

Sustainable Practices in Business Education Programme in Nigeria Higher Education: Issues and Solution

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Abstract

This paper addresses sustainable practices in business education programme in Nigeria higher education and identified issues as well as give solutions in order to pave way for future development and the achievement of stated objectives that business education as a programme entails and encompass. One of the major goals of business education is to train students to understand the technological challenges presently and changes that might arise in the future business world. issues facing the programme in various higher education include the issue of Student's Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) to be carried out in a school where they produced nothing, funding of Business Education programmes, poor remuneration and motivation of teachers, insufficient infrastructure and Inaccessibility of digital and internet technology. It was concluded that Business education is a programme which helps and assist graduates to gain and equipped themselves with necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values in its recipients which enables graduates to handle future challenges of life. The study recommend among others that Nigeria higher education institutions were business education programmes are been taught should give students up-to-date, modern machinery, tools, and equipment for their best performance in acquiring practical skills because business education programme is a skill builder programme and should be taken into concern and existing facilities need to be constantly up-dated in line with changing technologies once this is done, it will assist the programme in sustaining the future.

Keywords: Business education, Issues, Practices, Solutions and Sustainability

Introduction

Becoming self-reliant and self-dependable is the desire of every individual especially graduates after going through education as a process for four-six years in higher institutions. Agi

and Yellowe (2013) says education are important for the development of human resources, impartation of appropriate skills, knowledge and attitude. It is the basis for transformation, industrialization and a highway to global knowledge economy. The higher institutions can be Colleges of education, Polytechnics, Monotechnic and Universities. Education can be defined as a natural fit which enhances and improve students emotionally, physically, socio-cultural, political and ability to foresee future challenges that might arise the nations of the world. Okoorosaye-Orubite (2019) defined education as a social creation, designed to meet the specific needs of the society at any particular point in time. This was aptly supported by Pauley and Buseri (2019), defined education as a socializing agent that equips all its beneficiaries with the necessary tools such as knowledge, skills, attitude, cultural values, language and social skills to enable them conform to the desires/demand of their society. Formal education is the term used by the researcher to describe this form of education in this study. Formal education is the type of education that occurs inside the four walls of a school system and has structured curriculum and syllabus.

Higher Education is the type of education which focus on training and producing graduates with specialized and advanced knowledge, skills in-line with various academic innovation, creativity, sustainability and professional fields of graduates in any sequence of higher education levels and prepare for any issues that might rise in the future of Nigeria. Bearney (2009), sees Higher education as essential tool for revenue generation, national sustainability, workforce consolidation, and innovation. It encompasses a diverse range of post-secondary institutions, including universities, colleges, technical schools, and vocational institutions. Higher education is the education given after secondary education in colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnic, universities and other institutions offering correspondence courses (FRN, 2004).

History of Higher Education in Nigeria

The first Tertiary Institution in Nigeria was the Yaba Higher College, established in 1934. This phenomenal numerical growth of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is commendable going by observation of Eggins (2010) that it is now accepted that tertiary education has important implications for the economic, political and socio-cultural development, sustainability and global competitiveness of nations. Succumbing to these agitations, colonial-administration proposed and implemented the Elliot Commission of 1943 (Olalekan, 2018). This commission recommended the establishment of the first Nigerian University, the “University of Ibadan”. The University of

Ibadan, was founded in 1948, following the report and recommendation of the Asquith and Elliot Commissions, which were set up in 1943 by the British Colonial Government. The University of London received autonomy from colonial-administration in 1962. Furthermore, in 1959, the Ashby Commission was inaugurated. This commission was established based on the need to create and consolidate a functional workforce in the nation at the time (Otonko,2012). The commission made recommendations that have had a lasting effect on the education and workforce in the country. For instance, it set the goal of producing 2000 tertiary institution graduates by the year 1970 (Otonko, 2012). The commission also recommended that the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) be established. Subsequently, UNILAG (University of Lagos) and the University of Ife were established in 1962. Other milestones for tertiary education. In Nigeria, there is two sequences of higher educational levels. a. The first channel assumes that a graduate went through colleges of education and then to the universities. b. The second channels are the more common ones, those who went straight form secondary school to university and those who went through polytechnics to university.

Concept of Business Education

In addition, due to the fact that several academics have defined the term "business education" differently by approaching it from various angles, dimensions, and perspectives, there is no single, widely accepted definition to the concept “**Business Education**”. Ebinga (2014) defined business education as a programme of study which offers students who wish to pursue a career in business an opportunity to develop skills, abilities and understanding that will enable them to enter, perform and progress in business occupation after graduating from high school or the university. Esene (2012) in Chundusu and Jwampe, (2017) defines business education “as education for and about business or training in relevant skills in office occupation.”

Goals of business education according to Asuquo (2005) are as follows:

1. To provide opportunity for practice job preparation or vocation studies for students in order to make them render effect and efficient services in office, distributive and service occupation.
2. To prepare students, based on interests and aptitudes with the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it

3. To provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the business and economic system of the nation so as to enable them participate actively as producers and consumers of goods and services.
4. To develop in students the basic awareness of the contribution which business and office employees make to the nation`s economy.
5. To develop and improve the personal qualities and attitudes of students as required in personal and employment situations.

In the Concept of the above meanings, Business Education can be defined in the context of this study as the kind of education which helps students becoming self- dependent, trustworthy, sufficient and reliable by preparing themselves for any challenges that may rise or need in the present or future once graduated from school. Business education is another kind of education which allows students to think deeply, critically, innovate and find jobs were none exit. Business education graduates are job creators and not job seekers. In the words of Adeyemi (2000), it is the business of human beings to create and recreate whatever their minds conceive. Ogwu, Omeje and Nwokenna (2014) asserted that business education students could create jobs in the areas of weaving, trading, barbing, hair dressing, making of mounds, music and so on.

Sustainable development of Business Education Programmes in Nigeria Higher Institution

Sustainable development of business education programmes can be referred to as all means of development of the programmes in Nigeria higher institutions. China, Lilly and Igbemi (2017) sustainable development is all about improving the lives of people. In the opinion of Hansa (2014), sustainable development deals with the carrying capacity of natural system with social, political and economic challenges faced by the society. In order for business education programs to be sustainable, effective ways to achieve educational goals must be considered. For example, business education and its options must be taught using effective teaching strategies, accessible instructional facilities, and curriculum created by experts in the field. Only then can the program's goals and objectives be met. Aim of sustainable development of business education programmes is to balance the programme social, economic, environmental and social equity and justice. In support of this, Ukairo (2017) noted that for sustainable development to be achieved in any nation, there must be

a balance between environmental, societal and economic considerations needed to maintain and improve the quality of generations to come.

In this study, sustainability development of business education programmes has to do with various means, ways, methods of training students practically and theoretically in order to equip them to be self-dependent and self-reliant after graduation which will assist and contribute to the economic development of Nigeria. Once graduates are self-sufficient and self-dependent it reduces looking for white-collar jobs and start hiring workers, which helps lower unemployment and hunger in the country and raises people's standards of life.

Issues Business Education Programmes Faced in Nigeria Higher Institutions

The following are issues faced by Business Education programmes in Nigeria Higher Institutions:

- i. Student Industrial work experience scheme (SIWES): SIWES is a major and compulsory course that a business education student engages in during the course of study because it's a course that will enable the student to develop skills which will assist them to become self-dependent in the future. Department of Education Science and Training (DEST, 2002), Omar, Baker and Rashid, (2012) maintained that these skills are required not only to secure employment, but also to advance within an enterprise in a way that one can achieve his or her potential and contribute meaningfully to an entity's strategic direction. But reverse is the case here, Students do their Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) at schools instead of industries where they were produced nothing. The majority of schools whose students participate in an industrial work experience lack the required tools, supplies, and personnel. Students had difficulties finding employers because no employers were willing to hire them for two to three hours per day and to be present three days a week. As a result, students were forced to schedule their teaching practice, industrial work experience program, and school lectures for the same time, day, and length of time.
- ii. Funding of Business education programme: Business Education programmes are offered in public, federal, state and private Institutions. Funding is a major issue that has been affecting Nigeria institutions in which Business education programme is not an exception. Ugwuogo (2013), explains that Business Education programmes of tertiary institutions are poorly funded, especially at the state-owned

- tertiary institutions. For business education programme in Nigeria institutions to achieve its goals and objectives for which it is created, it requires adequate funding to employ and retain adequate number of qualified staff, develop curriculum by expert in the field and provide a wide range of modern infrastructural facilities such as comfortable classrooms, typing pool, model office, computers, typewriters, duplicating machines, office cabinets, perforating machine, stop watches, typewriting furniture, photocopy machines, scanning machines, textbooks, well equipped laboratories, libraries workshops and teaching aids that meet the needs of current business and economic environment (Onwubuya, Nkiru & Amobi, 2021).
- iii. Poor remuneration and motivation of teachers: Teachers are major element in any educational set up, be it Private or Public institutions. Poor remuneration is a major problem in Nigeria education sector, the teachers are poorly paid and not motivated. This situation also affects business education teachers. Poor teacher performance is a major cause of falling standard of education in Nigeria in which their pays (salary) is not encouraging and this one of the reason teachers are performing low to their expected standard. This assertion was corroborated by Okpuzo and Ogidan (2012), poor remuneration is responsible for the poor attitude to work of some teachers, they go about doing their private businesses instead of concentrating on how to improve teaching and learning in the school. Okoroma (2007) asserts that teachers may be largely blamed for contributing to the fall in educational standards it is also important to give some reasons for the situation. For many decades teachers in Nigeria were neglected and their welfare was not adequately protected. This observation is supported by Udoh in Okoroma (2007) who noted that teachers cannot contribute to a high standard of education except the teaching profession can guarantee necessary conditions such as societal recognition, high status and dignity, security of jobs, job satisfaction, adequate remuneration and professional excellence.
- iv. Issue of insufficient infrastructure: Nigeria business education programme is offered with low and obsolete infrastructural facilities which has being a basic challenge for the programme to meet up with modern trends. Business education programme is a skill builder programme that needs a variety of modern and relevant equipment,

machinery, gadgets and tools for students' optimum performance in acquisition of practical skills. Due to the dynamic nature of business environment, existing facilities need to be constantly up-dated in line with changing technologies. But what obtains according to Aworanti in Ahmed (2019) is that basic facilities like studios, libraries, laboratories and entrepreneurship research centre have declined in quality and quantity, where they are available, they are not only in bad and non-functional state but also very obsolete.

- v. Inaccessibility of digital and internet technology: Business education programme is ICT-driven programme which requires digital and modern technology in this modern-day on like those days were business education encompass talk and chalk ways of teaching. There is low or non-availability of digital and internet technology in the classroom which has greatly affect both business educator and students. Students are to be taught the use of digital and internet facilities, considering the influence of modern office and communication technology in today's world economy but reverse is the case the teachers that ought to take his student are not ICT Incline. Lack of the modern technology for teaching and learning against the UNESCO (2002) view, that Business Education teacher must have the knowledge and skills to use the new digital tools and resources to help all students achieve high academic standard and students and business educators must have sufficient access to digital technologies and internet in their classroom, school and Business Education institutions.

Strategies for Achieving Sustainable of Business Education Programme in Nigeria Public Institutions.

The following strategies points listed below was identify by the researcher that will assist business education programmes in public institutions to gain its sustainability development which are:

- a. Students studying business education as a course be it at the colleges of education, polytechnic and universities should be introduced and trained 21st century skills, as this will help them grasp the abilities required to thrive in this new business environment because Nigeria is a dynamic country that changes over time.

- b. Collaboration between public institutions and corporate sectors should be encouraged because when collaboration exists between both sectors, sustainability of business education programmes seems to sustain its development.
- c. Improve practical skills both for the teachers and students should be encouraged which will assist in promoting business education programmes.
- d. Association of Business Education of Nigeria (ABEN) should continue to organise workshops, seminars and conferences on the crucial role of business education for sustainable development. Just like the previous conference that was held at Lead City University, Oyo Ibadan in Year 2023. The theme focused on trends that exist in Nigeria. if this continue to happen business education programme will sustain it development because present issues are been tackled and solutions are been provided in conferences, workshop, etc.
- e. Curriculum planners in Nigeria should continue to review the business education curriculum yearly, monthly and weekly and experts in the field should be asked to do so, so as to make it more practical oriented unlike the theoretical ways it has been for past years. This will assist graduate to acquire skills that will make them self-reliant and which will promote sustainable development of the programmes.

Conclusion

Business education programme in Nigeria higher institution is crucial for the sustainability development of the programme. Business education is a programme which helps and assist graduates to gain and equipped with necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values in its recipients which enables graduates to handles future challenges of life and assist them to be self - reliant and also been an employer of labor instead of searching for work which assist to contribute their own quota towards national development presently and future. For this reason, it is important for scholars in this field, graduates, stakeholders and government to work together by adopting the recommendation in this paper in order to ensure functional and reliable Business Education programme in Nigeria for sustainability development of the programme.

Recommendations that will enables Business Education Programme to sustain its Development

- i. Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES): The skill course in the curriculum should not be run con-currently with Teaching practice in schools, students should be given time to go out of the school system to undergo the Siwes programmes in order to focus more, carry out and achieve the practical skills.
- ii. Government should welcome donors from private sectors, communities, philanthropist etc in order to mobilize and generate adequate funds to support business education programmes and achieved sustainable development.
- iii. Business Education programme should be taught and designed by business educator professionals and not to be taught by other professional from different field such as Mathematics professional etc.
- iv. Better remuneration and motivation of business education teachers should be done so as to eradicate or reduce the teachers going about doing other private business in order to gather a better salary by the end of the month. By doing this the teachers will concentrate more in improving their teaching and learning in school and also go out of their comfort zone in attending conferences, etc
- v. For business education to achieve its goals and objectives of producing graduates with relevant and competitive employability skills, access to digital and ICT facilities is very important during learning in the classroom which assist the programme in gaining its ground in the future.
- vi. Business education curriculum at every level should undergo constant evaluation and review in order to keep it up to date with current technological realities.

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