

## Research Article

# Business Educators' Rating of Collaboration as a Tool for Achieving Quality Business Education Programme in Colleges of Education in South-East, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The study aimed at business educators' ratings of collaboration as a tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and four null hypotheses were tested. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 162 business educators in seven colleges of education in South-East Nigeria. The entire population was studied without sampling because the size was not too large. The instrument for data collection was five-point rating scale questionnaire which contained 17-items in two clusters. The instrument was validated by three experts. Internal consistency method with Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and obtained an overall co-efficient value of 0.88. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that respondents' agreed that funding by government and research were collaboration tools for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Gender significantly influenced the respondents' mean ratings of funding by government and research. Ownership of institutions differs significantly in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool, but did not differ significantly in research. Based on the findings, it was concluded that, all the collaboration tools listed in the study creates real world learning experience and enhance quality business education programme among the students and teachers in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. It was, therefore recommended among others that, government should continue to provide colleges of education with enough funding for research and development for creating a strong link with international scholars and promotes learning.

**Keywords:** Business educators, ratings, collaboration, quality business education programme and colleges of education.

## Introduction

Business education as an integral part of vocational education is an educational programme that prepares students for entry into and advancement in jobs within business and prepares them to handle their own business affairs and to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy. Business education encompasses knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed by all citizens in order to effectively manage their personal businesses and economic system.

In other words, business education means education for business or training skills which are required in business offices, clerical occupation and business policy analysis. Business education aspires to produce skilled graduates who will meet the demands of the fast growing society. It is the

technological and industrial development of any nation depends on her ability to develop her citizens towards being job creator instead of job seeker which business education helps in achieving it. Due to poor infrastructural facilities facing Nigerian colleges of education, coupled with the number of graduates from different institutions of higher learning that failed to transform the economic fortune of the country towards industrialization, the nation is far from experiencing technological advancements and economic growth (Olorunfemi & Ashaolu, cited in Nwazor & Udegbonam, 2016). Therefore, for effective running of colleges of education, there is needed for collaboration with government, industry, business institutions among others.

College of education is referred as the third stage, third level and post-secondary education in the educational level following the completion of a school providing secondary education. College of education is one of the apex of teaching, learning and research engagements in the education sectors of a nation. The regulator of Nigerian colleges of education is the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). Its role is to formulate National Policy framework for the full development of teacher education and training of teachers. NCCE defines minimum standards for all programmes of teacher education and accredits their certificates and other academic awards. The certificates obtained by graduates of college of education are Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) and Bachelor of Science in Education (B.Sc. Ed) in some colleges. Thus, reason for choosing college of education is that it provides higher educational guidance, orientation and teaching training to students in order to achieve quality programme. Another reason is because colleges of education have business education programme where students are adequately taught by competent, committed and well qualified teachers to enable them to teach various components of business education subjects at junior secondary school level and able to pursue degree programmes in business education. Thus, for effective running of business education, school-to-work which involves transition of students from schools to industry and business institutions was adopted.

As school-to-work programmes ensure smooth transition of students from schools to industry and business institutions, its activities have been less impactful due to inadequate student placement, lack of supervision and rejection of student-trainees in some cases by public institutions, local and multi-national organizations (Essia, 2012). As a result, linkage between schools and industries in the area that concerns poor infrastructural facilities have become ineffective in achieving the objectives of transferrable skill development, improving work experience, providing practical and industrial orientation that leads to better career choice in business education. Schools need to partner with industries for research assistance and collaboration, curriculum planning, infrastructural provision, scholarships, seminars and field trips among others (Okojie, 2013). Furthermore, Gbenedio (2012) noted that many academic programmes tend to exist in isolation, with few connections between learning institutions and industries, even between those in the same geographical area.

In recent time, graduates from the nation's colleges of education most especially the business education graduates have been plagued by the inability to get jobs in corporate organization and companies in Nigeria (Igberaharha, 2018). The industries mostly complain of inadequate skills required especially in the current cutting edge technology, low practical know-how and lack of confidence. Many authors and researchers like Essia (2012); Nwazor (2014) related this problem to the quality of training received by these graduates while in school which is devoid of skills required to meet with the demands of the business world. Okojie (2013) observed that some of the courses available in Nigerian higher institutions nowadays are far removed from the needs of the society and this is partly responsible for the mass unemployment of Nigerian graduates. This is in line with the thoughts of Udegbonam, Igomu, Enenchukwu and Igbinoghodua (2019) that Nigeria is bedeviled with severe problem of graduate unemployment brought about by mismatch between graduate training and the world of work. These could be done through effective college-industry collaboration to ensure smooth transition of students from schools to industry and business institutions for the courses offered in Nigerian colleges of education. Collaboration refers to the situation of two or more persons working together to create or achieve the same goal. Similarly, the essence of

collaboration among other things is to identify the higher order of quality needed by the students for success in school and in the work place after graduation so as to inculcate same in the students. One outcome of tertiary educational institutions drive to produce students with high order skills is closer integration with industry (Bedwell, Wildman, DiazGranados, Salazar, Kramer & Salas, cited in Ankrah & AL-Tabbaa, 2015). With regard to the need and relevance of the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions to foster collaboration with industries, Ojimba cited in Udegbuma, Igumu, Enenchukwu and Igbinoghodua (2019) posited that given the right and conducive atmosphere, schools, industry government and society linkages can be developed into strong and solid collaboration. Udegbuma, Igumu, Enenchukwu and Igbinoghodua further noted that the benefits of collaboration are enormous because it would enable students acquire industrial skills, develop work habits and instill positive attitude of students towards industries and business education in particular.

Business education with industry collaboration is critical for skills development (education and training), the generation, acquisition and adoption of knowledge (innovation and technology transfer), and the promotion of entrepreneurship (start-ups and spin-offs). Business education is basically occupational education which makes individuals self-sufficient and reliant (Islam, Mohajan & Datta, 2012). Business education students need collaboration as tools for achieving quality in order to be effective in their chosen fields of work. The linkage between tertiary educational institutions and industry is very weak in Africa including Nigeria and do not produce the skills assets needed for industrial productivity. This leads to low absorption level of graduates by available industries.

In Nigeria, there seems to be lack of linkage between industry and academics and this is really a serious problem hampering the performance of business education programme. The students should learn practical techniques and should build skills related to commerce, trade and industry for which they have to practically visit the business sites and locations. Rotua (2017) reported that if there are fewer linkages between industry and academics, then the school will not be able to get practical exposure.

The interaction between institutions of higher learning and employers in Industries and related business organizations represent a means of ensuring quality education training programmes. The challenge to business and industry to succeed in an increasingly competitive world market is contingent upon skilled personnel, who learn, grow and adapt to the changing markets and technologies (Okoro, 2015). Through such ventures, students have opportunities to acquire hands on experiences and skills that will come in handy when they finally join the job market. With this, tertiary educational institutions particularly (colleges of education) should also explore avenues to facilitate business matching, networking, knowledge transfer programmes, and community network among others with industries to bring significant changes to the country's economic development. It is through these programmes that relevant skill development by business education would be realized in order to meet business needs.

School-industry collaboration is achieved in several ways- through mentorships, research and development, technology transfer and internship work placements (Jackson, 2015). *Collaboration is important not just because it is a better way to learn but because it penetrates every institution and all lives. Thus, learning to collaborate is part of equipping oneself for effectiveness, problem solving, innovation and life-long learning in an ever-changing networked economy* (Islam, Mohajan & Datta, 2012). Thus, Jackson (2015); Udegbuma, Igumu, Enenchukwu and Igbinoghodua (2019) and Oviawe, Uwameiye and Uddin (2017) noted the collaboration tools for achieving quality business education programme to include funding by government, industry, philanthropists; research, innovation, knowledge transfer, employability, in-service education among others. However, the study focused on funding by government and research collaboration as tools for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education. Funding by government as mentioned is the first thing that comes to mind as the availability of money for meeting the need of a given project or

programme is critical. It is a system of apportioning available capital belonging to an organization for meeting needs. Funding refers to a form of financial support that is given for the achievement of projects. According to Nwafor, Uchendu and Akani (2015), funding is the provision of financial resources in order to meet needs, projects or programmes. Money needed to run a project or programme in the school may be raised from within or outside the school. When funds are generated, they are usually disbursed based on the needs of the school. The process of making the acquired funds available to the units that require them either in the short or long run is referred to as funding (Ankrah, Burgess, Grimshaw & Shaw, 2013). In support, Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) reported that funding of educational institutions promotes quality modern facilities and instructional materials that are made available for the business education programme.

Similarly, Ezeonwurie (2019) noted that there is need for consistent funding, in form of payment of teachers' salaries, purchase instructional materials and teaching facilities, building of classrooms and equipping of computer labs, typing pools and offices with modern technological devices. Therefore, through funding by government success of the business education programme and attainment of its goals and objectives will be achieved (Ajoma, 2018). Ezeonwurie (2019) revealed that funding enhanced business education programme in colleges of education. Another collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme is research and innovation.

Research is a means of demonstrating one's ability and capability in solving an identified problem and it is an important pointer to the national technological capability (Oguwusi & Ibrahim, 2016). One of the major roles of research is in breeding industrialization which brings about jobs and wealth creation, arrests social menace, assists in curbing rural-urban migration and poverty reduction. Research as an endeavour comes in three forms basic research (theoretic or experimental), applied research and development research. School-industry collaboration can expand the relevance of research carried out in public institutions, foster the commercialization of public research and development outcomes, and increase the mobility of labour between public and the private sectors (Jo-Johnson cited in Siyanbola, 2016).

In addition, Okoro (2015) revealed that research as a collaboration tool enhance quality research and publications, quality curriculum, quality text books, discipline of teachers, quality infrastructure, quality teaching facilities among others. Nwokike, Ezeabii and Jim (2018) noted that research as a collaboration tool for achieving sustainable development in South East States of Nigeria through business education programme ensured that the school curriculum is relevant to the skills required of industries.

The influencing factors in the context of rating of collaboration tools for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education could be gender and ownership of institutions. Gender in this study refers to male and female business educators in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Nwosu, Crossdale and Ofulue (2018) revealed that male and female business educators did not differ significantly in their views of in-service education, quality curriculum development, funding by government, industry and philanthropists as tool for achieving quality business education as examined in their study. Nwokike, Ezeabii and Jim (2018) reported that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators on the relevance of research collaboration in achieving sustainable development in the South East States of Nigeria. Okoli, Utoware and Kaizer (2018) reported that there were no significant differences in the mean responses of both male and female business education lecturers from federal colleges of education as well as their counterpart in state on achieving quality business education such as in-service education, curriculum development, personnel and funding in South East Nigeria.

Similarly, ownership of institutions here refers to a body that owns the college of education where business education programme are offered. Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) reported that there is no significant different regarding funding by government as collaboration tool for achieving quality

business education programme for teaching and learning by federal and state owned tertiary institutions. Nwosu, Crossdale and Ofulue (2018) noted that business educators in federal owned colleges of education did not differ significantly on in-service education, quality curriculum development, funding by government as tools for achieving quality business education programme. Similarly, finding by Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) revealed that there was no significant difference regarding research collaboration as a tool for achieving quality teaching and learning by public and state tertiary institutions. Therefore, an effective relationship between schools and industries will compel industries to make expertise, equipment and expendable material available for effective teaching and learning of the business education students. It is against this background that this study sought to ascertain business educators' ratings of collaboration as a tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Business education students are expected to be equipped with employability skills and competencies needed by employers in the world of work at this globalization era. Although, it has been observed that a wide gap appears in expectations, perceptions of colleges of education on collaboration tools for achieving quality business education programme, probably as a result of poor understanding of the indices of collaboration (Zyl, Amadi-Echendu & Bothma, 2017). Thus, millions of graduates from Nigerian educational institutions of higher learning in the labour market seem not qualified to be employed due to lack of skills and competencies. This is linked to lack of practical experience due to inadequate facilities and technology. Meanwhile, colleges of education need tools for research assistance and collaboration, curriculum planning, infrastructural provision, in-service training, scholarships, seminars, strong institutional capacity among others. Therefore, effective communication between colleges of education and industries should be work visits.

According to Gbenedio (2012), many academic programmes tend to exist in isolation with few connections between the school and industries, and even between those in the same geographical area. Therefore, if effective collaboration with school, industry, government and society are established, business education students will have the opportunity to receive appropriate training from appropriate environment and the gap between the classroom experiences and the yearnings of employers will be reduced to the barest minimum.

The problem of this study, therefore, is that Nigerian business education students seem not to apply the collaboration appropriately, lack practical experience due to inadequate facilities and technology as expected for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education. This could be due to their ignorance of the importance of collaborating with government, industries and individuals to gain access to adequate facilities and technology for teaching to achieve quality programme. If this ugly situation is not averted, its adverse effects on the socio-economic development of the colleges of education in South-East will persist to the detriment of students, citizens and the government. But if averted, business education students will have the opportunity to receive appropriate training from appropriate environment and the gap between the classroom experiences and the yearnings of employers will be reduced or if not eliminated. It is based on the above views that the study intends to ascertain business educator's ratings of collaboration as a tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain business educator's ratings of collaboration as a tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study ascertained business educators' ratings of:

- 1) Funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.
- 2) Research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) What is business educators' rating of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?
- 2) What is business educators' rating of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) Male and female business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.
- 2) Business educators in federal and state colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.
- 3) Male and female business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.
- 4) Business educators in federal and state colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

## **Method**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of this study comprised of 162 business educators in seven colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Data collected was a 17 items structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts-two in business education and one in measurement and evaluation all from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Their comments enhanced the content validity of the instrument. To establish the internal consistency of the instrument, a trial-test was used. Data collected in the pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha to determine the internal consistency using the application of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 and obtain reliability coefficients values of 0.89 and 0.84 for clusters B1 and B2 respectively with an overall coefficient value of 0.87. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point scale, with response categories as "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree". The administration of the instrument was carried out personally by the researchers with the help of four research assistants. Out of the 162 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents in their schools through direct approach which facilitated a response rate, 158 copies (representing 98 percent) were retrieved with an attrition rate of four copies (representing 2 percent) and used for data analysis. Data collected regarding the research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In order to determine the ascertain business educator's ratings of collaboration as a tool for achieving quality business education programme, a decision rule based on mean ratings between 3.50-4.00 were regarded as strongly agree, items with mean ratings of 2.50-3.49 were considered as agree. Furthermore, items with mean ratings of 1.50-2.49 and 1.00-1.49 were considered as disagree and strongly disagree. In testing the null hypotheses, where the calculated p-value is less than the stipulated level of significance (0.05), it meant that there was a significant difference and the hypothesis was rejected. Conversely, where the calculated p-value is equal to or greater than the stipulated level of significance (0.05), it meant that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was not rejected.

## **Results**

### **Research Question 1**

What is business educators' rating of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?

**Table 1. Business educators' mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria (N=158)**

S.No.	Funding by Government help in	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
1	Providing of financial resources in order to meet business education needs	3.60	0.43	Strongly Agree
2	Providing of financial resources in order to meet projects of business education	3.20	0.52	Agree
3	Providing of financial resources in order to meet business education programmes	3.70	0.42	Strongly Agree
4	Institutions success of the business education programme and attainment of its goals and objectives	2.69	0.57	Agree
5	Providing adequate and conducive classrooms	3.54	0.48	Strongly Agree
6	Providing well-equipped laboratories/studios	3.24	0.50	Agree
7	Providing state-of-the-art model offices	3.20	0.53	Agree
8	Providing updated libraries	3.50	0.45	Strongly Agree
9	Providing appropriate staff offices	3.36	0.49	Agree
10	Providing appropriate furniture	3.56	0.44	Strongly Agree
11	Providing research and development	3.50	0.45	Strongly Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.37</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Data in Table 1 show that the item-by-item analysis reveals that out of eleven items listed. Six of the items have mean scores that ranging from 3.50 to 3.60 indicating strongly agree and the remaining five items as agree with mean scores ranging from 2.69 to 3.36. The cluster mean scores of 3.37 shows that, on the whole, business educators in the area of the study agree on the funding by government as a collaboration tool to enable business education department of colleges of education achieve quality programme. The standard deviations of 0.43 to 0.57 show that the respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings.

### Research Question 2

What is business educators' rating of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?

**Table 2. Business educators' mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria (N=158)**

S.No.	Research helps in	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
1	Providing business education with key technologies as levers to encourage greater research and development	2.60	0.60	Agree
2	Fostering the commercialization of public research and development outcomes	2.50	0.64	Agree
3	Enabling knowledge transfer among business educators	3.56	0.54	Strongly Agree
4	Increasing research productivity	3.88	0.51	Strongly Agree
5	Coordinating research and development agenda	2.70	0.58	Agree
6	Stimulating additional private research and development investment	2.78	0.56	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.00</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Data in Table 2 show that out of the six items listed. Two items have the mean scores ranging from 3.56 and 3.88 indicating strongly agree and the remaining four items as agree with mean scores ranging from 2.50 to 2.78.

The cluster mean scores of 3.00 shows that, on the whole, business educators in the area of the study agree on the research as a collaboration tool to enable business education department of colleges of education achieve quality programme. The standard deviations of 0.51 to 0.64 show that the respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings.

### Result of Test of Hypotheses

The null hypotheses formulated for the study are tested in this section. The t-test is used to analyze data relating to the twelve hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

#### Hypothesis 1

Male and female business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

**Table 3. Summary of t-test analysis of male and female business educators in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.**

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\alpha$	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Male	60	3.12	.15	0.05	156	2.93	.000	Significant
Female	98	3.10	.10					

Table 3 indicates that the calculated t-value is 2.93 at 156 degree of freedom and .000 p-value. Since the p-value of .000 was less than the alpha value (0.05). It means that male and female business educators differ significantly in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was, therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis was not rejected.

#### Hypothesis 2

Business educators in federal and state colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in South-East, Nigeria.

**Table 4. Summary of t-test analysis of business educators in federal and state colleges of education in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.**

Ownership of Institution	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\alpha$	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Federal	89	3.21	.19	0.05	156	-3.77	.010	Significant
State	69	3.17	.14					

Table 4 indicates that the calculated t-value is -3.77 at degree of freedom and .010 p-value. Since the p-value of .010 was less than the alpha value (0.05). It means that business educators from federal owned colleges of education differ significantly from their counterparts in state owned colleges of education in their mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was, therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis was not rejected.



### Hypothesis 3

Male and female business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of research as collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

**Table 5. Summary of t-test analysis of male and female business educators in their mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.**

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\alpha$	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Male	60	3.12	.12	0.05	156	2.93	.003	Significant
Female	98	3.02	.10					

Table 5 indicates that the calculated t-value is 2.93 at 156 degree of freedom and 0.01 p-value. Since the p-value of .003 was less than the alpha value (0.05). It means that male and female business educators differ significantly in their mean ratings of research as collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was, therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis was not rejected.

### Hypothesis 4

Business educators in federal and state colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in South-East, Nigeria.

**Table 6. Summary of t-test analysis of business educators in federal and state colleges of education in their mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.**

Ownership of Institution	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\alpha$	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Federal	89	3.07	.07	0.05	156	1.93	.35	Not Significant
State	69	3.46	.09					

Table 6 indicates that the calculated t-value is 1.93 at 156 degree of freedom and .35 p-value. Since the p-value of .35 was greater than alpha value (0.05). It means that business educators from federal owned colleges of education do not differ significantly from their counterparts in state owned colleges of education in their mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in South-East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was, therefore not rejected while the alternative hypothesis was rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study in research question one revealed that funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme were rated as strongly agree to agree by business educators. This implies that funding by government as a collaboration tool enable business education programmes achieves expected quality. This finding agrees with that of Mbanefo and Eboka (2017) who revealed that funding by government enable administrators to identify administrative practices that help federal university personnel, on a broader scale, to function in an environment of financial uncertainty. It also agrees with that of Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) who reported that funding of educational institutions promote quality modern facilities and instructional materials that are made available for the business education programme. Similarly, the findings also agree with Ezeonwurie (2019) that there is need for consistent funding, in form of payment of teachers' salaries, purchase instructional materials and teaching facilities, building of classrooms and equipping of computer labs, typing pools and offices with modern technological devices.

Result of hypotheses showed that gender and ownership of institutions significantly influenced respondents' mean ratings of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. The finding on gender difference agrees with that of Ezeonwurie (2019) who revealed that funding enhanced business education programme in colleges of education. It also disagrees with that of Nwosu, Crossdale and Ofulue (2018) who reported that male and female business educators did not differ significantly in their views of funding by government as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme. Similarly, the finding on ownership of institutions disagrees with that of Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) who reported that there is no significant difference regarding funding by government as collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme for teaching and learning by federal and state owned tertiary institutions.

The findings of the study in research question two revealed that research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme were rated as strongly agree by business educators. This implies that research as a collaboration tool enable business education programmes achieves expected quality. This finding agrees with Okoro (2015) who revealed that research as a collaboration tool enhance quality research and publications, quality curriculum, quality text books, discipline of teachers, quality infrastructure, quality teaching facilities among others. It also agrees with that of Nwokike, Ezeabii and Jim (2018) that research as a collaboration tool for achieving sustainable development in South East States of Nigeria through business education programme ensured that the school curriculum is relevant to the skills required of industries.

The findings also showed that gender significantly influenced respondents' mean ratings of research as a collaboration tool for achieving quality business education programme in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria, while ownership of institutions do not significantly influenced respondents' mean ratings. The finding on gender difference disagrees with that of Nwokike, Ezeabii and Jim (2018) who reported that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators on the relevance of research collaboration in achieving sustainable development in the South East States of Nigeria. Similarly, the finding on ownership of institutions disagrees with that of Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) who reported that there is no significant difference regarding research collaboration as a tool for achieving quality teaching and learning by public and state tertiary institutions.

The reason for the differences in test of hypotheses is as a result of inability to boost their courage and motivation to engage in various quality collaboration tool and ineffectiveness of the programme. The reason for the rating of the respondents is that they are in position to impact suitable programme for attainment of goal. They are one to be blame when the time comes against the inadequate performance of students in the world of work. They are one to devise appropriate measures for quality programme for their students.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that all the collaboration tools listed in the study create experience and quality business education programme among the students and teachers in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. Business education in college of education collaboration created real learning experience for student while they were working on industrial problems to provide solutions innovatively. Many faculties from business education were working on the contract research project to promote products of industry, the collaboration helped in developing new products for industry partners. With that, students have opportunities to find placement in industries, update new skills, and meet market needs, increases research and training among others.

## **Recommendations**

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

- 1) Government should continue to provide colleges of education with enough funding for research and development so as to create a strong link with international scholars and promote learning.
- 2) Business education department should develop a strong and vibrant relation with their alumni/alumnae within and outside the country by organizing 'Home-coming' programmes on annual basis to source for funds from the alumni/alumnae.

**Conflicts of interest:** There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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