



## DEVELOPING INTERVIEW SKILLS FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

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### **Abstract:**

The paper examined how teachers could use interview skills for the assessment of students in Business Education. It was noted that interview is a well-organized discussion between the teacher (interviewer) and the student (interviewee) before, during and after teacher-learning process. The interviewer presents set of questions to the interviewee to respond on the given areas of knowledge. It was observed that there are basically two types of interview: Structured and unstructured. Structure interview requires more skills. Some of the interview skills an interviewer is required to develop include: ability to discuss and interact favourably, ability to establish rapport with the interviewee, ability to relax the interviewee, ability to keep issues that are confidential, ability to construct and present valid and reliable questions, ability to encourage interviewee to express thoughts and feelings objectively, ability to listen attentively without reacting emotionally to the interviewee, ability to take note or record facts, ability to establish good eye-contact and non-verbal cues, ability to score, and judge objectively. These skills required continuous practice. A teacher in Business education could develop these skills for assessment of students in the secondary and tertiary schools. Recommendations were made.

**Keywords:** interview skills, assessment of students, business education

### **1. Introduction**

Interview is one of the techniques used in assessing students in schools by teachers or lecturers. It has been pointed out that interview should be used as a technique for the continuous assessment of students. (Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (FMEST), 1985). Similarly, the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in its National Policy on Education has recommended the practice of Continuous Assessment in Schools with, the use of various techniques including interview. Therefore,

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developing, interview skills, will help Business Education. teachers to provide objective assessment of their students. They could apply these interview skills before, during and after a teaching learning process. It should also be applied in assessing students in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of behaviour. Interview has not been widely used by teachers because of the required skills. Basically, interview skills include: ability to construct valid and reliable questions, ability to present the questions face-to-face and obtain formation for students' assessment.

## **2. Purpose**

The paper examined how Business Educators (teachers) should develop interview skills for the assessment of students. The concept of interview, assessment, and interview skills were discussed.

### **2.1 Concept of Interview**

Interview is a face-to-face interaction between two or more persons where questions are asked by the interviewer to obtain information. The respondent is called the interviewee. Interview involves a relationship. In this paper the Business Education teacher is the interviewer while the student is the interviewee. There are other similar definitions on interview. Wikipedia (2007) noted that interview is a conversation between two or more people (the interviewer and the interviewee) whereby questions are asked by the interviewer, to obtain information from the interviewee.

Ukwuije (1993) pointed out that interview is a tool used by teachers to collect information from students verbally on face-to-face basis. On a more clarification, he tried to differentiate between interview and questionnaire. That interview requires presentation of questions by the interviewer verbally to the interviewee who is also expected to respond verbally. On the other hand, he pointed out that questionnaire is presented in written form and the responses also in written form. In interview, teachers observe students' behaviour verbally in a face-to-face relationship (Orubu, 2000). Authors have different views about the types of interview. Federal Ministry of Education Science and Technology (1985) identified formal and informal or structured and unstructured interview.

Ukwuije (1995) pointed out structured, unstructured, non- directive and focused interview. Wikipedia (2007) presented structured, semi- structure, and unstructured interview. This paper emphasized structured and unstructured interview. The structured interview uses a schedule, which contains set of questions to be asked by interviewer (teacher) to the interviewee (student) in a specific order. The interviewer (teacher) is not expected to deviate from the set format of questions. Structured interview is also very formal. Questions are prepared in advance and are prepared to different respondents in the same order. It is use for placement. Unstructured interview is informal. It is flexible and interviewee is free to express himself/herself. There is no specific order of asking questions. The interviewer encourages the interviewee to expand on his/her answers and

may probe other areas to obtain information about the interviewee. Interview is useful and could be used effectively for the assessment of students in Business Education.

## **2.2 Concept of Assessment**

Generally, assessment is the consideration and judgment of someone academic progress (BBC English Dictionary, 1992). Students' academic progress helps to determine their career prospect. Assessment could be whole, parts or continuous. That is whole assessment and continuous assessment. The current practice in Nigeria school is that of continuous assessment, which is in parts or formative and a formal examination, Which in whole or summative' in nature. For so many years the Federal Government of Nigeria (1981, 1998 & 2004) in its National Policy on Education has maintained that assessment should be based in whole or in parts of continuous assessment of the progress of students. It is expected to cover the three domains of cognitive, affective and psychomotor of students' behaviour. A handbook on continuous assessment by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (FMEST) (1985) was published as a guide. Continuous assessment is the frequent use of valid and reliable techniques including interview for making judgment about the behaviour of a student in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Osadebe, 2007). Therefore, interview should be used for the assessment of students in Business Education.

## **2.3 Interview Skills**

Interview is a face-to-face verbal interaction where an interviewer (teacher) asks a set of questions to an interviewee (student) in order to obtain information for judging the student's behaviour. Skill is the knowledge and ability to do something well (BBC English Dictionary, 1992). It could be acquired through training and practice. It may also be a natural ability to do well. Therefore, some of the skills a Business Education teacher needs to develop in order to interview the students well are as follows:

- 1) ability to discuss and interact favourably,
- 2) ability to establish rapport with the interviewee,
- 3) ability to relax the interviewee,
- 4) ability to keep issues that are confidential,
- 5) ability to construct and present valid and reliable questions,
- 6) ability to encourage interviewees to express thoughts and feeling objectively,
- 7) ability to listen attentively without reacting emotionally to the interviewee,
- 8) ability to take note or record facts,
- 9) ability to establish good eye-contact and non-verbal cues,
- 10) ability to score and judge objectively.

The above skills are similar to the outline of Aiken (1979). A common skill interview according to Spiropoulos (2000) is being a good listener.

### **3. Application of Interview Skills in Schools**

The teacher could develop interviews before, during and after teaching and learning. It should be a continuous practice. These implies placement formative, diagnostics and summative (Osadebe & Odili, 2005).

#### **3.1 Interview for Placement Assessment**

The stage before the teaching of business education commences with the placement of students. Interview could be used effectively to select students who are capable of studying Business Education. The teacher (interviewer) should be able to present valid and reliable questions to the students (interviewee) and select them objectively according to their performances. This should be done to new students or as they enter into the new classes where selection or placement is necessary. The teacher should develop the required skills to assess the students.

#### **3.2 Interview For Formative Assessment**

In this stage, the Business Education teacher comes in with well-prepared questions that will be used at interval or toward the end of the lesson or lecture. Students are then interviewed. The aim is to monitor teaching progress and students learning outcomes (how students thinks, feels and react). Score may be awarded for continuous assessment. General class questions may go side by side with interview.

#### **3.3 Interview for Diagnostic Assessment**

At this stage, well-prepared questions are used to identify students with learning difficulties, psychological and medical problems. A special time may be given to students for remedial attention. The Business Education teacher should be patient to be able to tolerate this set of students. The teacher may refer students with counselling problem to the counsellor and refer those with medical problems to the doctor.

#### **3.4 Interview for Summative Assessment**

After teaching, the Business Education teacher may want to determine students learning outcomes. This could be achieved through the use of a well structured interview. Questions should be prepared in the content areas covered by the teacher. The items should be well designed so that the students respond appropriately on the topics taught. A face-to-face interaction with the students (interviewees) will help the teacher (interviewer), to determine the end to which the teaching and learning objectives have been achieved. It will help the interviewer to judge objectively the achievement of each student in Business Education. Interview checks problem associated with the use of test (such as examination malpractice). At this stage the teacher should score each student in order to judge objectively each performance after the interview.

#### 4. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from this paper:

1. interviewers (teachers) in Business Education should have the knowledge of interview; develop the skills through practice in teaching and learning of the subject.
2. interviewers (teachers) should learn to establish rapport with the interviewees during the face-to-face interaction. It requires the interviewer to be caution, patient, polite and caring for the interviewee.
3. the Business Education teachers should be able to prepare or use valid and reliable questions, and able to present them during the interview.
4. the Business Education teachers should be able to assess students' behaviour in areas of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor through the use of interview.
5. the teacher should be able to interview and select objectively the right students for placement into the study of Business Education.
6. during and after teaching, the teacher should be able to interview students for formative, diagnostic and summative purposes.
7. the interviewer should be able to use non-verbal cues such as nodding of the head, blinking of the eyes during the interview session.

#### 5. Conclusion

The need to develop interview skills for the assessment of Business Education students has been discussed. Interviewer (teacher) requires the knowledge and ability to objectively interview student (interviewee). Interview could be used to select students (placement assessment), monitor learning progress (formative assessment), identify students with learning difficulties (diagnostic assessment) and determine learning outcomes or achievement of objectives (summative assessment).

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