# Perspective of Business Education Lecturers on Gender Disparities in Work Ethics and Effective Teaching of Business Education Courses in Colleges of Education in North-Central

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# Abstract

The study investigated the influence of work ethics on the teaching of business education courses in colleges of education in the North-Central region of Nigeria. The study adopts a descriptive survey research design. A population of 72 business lecturers from five state colleges of education, in North-central, Nigeria participated in the study. A structured questionnaire tagged Work Ethics for Effective Teaching of Business Education Questionnaire (WEETBEQ) with a four-point rating scale was used to collect data for the study. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.93 was calculated for the instrument. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using the independent samples t-test at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the work ethics dimensions of punctuality to class have a very high extent positive influence on the effective teaching of business education courses (mean; male = 3.48; Female = 3.18, for punctuality); there was a significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses ( $t_{70} = 1.24$ , P=0.017). The study concludes that an improvement in work ethics dimensions of punctuality and effective communication will lead to effective teaching of business education courses. It was recommended that there is a need for the management of colleges of education to establish clear policies within the institutions to promote gender equity in punctuality to class.

Keywords: Work ethics, Punctuality, Communication

# Introduction

Education is a training process that aims to impart knowledge, foster abilities, and cultivate skills that may help people become more mentally attentive and adopt the proper outlook on life. This

indicates that if education is properly instilled in people, they will actively benefit themselves and favourably contribute to the development and welfare of their local community. This education must be exceptional, complete, useful, and pertinent to society's demands. The Policy explained that functional education needs to be current and applicable, with people developing the necessary skills and abilities to survive in society and contribute to its growth. According to Asaju and Adogba (2021), the effectiveness of education is the degree to which it alters or improves student behaviour, attitude, values, and knowledge. As a learning facilitator, the teacher must be able to influence students' attitudes, values, knowledge, emotions, and behaviours by his attitude and behaviour toward teaching as a profession. Students look up to the teacher as a role model when carrying out their responsibilities.

The objective of teacher education is to cultivate student teachers who possess the ability to engage in astute intellectual investigation (Ololube, 2013). The teacher education programme in Nigeria is supervised and regulated by the government through the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The responsibility for producing skilled and capable teachers lies with the Commission. The College of Education in Nigeria is one of the postsecondary institutions that provides a programme focused on Business Education, which is specifically designed for individuals interested in learning about various aspects of business.

According to Okoro (2013), the objective of introducing business education at the postsecondary level is to cultivate competent graduates who possess the ability to be self-employed and employ others. Business education is an academic programme that equips individuals with the knowledge and competencies required for fostering economic progress and advancement in a country. It is essential for effectively steering towards desired objectives. Based on the previously described ideas about business education, it is reasonable to conclude that strong work ethics and effective programme supervision by school administration are essential and play a crucial role in its success. To achieve success, this program must accomplish its utmost goals and objectives.

Work ethics refers to a society's or a people's perspective on and attitude toward work. Work ethics will be high if people in the community see employment as a virtue for human existence. On the other side, work ethics will unavoidably be low if attitudes and opinions toward work are of low value to life (Fitria, 2018). Early on, and frequently as part of a first impression, work ethics are developed. Therefore, it is necessary to train talent and hire character. Having a person who can be trained on pertinent skills is nice. But character is one thing that a boss can't always teach. It is

obvious from the previous statement that work ethics are a crucial quality that every teacher should possess because they might ultimately result in a work culture owned by the teacher. A teacher with a strong work ethic will complete assignments to complete satisfaction. Therefore, work ethics can be viewed as a set of attitudes or core beliefs that a person has to improve their quality of life, which in turn affects how they behave at work. Despite the abundance of information sources and ease of access, the instructor is still the most significant and influencing element of the educational process. Any innovation or development of the educational process should start with the teacher because they are the organizer, instructor, and efficient conduit between the students and the sources of knowledge (Aldmour, 2014).

Work ethics is a professional growth that improves service quality. This suggests that solid work ethics will result in high-quality work production. To meet the standards stated, business instructors must have strong work ethics. In general, work ethics refers to a person's views and ideas towards the importance of work, their commitment to it, and their level of adherence to the rules of their profession. Employees' work ethics consist of a set of beliefs and ethical standards that serve as a guide and can improve their productivity. Labour ethic includes applying ethical concepts and codes as well as applying certain philosophical methodologies to professional labour. Iqbal, Tuffail, and Lodhi (2021) assert that the definition of work ethics entails devotion or dedication.

Work ethics can be perceived differently by male and female business educators. Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. Teachers' gender plays a significant role towards their teaching effectiveness. Studies have shown that gender norms and stereotypes can influence work ethics and perceptions of productivity (Heilman, 2012; Heilman & Caleo, 2018). Investigating if and how these disparities manifest in the context of business education lecturers could provide valuable insights. Research suggests that female lecturers often face challenges related to work-life balance, perceptions of competence, and barriers to advancement (Nwosu & Okorie, 2017; Okorie, Nwankwo, Iwuala, & Okolie, 2022). Exploring the perspectives of business education lecturers on these issues could highlight areas for improvement.

The theoretical framework to guide this study is the virtue ethics theory of Aristotle and the human relationship theory of Gregory Elton Mayo. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), the theoretical framework is made up of pertinent theoretical principles, constructions, concepts, and tenets. The

philosophy surrounding work ethics appears to fall into four major groups. Deontology, utilitarianism, rights, and virtues theories are the four ethical theories that are relevant to work ethics. The Virtue Ethical Theory of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) is the one that applies to this subject. Aristotle's (384–322 B.C.) virtue ethics serves as one of the theoretical basis for this topic. He emphasised virtue as a set of consistent, profound, and long-lasting behaviours that encompass excellence and perfection. These behaviours form our identity and influence our typical thoughts, emotions, and actions, ultimately leading to a state of goodness or fulfilment. This theory is based on the premise that all activities and actions are directed towards a specific good, which serves as the ultimate objective for everything. Virtue ethics refers to the moral principles and character traits that enable an individual to exhibit excellence in both their conduct and performance. Aristotle views human work as the engagement of the soul in rational actions.

It is therefore crucial to pursue these tasks diligently and virtuously, as their successful accomplishment aligns with their inherent virtue. Based on the definition and description of virtue ethics, it is evident that all facets of human existence are characterized by virtuous qualities. Virtue ethics encompasses various aspects such as physical bodies, living spaces, children, education, and more, each of which possesses distinct features and behaviour. Virtues can either be moral or intellectual. Moral virtues are learned through habit and constant practice of those virtues. Intellectual virtues, on the other hand, are the end product of teaching, which requires experience and time to cultivate. Virtue is a quality of character that manifests itself in persistent conduct that is advantageous to both the lecturer (a moral agent) and the entirety of society.

From a moral or ethical standpoint, being on time, dedicated, loyal, and having good and efficient communication skills make a person exceptional as a lecturer in business education. There are undoubtedly independent reasons why any good teacher would want those interactions to satisfy the requirements of morality, regardless of how critically important it is for them to set an example for their students by acting in a certain way. These independent reasons have to do with general moral duties to others, professional duties, and finally, duties to oneself in the pursuit of being an effective business educator.

Virtues are those qualities, characteristics, good habits, or attributes of lecturers that help them to attain excellence in their teaching, Aristotle's idea is extremely pertinent to this subject since it relates to how business educators' characters relate to their work ethics. These virtues can be seen or heard in people's feelings, words, deeds, production, and results, as well as in their acts and

inactions. Through character growth, virtue ethics enables lecturers to create trust with one another. Business instructors need to cultivate these character attributes to achieve effective teaching because teaching is a means of serving others and assisting them in leading fulfilling lives.

In addition to making sure rules are obeyed and hazards are kept to a minimum, teachers' work ethics as moral educators are taken into account. For instance, if we look at the aspect of work ethics that pertains to being on time for work, what does it mean to be on time for class? For a teacher to be successful, they must have dependable character, moral common sense, and emotional receptivity since they not only educate but also assist learners in becoming responsible citizens. They must therefore always remember that their role involves not only impacting knowledge but also ethical character and conduct models.

Understanding the importance of ethics in the workplace sparked the development of numerous components of work ethics, which are now regarded as a crucial characteristic used to gauge the performance of management and staff members in any organization. A key managerial role that determines whether an organisation succeeds or fails is regarded as a supervisory strategy. A collection of guidelines and standards that must be followed to successfully interact with people and advance one's job forms the foundation of the concept of work ethics. The moral principles that apply to the field of education are linked to those that apply to people. In business, and particularly in human resource management, ethics is one of the most important topics. The Protestant Work Ethic (PWE), which Max Weber (1904–1905) advocated, is credited with helping capitalism flourish in Western society. It is from his writings that the concept of work ethics has evolved (Raymond, Kimberly, Cheryl, & Charles, 2010).

Experience indicates that work ethics are an essential requirement for teachers' performance. At its fundamental level, ethics can be defined as a collection of moral principles. Given that life is an ongoing sequence of moral choices, ethics focuses on determining the optimal moral course of action for both individuals and society as a collective entity. This statement (Anastasia, 2016) can also be employed to characterise a moral philosophy. Work ethics encompass a collection of ethical principles that an employee adhere to during their work, encompassing a sense of obligation, a focus on excellence, and self-control.

In the view of Michele (2019), work ethics are commonly regarded as a moral principle centred on diligence and hard work (Anastasia, 2016). Individuals who possess strong work ethics demonstrate deeply rooted principles that guide their conduct in the workplace. As a consequence, they constantly generate a higher quantity. The author stated further that, those who possess a robust work ethic often exhibit high levels of productivity and tend to progress at a faster pace. Due to their unwavering determination to complete the task at hand, they often achieve a higher rate of productivity compared to people lacking a strong work ethic. Employers universally expect and prioritise certain aspects of work ethics. The qualities encompassed in this list are dependability, honesty, impartiality, openness, resolution, accountability, responsibility, dedication, timeliness, humility, and initiative.

One aspect of work ethics is punctuality, which is staying on task and not leaving the office until all of the day's tasks or assignments have been completed, rather than whenever you feel like it. Being on time is a quality of responsible workers. Being punctual is not enough. An individual's attitude reveals their emotional connection to what they are doing. According to Preethi (2017), being prompt and maintaining commitments requires thorough compliance. Prioritizing the work to be prompt is made easier by being on time. The quality of the instruction delivered to the students increases as the punctuality of the lecturer increases. Being on time requires not only being present but also being organized and focused on one's responsibilities. Two key aspects determine punctuality. The first is reverence for time, and the second is regard for other people (Mckay & Mckay, 2020).

Effective communication between individuals is crucial in every organisation. It is a ubiquitous phenomenon that occurs among individuals at all phases of their life, in various forms. Every mode of interpersonal interaction constitutes communication. The efficient and successful functioning of any institution, such as a school, relies heavily on the cruciality of effective communication. Language enables humans to safeguard their cultural legacy and transmit it inter-generationally. Communication is the method used while exchanging ideas with others. For the kids to learn effectively, a teacher must have strong communication abilities. To assist students and accomplish worthwhile professional goals, teachers must have strong communication abilities (Khan, Khan, Zia-ul-Islam & Khan 2017).

Effective communication is necessary for both the teacher and the students to grasp what is being taught or for the teacher to effortlessly transmit his or her message. Teaching effectiveness is not solely based on the technicalities and methods the teacher uses when instructing the students.

Effective communication entails selecting the optimal communication channel for a given task, having the technical skills to utilise the channel effectively, presenting information in a way that is appropriate for the target audience, and being able to comprehend messages and responses from others (Adeleke, Adesua & Jimola, 2021).

The giving of academic knowledge is only one aspect of teaching. It also encompasses behaviour and discipline. Teachers equip their pupils with the knowledge, abilities, and competencies necessary for future tasks, as well as desirable traits of conduct and character. They serve as role models for pupils, and their behaviour affects the kids they instruct. As a learning facilitator, a teacher has certain talents and traits that represent eloquence. As a result, their influence on students' learning is significant through their behaviour, attitudes, and sentiments in the classroom. In the educational industry, issues with teachers have been linked to absenteeism, tardiness to work and classes, a lack of commitment to their jobs, and engaging in side jobs that interfere with their core responsibilities.

However, the attitude of some business educators to work is worrisome as it seems they are oblivious to their call to duty. What might be the causes of this weak work ethic? Could this be a result of the actions, perspectives, and convictions that college professors have towards their profession or of the management techniques used by the colleges of education in North-Central Nigeria? To achieve instructors' effectiveness, it is crucial to consider work ethics and this can be emphasised through teacher traits. Among other disciplinary difficulties, absenteeism among teachers in the Nigerian educational system has been linked. Understanding work ethics used in the academic setting is crucial for schools and instructors to become more effective.

While there is substantial research on perceptions of work ethics and the effective delivery of business education courses, limited studies have specifically examined these topics from the perspective of gender in the context of north-central Nigeria. This gap in the literature highlights the need for research that investigates how gender-based perceptions of work ethics may influence the successful teaching of business education courses in North central, Nigeria. To do this, it is crucial to examine what teachers may do to enhance their instruction. To close the knowledge gaps regarding the impact of work ethics on the successful delivery of business education courses in our institutions of education, the study set out to determine the answers to these questions.

### **Research Questions**

- 1. What is the difference between the perception of male and female business educators of the extent to which the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education?
- 2. To what extent do male and female business educators differ regarding the influence of the work ethics dimension of communication on the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education?

### Hypotheses

- **H01**: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses.
- **H02**: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of communication influences the effective teaching of business education courses.

### Methodology

The study adopts the descriptive survey design. The study was a survey of the perceptions of business educators on the influence of work ethics on the teaching of business education courses in colleges of education. The population of the study comprised 72 business education lecturers in colleges of education in the North-central zone of Nigeria. The researcher believes that these lecturers are in a better position to provide information on the influence of work ethics on the teaching of business education courses. The study was a census survey. A structured questionnaire tagged Work Ethics and Effective Teaching of Business Education Courses Questionnaire (WEETBECQ) designed by the researcher and duly validated by three experts with a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.92 was used to gather data for the study. The WEETBECQ consists of 20 items raised after an extensive review of the literature. The items were placed on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1. A total of 72 copies of WEETBECQ were administered with the help of two research assistants and all were retrieved, representing a 100% return rate. The data collected to answer the research questions were analysed using mean, and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using independent samples t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The following boundary limits were used for item options of research the questionnaire: Very High Extent (3.25-4.00), High Extent (2.50-3.24), Low Extent (1.75 - 2.49), and Not Needed (1.001.74). The hypothesis was rejected when the observed p-value was less than the fixed p-value of 0.05. The hypothesis was not rejected when the observed p-value was equal to or greater than the fixed p-value of 0.05.

# Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the difference between the perception of male and female business educators of the extent to which the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education?

	of business education courses	Male Respondents		Female Respondents	
S/N	Item Statements	Mean	Remark	Mean	Remark
1.	Punctuality to class by teachers teaches students the importance of respecting time, a valuable life skill.	3.49	Very High Extent	2.97	High Extent
2.	Punctuality in class by teachers increases students' engagement.	3.32	Very High Extent	3.03	High Extent
3.	Being ready to teach as scheduled on the timetable helps teachers to efficiently organize and manage classroom activities.	3.74	Very High Extent	3.12	High Extent
4.	Teachers' punctuality to class fosters trust and mutual respect between teachers and students.	3.71	Very High Extent	3.24	High Extent
5.	Punctual teachers have adequate time to prepare materials and resources, delivering well-structured lessons.	3.46	Very High Extent	3.50	Very High Extent
6.	Business education teachers' timely arrival to class minimizes stress for both teachers and students.	3.03	High Extent	3.10	High Extent
7.	Punctuality contributes to a positive classroom culture helping students to perform well.	3.39	Very High Extent	3.29	Very High Extent
	Weighted Average	3.45	Very High Extent	3.18	High Extent

# Table 1: Mean ratings of work ethics dimension of punctuality to class and effective teaching of business education courses

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data in Table 1 show that male and female business educators differ in their perception of the extent to which punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education (mean = 3.45 and 3.18 for male and female business educators, respectively).

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do male and female business educators differ regarding the influence of the work ethics dimension of communication on the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education?

Table 1: Mean ratings of work ethics dimension of communication and effective teaching of
business education courses

		Male		Female		
		Res	Respondents		ndents	
S/N	Item Statements	Mean	Remark	Mean	Remark	
8.	Clear communication by business education teachers helps students feel confident in expressing their ideas, opinions, and questions without fear of judgment.	3.93	Very High Extent	3.87	Very High Extent	
9.	Clear communication by business education teachers ensures students understand the class objectives and instructions.	3.54	Very High Extent	3.61	Very High Extent	
10.	Good communication enables business education teachers to provide constructive feedback to students, helping them understand their strengths and areas for improvement	3.53	Very High Extent	3.45	Very High Extent	
11.	Good communication builds positive relationships between teachers and students thereby creating a supportive learning environment.	3.71	Very High Extent	3.82	Very High Extent	
12.	Effective communication by business education inspires and motivates students to strive for academic excellence.	3.74	Very High Extent	3.59	Very High Extent	

13.	Good communication by business education	3.51	Very High	3.43	Very High
	teachers facilitates problem-solving by encouraging students to ask questions.		Extent		Extent
	Weighted Average	3.66	Very High Extent	3.63	Very High Extent

## Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data in Table 2 show that male and female business educators differ in their perception of the extent to which the work ethics dimension of communication influences the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education (mean = 3.66 and 3.63 for male and female business educators, respectively). The respondents rated all the constructs in Table 2 to a very high extent.

### **Hypotheses**

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses.

Table 5. Summary of independent samples t-test of mean ratings of work e	units unitension
of punctuality to class and effective teaching of business education courses	
Std.	Decision

Table 3. Summary of independent samples t-test of mean ratings of work athics dimension

			Std.				
Gender	Ν	Mean	Deviation	df	t	Sig.	
Male	55	3.45	0.29	70	1.24	0.017	H <sub>0</sub> 1 Rejected
Female	17	3.18	0.51	70	1.24	0.017	
Source: Fiel	d Survey	, 2023					P<0.05

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 presents the results of the independent samples t-test of mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the influence of punctuality in class on the effective teaching of business education courses. The results show that there was a significant difference between the

mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class influences the effective teaching of business education courses ( $t_{70} = 1.24$ , P=0.017). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business Ho2: educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of communication influences the effective teaching of business education courses.

Table 4: Summary of independent samples t-test of mean ratings of work ethics dimension of communication and effective teaching of business education courses

Gender	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Т	Sig.	Decision
Male	55	3.66	0.32	70	0.002	0.(02	H <sub>0</sub> 2 Rejected
Female	17	3.63	0.36	70	0.803	0.682	
Source: Fi	eld Surv	ev. 2023					P<0.05

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 presents the results of the independent samples t-test of mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the influence of the work ethics dimension of communication on the effective teaching of business education courses. The results show that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators regarding the extent to which the work ethics dimension of communication influences the effective teaching of business education courses ( $t_{70} = 0.803$ , P=0.682). The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study determines the perception of business educators on gender disparities in work ethics and the effective teaching of business education courses. From the analysis of research question one in Table 1, the study found that punctuality to class has a very high extent positive influence on the effective teaching of business education courses (mean = 3.43, SD = 0.60). This means that an improvement in punctuality to class will lead to effective teaching of business education courses, other things being equal. In the same vein, the result of hypothesis one indicates that no significant difference exists in the opinions of male and female business educators regarding the influence of punctuality in class on the effective teaching of business education courses. This finding supports the earlier finding of Johnson, Smith, & Williams (2018) who found that educators across different levels of education and genders, including colleges, recognized the significance of punctuality in creating a conducive learning environment and promoting student engagement. This finding corroborates Asma and Khalid Ahmed (2022) that teachers' punctuality is crucial for students' learning process because lectures presented in a short amount of time do not contain much explanation and can be difficult to comprehend. Indicating no significant difference in mean responses between male and female business education faculty in Nigerian universities regarding the impact of punctuality on the effective teaching of business education courses. This reveals that teaching students at the appointed time can inculcate punctual behaviour in students amongst others.

The study also found that effective communication by business educators has a high extent positive influence on the effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education. The result of hypothesis two indicates that no significant difference exists between the responses of male and female business educators regarding the influence of the work ethics dimension of communication on the effective teaching of business education courses. This means that good communication enables business education teachers to provide constructive feedback to students, helping them understand their strengths and areas for improvement and the achievement of the objectives of the lesson. The finding corroborates the finding of Alamgir, Salahuddin, Syed and Manzoor (2017) who found that teachers both male and female need effective communication skills to facilitate effective teaching. Alamgir, Salahuddin, Syed and Manzoor believe that effective communication is important for teaching effectiveness by teachers. For effective teaching of business education courses in colleges of education, business educators must display effective work ethics dimension of communication to ensure the production of quality graduates for the world of work. This finding also supports the findings of Mckay and Mckay (2020) who found that effective communication between individuals is crucial in every organisation. It is a ubiquitous phenomenon that occurs among individuals at all phases of their lives, in various forms. Every mode of interpersonal interaction constitutes communication. The efficient and successful

functioning of any institution, such as a school, relies heavily on the cruciality of the work ethics dimension of effective communication.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that gender disparities exist in the work ethics dimension of punctuality to class and effective teaching of business education courses, with male business educators having a slightly higher positive perception of the influence of punctuality to class on effective teaching of business education courses. Gender disparity does not exist in the work ethics dimension of communication and effective teaching. This implies that male business educators are more likely to be punctual in their classes than their female counterparts. Despite strides toward gender equality in several professional areas, disparities in how the work ethics dimension of punctuality in class is perceived and valued remain prevalent in business education.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- There is a need for the management of colleges of education to establish clear policies and guidelines within the institutions to promote gender equity in punctuality to class. This may involve teachers signing attendance in the classroom among others.
- 2. The management of colleges of education should offer professional development workshops and resources for business educators focused on enhancing communication skills in the classroom. Emphasize the importance of adapting communication styles to meet the diverse needs of students, regardless of gender.

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