively integrated.	2.78	0.96	Agreed
15	Teaching strategies in Business Education sufficiently prepare students for workplace challenges.	2.87	0.97	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.99</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics utilized to answer research question 1. The data reveal that the mean responses regarding teaching methods considered most effective range from 2.60 to 3.18, with standard deviations ranging from 0.55 to 0.97. The grand mean of 2.99, which is well above the 2.50 decision threshold, indicates that Business Education lecturers collectively agreed that the listed methods are effective for fostering practical skills. Specifically, the highest-rated methods included the use of modern instructional technologies and business simulations (Mean = 3.18), followed closely by interactive role-playing (Mean = 3.15) and research-based learning (Mean = 3.15). Therefore, this analysis effectively answers the research question by identifying technology-enhanced and simulation-based pedagogy as the specific teaching methods lecturers consider most effective for developing industry-relevant competencies.

**Research Question 2:** What is the perception of Business Education lecturers on the integration of internships, mentorship programmes, and experiential learning opportunities in enhancing students' employability?

**Table 2:** Descriptive Statistics on the Perception of Lecturers Regarding Internships, Mentorship Programmes, and Experiential Learning

S/N	Variable Name	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1	Internship opportunities are well integrated into the Business Education curriculum.	3.06	0.77	Agreed
2	Industrial training programmes provide students with relevant job-ready skills.	3.08	0.81	Agreed
3	Students have adequate access to structured mentorship programmes.	2.88	0.73	Agreed
4	Business Education programmes collaborate effectively with industry partners for internships.	2.94	0.73	Agreed
5	Internships help students transition smoothly from academic learning to workplace practices.	3.10	0.82	Agreed



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6	Experiential learning activities, such as simulations and fieldwork, are well implemented.	2.82	0.76	Agreed
7	Students benefit significantly from hands-on experiences during internships.	2.90	0.75	Agreed
8	Lecturers play an active role in guiding students through mentorship programmes.	3.24	0.63	Agreed
9	Business Education departments provide sufficient support for students to secure internships.	3.04	0.78	Agreed
10	Mentorship programmes contribute to students' professional growth and career readiness.	3.05	0.78	Agreed
11	The curriculum includes structured practical experiences that enhance students' employability.	2.96	0.69	Agreed
12	Employers actively participate in shaping internship and mentorship programmes.	2.95	0.60	Agreed
13	Experiential learning initiatives help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.	2.99	0.67	Agreed
14	The current internship duration is adequate for students to acquire practical experience.	2.84	0.79	Agreed
15	There is a need for stronger industry-academic partnerships to improve experiential learning.	3.16	0.78	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics used to answer research question 2. The data indicate that the mean scores on the perception of experiential learning integration range from 2.82 to 3.24, with standard deviations between 0.60 and 0.82. The grand mean of 3.00 exceeds the 2.50 decision threshold, showing general agreement among lecturers that internships and mentorships are integral to enhancing employability. Notably, the item "Lecturers play an active role in guiding students through mentorship programmes" received the highest rating (Mean = 3.24), followed by "There is a need for stronger industry-academic partnerships to improve experiential learning" (Mean = 3.16). Therefore, this analysis effectively answers the research question by demonstrating a strong, positive perception among lecturers regarding the value of integrating these experiential opportunities, while also clearly highlighting their consensus on the need to reinforce industry linkages to maximize student benefit.

**Research Question 3:** What specific teaching strategies do lecturers adopt to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills application in Business Education?

**Table 3:** Descriptive Statistics on Teaching Strategies Adopted by Lecturers to Bridge the Theory-Practice Gap

S/N	Variable Name	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1	I frequently use case studies to help students apply theoretical concepts to real-world business scenarios.	3.15	0.62	Agreed
2	Business simulations are an integral part of my teaching approach.	3.01	0.81	Agreed
3	I incorporate hands-on projects to enhance students' practical skills.	3.25	0.55	Agreed
4	Role-playing exercises are used to improve students' decision-making and problem-solving abilities.	3.09	0.70	Agreed
5	Guest lectures from industry professionals are regularly included in my teaching methods.	2.74	0.91	Agreed
6	I assign students real-life business challenges to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills.	3.00	0.60	Agreed
7	Collaborative learning techniques, such as group projects, are effective in bridging the gap between theory and practice.	3.07	0.73	Agreed
8	I use digital tools and software to enhance students' practical business skills.	3.18	0.65	Agreed
9	Practical assignments, such as business plan development, are part of my teaching strategy.	3.10	0.69	Agreed



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10	Students engage in workplace-based learning through industry partnerships.	3.15	0.67	Agreed
11	Internship placements are strongly encouraged and integrated into the learning process.	3.10	0.61	Agreed
12	I provide mentorship and career guidance to help students navigate business environments.	3.26	0.61	Agreed
13	Regular field visits and industry tours are organized to expose students to real business settings.	3.05	0.68	Agreed
14	The use of problem-based learning (PBL) enhances students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge.	3.07	0.80	Agreed
15	Continuous assessment methods (such as practical demonstrations) help evaluate students' ability to apply business concepts.	3.34	0.61	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.10</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics utilized to answer research question 3. The data show that Business Education lecturers utilize a diverse range of bridging strategies, with item means ranging from 2.74 to 3.34. The grand mean of 3.10, which is above the 2.50 threshold, confirms that lecturers actively adopt specific strategies to narrow the gap between theory and practice. The most dominant strategies utilized include "Continuous assessment methods such as practical demonstrations" (Mean = 3.34), "Providing mentorship and career guidance" (Mean = 3.26), and "Incorporating hands-on projects" (Mean = 3.25). Therefore, this analysis clearly answers the research question by pinpointing the exact practical, assessment-driven, and project-based bridging strategies that educators deliberately adopt to transition students from theoretical understanding to practical competence.

### Hypothesis 1

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers about teaching methods considered most effective for fostering practical and industry-relevant skills based on age.

**Table 4:** One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Summary on Teaching Methods Considered Most Effective Based on Age

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	1.297	3	.432	2.140	.098	Not Significant
Within Groups	26.673	132	.202			
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.971</b>	<b>135</b>				

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The statistics in Table 4 present the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) used to effectively test null hypothesis 1. The data indicate an F-value of 2.140 with a corresponding p-value (Sig.) of .098. Because the calculated p-value (.098) is greater than the established 0.05 level of significance decision threshold, the analysis confirms that the null hypothesis should be retained. This implies that the age of Business Education lecturers does not significantly influence their perception of the most effective teaching methods for fostering practical skills; lecturers across different age groups share a similar view on the efficacy of these instructional strategies.

### Hypothesis 2

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers on the role of internships, mentorship programmes, and experiential learning in enhancing students' employability based on academic qualification.

**Table 5:** One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Summary on the Role of Internships and Mentorship Based on Academic Qualification

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	.112	2	.056	.397	.673	Not Significant
Within Groups	18.821	133	.142			
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.934</b>	<b>135</b>				

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The statistics in Table 5 present the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) used to effectively test null hypothesis 2. The results show an F-value of .397 with a corresponding p-value (Sig.) of .673. Because the calculated p-value (.673)



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exceeds the established 0.05 alpha level of significance decision threshold, the analysis confirms that the null hypothesis should be retained. This finding indicates that a lecturer's academic qualification (B.Sc., M.Sc., or Ph.D.) does not significantly affect their perception of the value of internships and mentorships. Therefore, lecturers across all qualification levels unanimously agree on the importance of experiential learning for employability.

### Hypothesis 3

**Ho3:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers on the specific teaching strategies adopted to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills application based on gender.

**Table 6:** t-test Analysis of Lecturers' Perception on Bridging Strategies Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	64	3.17	.579	134	1.641	.103	Retain $H_0$
Female	72	3.01	.544				

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The statistics in Table 6 present the independent t-test analysis used to effectively test null hypothesis 3. The results reveal a calculated t-value of 1.641 with a corresponding p-value (Sig.) of .103. Because the calculated p-value (.103) is greater than the established 0.05 level of significance decision threshold, the analysis confirms that the null hypothesis should be retained. This suggests that gender does not significantly influence the specific teaching strategies adopted by lecturers to bridge the theory-practice gap. Therefore, both male and female lecturers uniformly employ similar bridging strategies, such as case studies and simulations, to enhance practical application in Business Education.

### Discussion of Findings

The first major finding of this study reveals a significant collective endorsement of modern, learner-centric instructional models by Business Education lecturers. Specifically, the data established that educators identify the integration of contemporary instructional technology (such as virtual laboratories), business-based simulations, and interactive role-playing as the most potent drivers of industry-relevant competencies. This robust agreement indicates a progressive pedagogical shift among Delta State lecturers, moving away from the traditional, teacher-centric memorization that Biggs and Tang (2022) warned only produces a "surface" understanding. This outcome directly supports the fundamental tenets of the Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978) established in the literature, which maintains that individuals acquire knowledge most effectively through active participation and the simulation of real-world complexities rather than passive reception. Furthermore, the finding is highly consistent with the empirical assertions of Erhivwiohwovie and Okoro (2023), who argued that technology-mediated instruction remarkably boosts graduate employability. It also reinforces the observations of Ito and Okpue (2025) regarding the efficacy of problem-based learning in fostering creativity and risk-taking. Crucially, the test of the first hypothesis revealed that the age of the lecturers did not significantly influence these perceptions. This lack of demographic variance is particularly revealing; it indicates a shared professional philosophy among both early-career and veteran educators regarding practical instruction. Ultimately, this unified pedagogical stance aligns perfectly with Oguejiofor and Iyoha's (2023) position on the absolute necessity of a practical instructional focus to maintain global competitiveness.

The second major finding addresses the integration of internships, mentorship programmes, and experiential learning. The data indicate a broad and robust consensus (Grand Mean = 3.00) among educators that these experiential elements are essential for preparing students for the modern workforce. Specifically, participants highly rated their direct, active involvement in guiding students through mentorship (Mean = 3.24), while simultaneously calling for much stronger academic-industry partnerships (Mean = 3.16) to refine these experiences. From a theoretical standpoint, this finding is deeply anchored in the Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) established earlier, as it views these structured industrial attachments as strategic educational investments that directly increase a student's economic utility and productivity in the labor market. The empirical results strongly corroborate the observations of Umeh and Iyoha (2024), who emphasized that global employability skills, such as problem-solving and teamwork, are most effectively refined when students transition from the classroom to real-world business operations. Furthermore, the lecturers' expressed need for stronger industry linkages validates the assertions of Ofor-Douglas (2024), who maintained that managing university education for employability demands powerful synergy between academic institutions and corporate stakeholders. It also mirrors the findings of Agwazie and Eziechine (2025), who posited that hands-on training is a critical requirement to fully bridge the



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learning-work divide in Delta State. Crucially, the test of the second hypothesis revealed that a lecturer's academic qualification (B.Sc., M.Sc., or Ph.D.) does not significantly affect their perception of the value of these programmes. This unanimity across all qualification levels is highly significant; it demonstrates that despite the systemic hurdles such as funding deficits identified by Ukwadinamor et al. (2024), the indispensable value of industrial exposure as a "clinical laboratory" remains a universally accepted pedagogical truth within the Business Education discipline. The third major finding addresses the specific pedagogical strategies lecturers adopt to bridge the gap between abstract theoretical knowledge and practical workplace application. The empirical evidence demonstrates that academics actively employ a deliberate variety of bridging tools, yielding a high grand mean of 3.10. Notably, the highest-rated strategies included the implementation of "continuous assessment methods such as practical demonstrations" (Mean = 3.34) and "incorporating hands-on projects" (Mean = 3.25). This deliberate shift toward competency-based evaluation perfectly corroborates the assertions of Connolly et al. (2023) established in the literature, who highlighted the absolute necessity of authentic assessment, evaluating students via tasks that mirror real-life challenges to provide tangible proof of employability. Furthermore, this trend directly aligns with the findings of Agwazie and Eziechine (2025), who strongly advocated for increased hands-on training to resolve the persistent disconnect between education and employment in Delta State. The high reliance on providing career guidance (Mean = 3.26) also reinforces Ofor-Douglas's (2024) position on the critical need for mentorship coordination. Crucially, the inferential analysis of the third hypothesis revealed no statistically significant difference between male and female lecturers regarding their chosen bridging techniques ( $p = .103$ ). This lack of gender variance is highly instructive; it implies that institutional standards and a shared professional commitment to practical instruction take definitive precedence over demographic differences. Ultimately, both male and female educators in Delta State are uniformly dedicated to ensuring students can successfully apply theoretical concepts to solve authentic business dilemmas.

## Conclusion

Drawing from the empirical evidence gathered in this research, it is concluded that Business Education faculty members within Delta State's higher education system possess a deep understanding of and a strong dedication to experiential pedagogy. A distinct evolution is evident, moving away from conventional, lecture-heavy instruction toward more pragmatic, technology-integrated, and project-centered teaching frameworks. The research clarifies that the persistent theory-practice divide does not stem from a deficiency in pedagogical knowledge among teachers. Instead, the findings suggest that the challenge lies in the need to formally institutionalize and provide systemic support for the instructional strategies already recognized as successful. Moreover, the remarkable consistency in perspectives across various age groups, gender identities, and academic backgrounds points to a robust professional consensus within the academic sector. This alignment offers a reliable basis for government and institutional policymakers to execute standardized educational reforms. Ultimately, to maintain the relevance of Business Education in a fluctuating global economy, there must be an ongoing reinforcement of the harmony between classroom-based bridging tactics and real-world industrial exposure through internships.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusion drawn from this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Institutionalize Modern Pedagogy and Assessment Reforms: To support the effective teaching methods identified, tertiary institutions should move beyond individual lecturer efforts by providing "Smart Classrooms" and licensed business simulation software to standardize the use of modern instructional technologies. Additionally, institutional boards should encourage a shift toward more practice-based continuous assessments rather than an over-reliance on traditional examinations.
2. Strengthen Industry-Academic Linkages for Internships: To maximize the perceived value of experiential learning, the management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should establish formal, robust partnerships with corporate organizations. This will ensure that internship placements are not merely administrative requirements but high-quality, immersive learning experiences that successfully transition students to the workplace.
3. Enhance Structured Mentorship and Professional Development: To further support the bridging strategies adopted by educators, departments should create structured mentorship frameworks where students are directly matched with industry professionals and senior lecturers to foster professional identity and career readiness. Concurrently, regular



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workshops should be organized for lecturers to continuously update them on emerging global trends in experiential teaching and digital business tools.

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