

BUSINESS EDUCATION AND EXTENT OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Business education is the gate way through which business skills, knowledge and competencies can be achieved. These skills and competencies when required will empower the youths to be self-reliant and to meet the challenges of the industrial development in the new millennium. This paper therefore highlights the concepts of business education for sustainable development, challenges in business education, the way forward for sustainable development and recommendations.

There is the need to equip the youths with necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for survival in the new millennium. Business education is therefore the gate way through which these knowledge, skills and competencies can be achieved. Business education is the form of education that prepares individuals for employment in a specific occupation or family of occupation by providing those experiences which will enable them to develop skills and competencies needed for employment, (Akpan, 2002). The acquisition of these skills and competencies will enable the youth to handle their own business affairs intelligently as operators and consumers in the economy. Nanassy (2009) affirmed that business education is that aspect of the total education programme that provides knowledge, skills, understanding and

attitudes needed to perform in the business world as a producer and or consumers of goods and services that business can offer.

Business education enable individuals to develop the understanding, acquire skills and attitude which will enable them to enter into the business world and earn a living. With the above view, business education may be defined as the training for the acquisition of business skills and competencies needed in the business world. It is a systematic learning experience designed to give individuals gainful employment in the areas of accounting, secretaryship, data processing, marketing, communication, industry, etc.

Business Education for Sustainable Development

Business education as an instrument for sustainable development plays a vital role in the economic revival of the nation. Below are the roles of business education for economic development.

Youth Empowerment

Through business education the youths would be sensitized, mobilized, motivated and gingered for self-employment and self-reliance. Effective acquisition of business skills will inculcate entrepreneurial skills that will help the youths to be self-reliance. Akpan (2002) affirmed that business education equipped individuals with managerial skills to manage their human and material resources through the acquisition of skills and competences in secretarial, computer, marketing and entrepreneurial training. To reduce the problem of unemployment in any given society is to direct educational effort towards developing skills and attitude conducive for self-employment. This would lead to the much needed entrepreneurial development and economic growth in the new millennium.

Consumer Education

Business education educate the youths in the development of consumers business and socio-economic competencies. It makes the youth intelligent consumers of goods and services provided by business. It also develops in them a better understanding of individual relationship with business and the place of business in our socio-

economic system. A good knowledge of the basic business subjects helps to serve every individual in making adjustments in the economic arena. Akpan (2004) affirmed that business education educates the public on the consumption of goods and services and foster conservation and discourages exploitation which could deter the socio-economic growth of the society.

Formation of Business Attitudes

Business education educates the youths with the proper knowledge, business behaviours and attitude needed for successful business formation. It also inculcates in youths efficient methods of distribution of goods and services to consumers and desirable social and cultural behaviours. Eni (2004) observed that business education survey and revealed the desirable kinds of business behaviours and proper knowledge, habits and attitudes that are needed by business workers to control their desirable performance.

Manpower Development

Business education provide highly trained and dedicated succession of business education teachers for the production of various levels of business manpower to keep her citizens above subsistence level and to provide a solid based for healthy multi-cultural economy that would eliminate over dependence on foreign economics. The aim of business education is to provide trained manpower skills necessary for agricultural, industrial and commercial sectors for economic development. It was on these bases that

Okolo (2006) asserted that business education must aim at producing students that would acquire salable skills that would help them to be employable.

Career Education

Business education provides educational experience and abilities that would enable students to make intelligent occupational decision, specialization and to progress in a chosen area. It provides opportunity for students to make realistic decisions about a successful and satisfying career for economic survival. Akpan (2004) observed that skills, experiences, decisions and interactions gain in business education, when taken consciously result in the formation of viable business career and also provide the means in which the abilities and experiences could be applied on non-business areas. Robert (2001) concluded that career education guide individuals to fit into the job opportunities available within the system.

Challenges in Business Education

Business education is the gate way to national development. It is fraught with many challenges. Some of these challenges are

Insufficient Basic Instructional Tools:

Business education as a discipline is confronted with insufficient instructional tools for effective skills training such as computers and typewriters. Some institutions of higher learning do not have enough computers and typewriters while some are with few typewriters and without computers for their practical exercises. At

the secondary school level, virtually all public secondary schools have received their consignment of introductory technology machines whereas little or nothing has been done about the provision of typewriters and computers for integrated business studies for junior secondary schools and typewriting and computer science for senior secondary schools.

This hindered the effective acquisition of business skills and competencies to meet the challenges of technological changes.

Poor Design and Implementation of Business Education Curriculum

Business education curriculum is not designed to reflect technological changes in the industrial world. Business education curricula is yet to emphasize entrepreneurship training as a course and information and communication technology (ICT) to prepare the youths to meet the current technological needs of the society with the philosophy for useful living, employment and the needed human qualities in the industrial world.

Insufficient Funding

Business education department in our various institutions of learning are not adequately funded to procure, maintain and make replacement of non-functional tools and equipment for teaching and learning when necessary. This affects the effective acquisition of business skills.

Poor Maintenance Culture

The Maintenance Culture of the facilities and equipment available in most

of our institutions of learning are poor. Where instructional tools are available, they are obsolete and non-functional as they need repairs and servicing or replacement. This creates a problem to effective acquisition of the needed skills. Ikpe (2004) concluded that where facilities and equipment are available, they are usually obsolete and non-functional as they need repairs and replacement.

Lack of Staff Empowerment

Business educators in our institutions of learning are not often empowered through in-services training, research, conferences, seminars and workshops to update their knowledge and skills to improve their pedagogy in teaching business courses to meet the technological changes in the society. These deny business educators the acquisition of new skills, knowledge and attitude needed.

Way Forward for Sustainable Development

To generate and revitalize business education for sustainable development, business education should be re-assessed and made compatible with the needs of individuals and the society through:

Recruitment of Quality Teachers

Quality business teachers with well tutelage and pedagogy should always be recruited to teach the needed knowledge, skills and attitude required to meet the dynamic changes in technology, attitudes and procedures. For instruction to be qualitative, the caliber of teachers rendering the instructions must be

qualitative. The success of any educational programme is determined by the quality of its instructors. This will enable the products of business education to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for the development of the economy. Williams (2003) confirmed that the only reliable source for training in business education is obtained from those who are masters of the occupation.

Revised Curriculum Content

Business education curriculum should be dynamic and functional to meet the societal demands due to technological changes. Business education curricula should be broaden and re-structured to be a true reflection of industrial society with the philosophy of preparing the youths for useful living. The content should embrace entrepreneurship as a course and office technology with more packages in computer such as internet, power point and Corel draw for effective utilization of modern Information Technology and Communication principles in business. Ekong and Williams (2004) observed that business education curriculum should reflect the technologies available to the trainees.

Provision of Sufficient Instructional Facilities and Equipment

The attainment of quality performance in business education could only be achieved through provision of sufficient learning equipment and instructional facilities such as computer, internet, photocopiers, duplicating machines, electric and manual typewriters,

etc. The laboratory and studios should be attractively furnished with rug carpets, air conditioners and fans to create conducive learning environment. The provision of these learning facilities and equipment will attract and empowered the learners to acquire the necessary skills and competencies for economic survival.

Staff Empowerment

Academic staff should be encourage and motivated through sponsorship in seminars, workshops and conferences to update their skills and knowledge on the existing technological changes and to improve on their pedagogy in teaching business course. Today and future business teachers will be constantly challenged by the technological innovation. In order to overcome this, there must be constant training and retraining of business teachers so as to keep them abreast with the contemporary technological development. Through this, business teachers will be empowered with the skills, knowledge and competencies to meet the need of the technological development.

Adequate Funding

Business education is influenced, shape and determined by the level of financial involvement. Adequate funding will lead to procurement of equipment, replacement of obsolete equipment and spare parts and good maintenance culture in studios and laboratory. A well funded business education programme will ultimately usher in effective acquisition of business skills and competencies for

industrial development. Aniagboso (2002) affirmed that adequate funding of business education leads to effective acquisition of business skills that will salvage nations in terms of an enviable manpower production. Ononeme (2002) concluded that the achievement of educational goals depends on adequate financial support. Funding therefore remains the cardinal factor in the success of education enterprise.

Conclusion

Business education is a qualitative and sustainable education that imparts effective skills to the youths for self-sustenance. Therefore business education needs to be developed, improved and made active as a source of youth empowerment for self-reliance and to meet the challenges of the industrial development in the new millennium.

Recommendations

- Quality business teachers with well tutelage and pedagogy in teaching should always be recruited to teach business courses.
- Business education curriculum should be revised or restructured to reflect the industrial needs of the society.
- Sufficient instructional facilities and equipment should always be provided in business education department to ensure effective acquisition of business skills.
- Academic staff should always be motivated and encourage through

sponsorship in seminars, workshops and conferences to update their knowledge on new skills.

- Federal government, state government and private owners of institutions offering business education should always make enough budgetary allocation for the procurement and maintenance of instructional facilities and equipment.

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