

**BUSINESS EDUCATION AND TRAINING NEEDS FOR  
SUSTAINABLE ACHIEVEMENT OF MILLENNIUM  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)**

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**Abstract**

Education is generally regarded as a necessary and essential requirement for national development. It is central to socio-economic and technological advancement, and it is critical to self-sustaining and self-generating process of positive transformation of modern society. This paper focused on business education in Nigeria with a view to establishing its role in attaining MDGs. The paper examined the role of business education as it relate with the eight objectives of MDGs, other areas relating to business education that is geared towards MDGs such as entrepreneurship skills, small medium enterprises and ICT are also examined. Suggestions for future direction of business education are made such as: revisiting business education curriculum and government enlightening the society on the importance of business education and to encourage youths to enroll in business education programme.

Business education is that aspect of the total education that prepares its recipients for employment in the broad range of teaching. The national policy on education has introduced information and communication technology into the teaching and learning of business studies right from the pre-vocational level to higher level. The restructuring of business education curriculum has paved way for graduates of business education to gain employment in offices, and also involved in distribution and marketing occupations, business teaching and economic

understanding. (Idih 1992) noted that business education is an aspect of vocational education aimed at equipping its beneficiaries with skills and competencies needed to secure employment or to be self employed in the areas of modern organization offices.

Nwosu (2003) noted that the primary purpose of business education is that of preparing the recipients for gainful employment in business office occupations and teaching job. Business education aims at paid or self-employment. Emphasis is on exposure and acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant and adequate for employment in specific business occupations. In this discourse the term business competence appears to be the leading concept. Thus, Ikpo (2010) noted that competencies depict aptitudes, capability, dexterity, expertise, skills, talents and knowledge required by individual to perform a particular function or activity or practice in a given discipline or field of study. In other words, professional business competencies describe those essential work traits or characteristics which need to be acquired by recipients of business education in order to enable them function effectively or perform credibly well in related business activities in the e-business world.

As lofty as the definition and focus of business education are; it is pertinent to observe that one of the national phenomenon that have generated better regrets among graduates as citizens today is the problem of unemployment. Ikpo, Pac and Akpan (2010), unemployment is a phenomenon that arises when the members

of a country's labour force are unable to attain their goals of participation in gainful occupations due to a situation in which supply of labour significantly exceeds the demand for it. Unemployment is a state of joblessness or idleness of one with labour requirement, potentials, skills, attitudes and competencies.

Infact, the rate of graduate unemployment today underscores the fact that it is an economic problem that leads to social, psychological and personal economic frustration. Advances in technology, especially in information and communication technology (ICT) in recent times is fast changing the nature of instruction in the entire spectrum of the education system. This is the most reason why business education emphasis on developing skills.

#### **Business Education Training Needs in Achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDGs)**

Business education programme offer training in the following areas-

1. Office management and technology training
2. Marketing and advertisement training
3. Information and communication technology training
4. General education training
5. Computer training
6. Classroom training
7. Entrepreneurship training
8. General Business training

### **Goals of Business Education**

1. To play productive role in a free enterprise economy
2. To keep simple records of financial and other transactions in the office and operates and cater for office machines and equipment.
3. To recognize values and demonstrate responsibility in duties assigned them.
4. To apply various business concepts acquired in class to real life situation
5. To acquire skills and the competencies required for the performance of basic business jobs e.g take administrative decisions and deal with correspondences.

Coherently, business education aims at equipping men and women properly for effective roles as qualified teachers of business education, businessman and entrepreneurs and to restore man's belief on self-reliance, self confidence and a strong individual to survive at all phase of life.

Attaining millennium development goal (MDGs) through business education training is the subject of this paper. This can only be achieved by the application of National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and entrepreneurship. Hence NEEDS, entrepreneurship and SMEs are regarded as strategy for attaining MDGs. NEEDS are the people's plan. SME are government policies aimed at sustaining the economy, entrepreneurship is government and individual vision to sustain self and the nation.

### **Attaining MDGs Through NEEDS and SMEs:**

According to the National Planning Commission (2004) NEEDS/SME are people's way of letting the government know what kind of Nigeria they wish to live, now and the Future. It is ways of the government letting the people know how it plans to overcome the deep and pervasive obstacles how to progress and identify methods of survival. Entrepreneurship will encourage foreign investors.

NEEDS, SMEs and entrepreneurship can sustaining and achieve MDGs because it help to realize the vision for prosperity and it focuses on the key strategies which are:

- Re-orienting values
- Reducing poverty
- Creating wealth and
- Generating employment through business education training.

### **Business Education and MDGs**

Specifically business education programme in sustaining and achieving MDGs recommends the following:

1. Providing courses that build vocational and business skills
2. Building technical schools and buying sufficient equipment for use by trainees
3. Improving recipients and exposing them to information and communication technology from pre-vocational level.
4. The government at the Federal, State and Local Government levels

should embark on numerous programme aimed at assisting young school leavers in acquiring employable skills.

5. Encouraging the youths and engaging them in skills acquisition programmes for the purpose of business skills to prevent idleness and youth restiveness.

Other areas to match business education to attain and sustain MDGs are:

- Entrepreneurial skills
- Food security
- Capacity utilization
- New technologies
- ICT education

Thou the major problems threatening the society are the graduates' unemployment. Business education graduates roam the major streets of the urban areas looking for non-existing white collar jobs. The technological trends in modern offices today do not only cause jobs to disappear, there is an indirect correlation with the amount of training in such jobs, this is as a result in upgrading of jobs and the emergence of unknown office occupation.

Employers of labour seek for graduates with technical skills that best fill the available job vacancies. This is as a result of graduates skills mismatch to the expectations of employers on the competences needed by business education graduate for gainful employment; The solution to this problem is to train youths

on ICT in other to promote technology, ICT has shifted base from a professional or course of study to a universal language or a means of communication this is geared towards achieving MDGs. Government has launched ICT in selected girls secondary schools, this is to train and equip students towards achieving MDGs also training skills business education graduate to fill the missing gap will enhance the achievement and sustainability of MDGs.

**Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are:**

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve Universal Primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve material health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

The eight (8) MDGs were agreed upon by 189 countries in New York in the year 2000 these goals represent a commitment by rich and poor nations to expand social and economic progress in all regions of the world, as well as creating a global partnership for reducing levels of poverty and suffering in less developed areas by 2015. Each MDGs also includes a number of indicators designed to measure its progress and they are intended to be tracked and updated regularly by UN members governments and international

government bodies such as the World Bank.

To this end, governments in developed countries have come under increasing public pressure to work with developing countries in reaching their projected MDGs targets and to provide greater assistance through debt relief, foreign aid and more equitable trade practices.

Some of the ways taken by the government to attain millennium development goals using entrepreneurship and other skills include:-

1. Vocational education in secondary school curriculum as one the basic and compulsory subject for all students. These will enable the students to learn or acquire one or two skills during their earlier stage of life training; this skills will sustain and empower them in future. It will help the student engage their time and serve the nation better.
2. Establishment of vocational centers in the rural and urban areas; these centre will empower both youth and women in vocational skills and training that will enable them become self employed and also be employers of labour.
3. Establishment of some institutions that will enable individual establishes their own businesses and also give micro/macro assistance for these project. The

SMEs serve as a resort to a common citizen

It is not enough to set up committees or initiate policy; but the effective implementation of the policies and the progress which will yield positive result is most important. MDG has forty-eight technical indicators to measure its progress. The government is aware of peoples need; it had laid down some structures towards addressing these needs. But not until the government adopt or put it place, and practical and sustainable implementation process through indigenizing this business education and skills; its policies and programme will still remain a cry of how to empower the citizens.

#### **Strategies to Attaining MDGs Through Business Education Include the Following**

1. Introduce and make business education programme compulsory from Junior Secondary level.
2. Reduce drastically the incidence of dropout from the formal school system through improved relevance quality and efficient educational programme.
3. Developing the entire citizen with a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
4. Empowering the citizens to be self reliance through the promotion of business education.
5. Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, manipulative, communicative and

life skills, as well as ethnical, moral and civic values needed for a solid foundation for life-long learning.

6. Catering for the needs of those who for one reason or the other had to interrupt their schooling through appropriate forms of complementary approaches.
7. Motivating business education students in all aspect of their lives and also encourage enrollment into the programme.
8. Training the business/vocational teachers to be well equipped for the task ahead of them and also giving business education graduates the opportunity to work in any office/parastatals.
9. Relevant agencies and stake holders should co-operate and provide effective and enabling environment for the business education graduates to establish their own businesses. Government should give financial assistance.
10. Enlightenment campaign should be embarked on by the government to introduce the importance of business education to the youths, parents and the society.

### **Conclusion**

Nigeria is faced with numerous and diversified challenges. Business education programme is that sure way that could be adopted to redeem the country from and its present level of unemployment also it is a sure way to attain the millennium development goals.

Therefore the enrichment of business education curriculum and content will guarantee skills learned and developed as a result will produce self reliance, and generate employment. Business education programme have potentials to develop and expand businesses, creates new jobs opportunities, reduce dependency, improve and maintain favourable balance of payment as well as halving poverty in Nigeria by 2015 and also achieving the position of 20<sup>th</sup> economist position by 2020. For this vision to become real, government, institutions, parents, stake holders, agencies must contribute positively and significantly to support business education and encourage youths to enroll for the programme.

### **Recommendation**

1. Government should equip schools with modern facilities such as computer, internet, e-library and generating set; these will enhance effective teaching, learning and training of youths.
2. Government should be involved in promoting business education. Government should harmonize the efforts of various institutions and foreign agencies such as UNDP, NAPEP, NDE, ITF, NDDC, Banks and companies.
3. The curriculum of business education should be re-visited and made all embracing to include ICT on a large scale and also rich enough to encourage student to enroll for the programme. Business education graduates should also

- pick jobs from offices, banks, industries and companies, and also become owners of their business and not limited to the classroom.
4. Government should fund business education properly and make learning environment conducive.
  5. Electronic teaching/learning using all modern facilities should be introduced and implements.

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