

**BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME
AS INSTRUMENT FOR ACQUIRING ENTERPRENEURIAL SKILLS
IN NIGERIA
CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

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ABSTRACT

This paper is titled Business Education Programme in acquiring entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospect. The paper X-rays the concepts of Business Education, prospects and challenges of business education. Concept of entrepreneurship, ways through which business Education can promote entrepreneurship education. The paper concluded that Business Education has the potentials of helping entrepreneurs in order to avoid failure by equipping its recipients with skills for identifying viable investment opportunities, proper marketing and financial management. The paper suggests among others that only business educators should be allowed to teach in business education programme and more funds should be allocated to business education programme.

KEYWORDS: *Disruption, Business Education, Entrepreneurial Skills*

Introduction

It is the desire of every society to achieve a sustainable level of economic development. This is achievable by embarking on entrepreneurship activities by the citizens of the society. The success of a society in entrepreneurship depends on skills acquired by the entrepreneurs. Nigeria is rich with vast natural and human resources. According to Ekpenyong and Emmanuel (2014), Nigeria economy can into sustained growth and development if these resources are optimized for the benefits of the citizenry with knowledge and skills capable of making them gainfully employed and social-economically productive.

According to Isichell, Ehiwairor and Ndikanwu (2019) it is true that our nation Nigeria fully depends on petroleum as their main economic stay but that is not wise and prudent enough. That is like putting one's egg in one basket and losing all. There is need for economic diversification into many areas as occasioned by our environmental, cultural and human endowments. We have iron, wood, chalk, mineral deposit, water, fishes, animals, forest, fertile soil, crops estuaries, rivers, streams, rocks, deserts swamps raining and dry seasons, high population of men and women, insects and so on (Isichekk et al, 2018). All these can be harnessed and processed into economic opportunities that will help to reduce unemployment and poverty scourge in Nigeria.

Today, Nigeria is laying more emphasis on daily basis on self-reliance for economic growth and development, hence there is need for education to incorporate Business Education in order to reduce unemployment syndrome in Nigeria (Oru, Ayemhenre and Mayah, 2019).

Conceptual Framework

Business education is one of the major components of vocational education. In Nigeria, the discipline is offered at both the secondary and tertiary levels of education. According to Sulayman et al (2014), Business education is an aspect of total educational programme which provides the recipient with knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform well in the business world as a producer or consumer of goods and services. Furthermore, is of the option that Business Education is a broad area of knowledge that deals with a nation's economic system and also identifies and explains that rate of business contentment and experience that prepare individuals for effective participation a citizens, workers and consumers. Finally, The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) (2008) defines Business education as an aspect of

vocational education that equips people with necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in business world either for job occupation or self-employment.

It could be deduced from the definitions above that Business education is an education for an about business. It combines both theoretical and practical knowledge. In the same vein, it exposes the recipient to the economic system of its country and equips the individual lifelong skills that would enable him to make reasonable judgment as a producer (entrepreneur), employee or consume of good and services. Finally, Aliyu (2013) in Sulayman (2014) state that the purposes of Business education stresses the need for:

- a). Specialized instruction to prepare students for career in business
- b). Fundamental instruction to help students assume their economic roles as consumers, workers and citizens.
- c). Background instruction to assist students in preparing for professional careers requiring study.

Business Education

Business Education is a programme of study that strive to equip its recipients with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for them to secure employment in public and private organizations, retain them and also advance in their chosen careers (Udoye, 2015 cited in Ayemhenre and Okolo 2018). According to Onyesom and Umoeshiet (2013), business education is that aspet of educational training which an individual received with the primary aim of enabling him/her to acquire adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skill in business activities for vocational usage in career as an administrator, manager or teacher wherever he/she may find himself/herself in the business.

Objectives of Business Education

The following are the objective of business education programme:

1. To afford all students the pertinent information to enable them to explore and learn about the world of work and the relevant interest and career area of their choice.
2. To help every student become and intelligent consumer of goods and services.
3. To provide the students with the necessary occupational information to enable them understand various occupations found in the world of work.
4. To provide training that will result in developing individuals who are well

adjusted in the sense that they are capable of coping with the world in which they love.

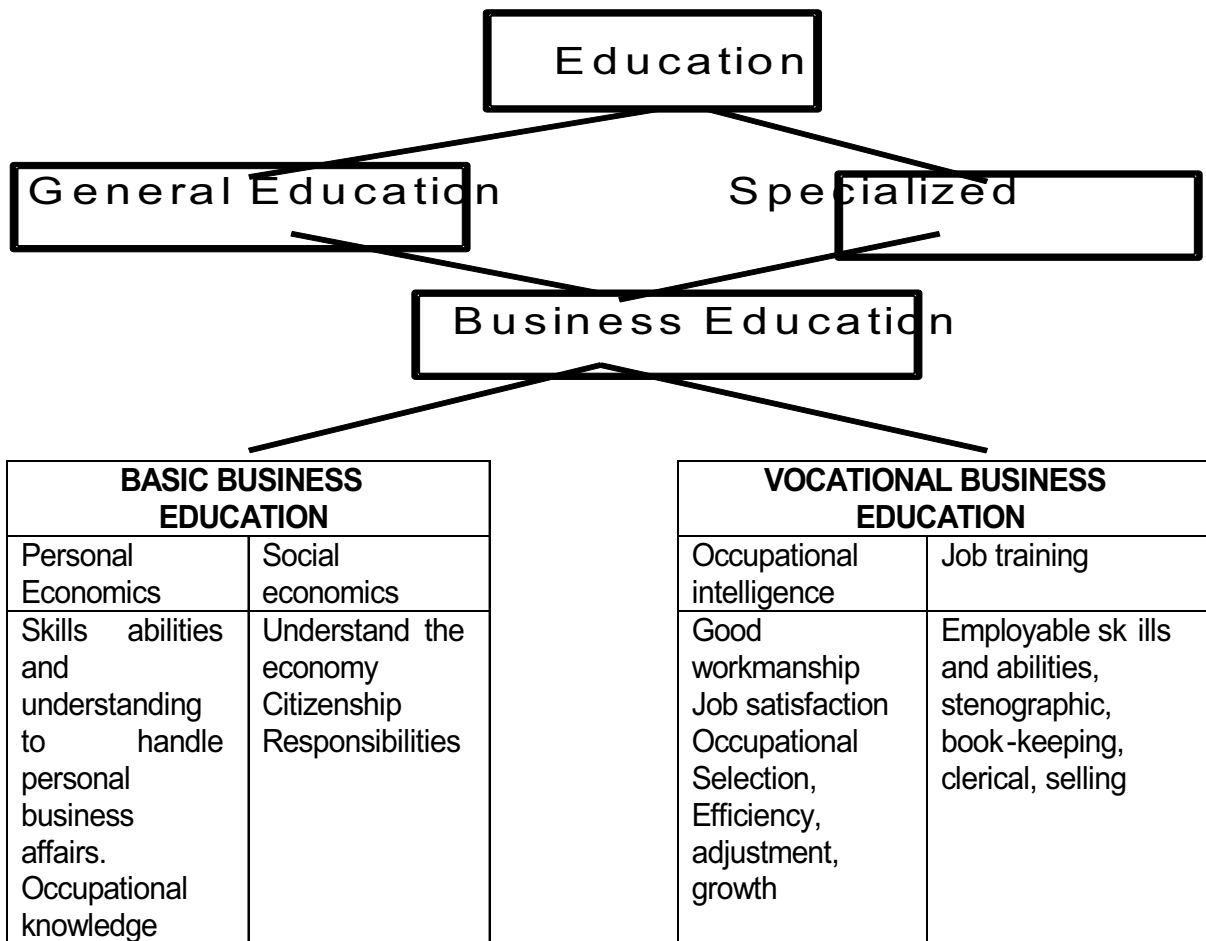
5. To enable students to acquire saleable skills in the field of their choice
6. To help students prepare for choose and enter into and progress satisfaction in occupation of their choice.

Prospects and Challenges of Business Education

Prospects:

Business education has been noted by many as having contributed to the development of Nigeria. For instance, Oriazowanlan and Iyokekpolor (2009) cited in Oru et al (2019) remarked that business education has produced skilled manpower for the employment need of a globalized economy. They added that qualitative education is essential for life transformation of the citizenry of any country. This transformation can only be achieved through competent man-power development and business education is a good platform for such transformation. Business education is vital in the programme of service delivery for economic vision of 2020 in Nigeria.

1. Business education offers to every individual an opportunity to develop those skills, abilities, and understandings that will enable him handle competently his personal business affairs, to develop an understanding of the vocational opportunities available in the broad field of business and to assume his citizenship responsibilities through enlightened participation in an understanding and appreciation of the enterprise system.
2. It offers to the student who wishes to pursue a career in business those skills abilities, and understandings that will enable him to enter, perform, and progress in a business occupational intelligence that will enable him to fit into and find job satisfaction in the labour force of our complex and dynamic economy. This philosophy could be restated as objectives and shown graphically as shown below.



Source: Oru et al (2019)

1) **Administrative Factors**

Nolan (1997), cited in Oru et al (2019) noted that administrative and supervisory functions in business education include: assisting in examining and revising curriculum and courses of studies; holding conferences and meetings in matters affecting business education; organizing and conducting in service workshops, seminars and staff development programs; keeping business teaches up-to-date on significant legislation affecting business education; interviewing and selecting qualified business teachers; recommending and assisting in obtaining needed facilities supplies and equipment; attending local, state and national professional meetings and conventions. Available records in two universities visited showed that until recently, the administration of business education has always been in the hands of non-professionals.

Ikpe (2000) cited in Oru et al (2019) observed that funds allocated to all phases of vocational education is often merged and placed under the head of department. With this funds given to the head of department, it is easy for such person to concentrate to development on his area of specialization. He suggested that allocation of financial resources should be clearly indicated to reflect a particular phase of vocational education.

2) Challenges of Qualification and Professionalism

Business education lack qualified and professional manpower to teach business subjects. Some of business education administrators are also non-professionals. Being non-professional there is little or nothing the administrator could do to re-engineer business education for improvement. The recognized and registrable business teachers qualifications in Nigeria include the following: NCE, B.Ed, or B.Sc. Ed., M.Ed., M.Sc. Ed., Ph.D in business education; a degree in business related discipline in addition to minimum teachers qualification of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) or Postgraduate Diploma in Technical Education (PGDTE) or Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is also accepted.

3. Challenges of Programme Evaluation

Evaluation is one important concept in Business education that should not be over emphasized. Evaluation is the process of examining critically the implementation of an existing programme or curriculum in relation to the desired inputs, processes, or outputs thereby discovering the degree of achievement, accountability and discrepancies through the analysis of the data, thus proving information on achievement and making suggestions of alternatives in the form of recommendations to policy and decision maker's for the improvement of the curriculum.

Problems of business education evaluation according to the author include lack of criteria, poor knowledge about decision making; lack of competent personnel. Due to inadequate evaluation of the programme innovative ideas are hardly introduced. Also, inadequate evaluation hinders competitiveness with global standard.

4. Governmental Factors

For a long time, a lot has been said and written by scholars during seminars, workshops conferences on the need for government to put in place policies and programmes that

will promote business education. Such important suggestions are never considered by the government. For instance, suggested that, vocational education should be a vehicle for training youths to equip them with saleable skills which could make them self-reliance as a means of ending the civil unrest which is posing serious threat to the nation. That recommendation is yet to be implemented. Consequently, six (6) years later, the nation is engulfed with security challenges that are almost out of control. This ugly situation could have been averred if vocational education is well positioned for such role. This is why re-engineering of the programme is necessary.

5. Poor Societal Perception

ABSTRACT

Quantity and Quality of Teachers

By far, the most serious factors eroding in the educational system generally and business education in particular is the quantity and quality of the teachers. This has been a perennial problem. Meanwhile, it is general said that no nation can live above the quality of her educational system. The teacher is in a strategic positive to influence the quality of education.

Unemployment

Unemployment is a situation where those capable and willing to work finds no work to do. According to Ikenga, Mordi and Ayemhenre (2015) unemployment is a situation in which persons capable and willing to work are unable to find suitable paid employment. Supporting the above, anyaele (2003) cited in Ikenga et al (2015) states that unemployment is a situation where some people who falls within the ages of the working population, capable and willing to work are unable to obtain befitting work to do.

Types of unemployment

According to Ogudo (2013), unemployment may be classified into two basic categories: unemployment that results from deficient aggregate demand and all other unemployment due to frictions and labour market (mal) adjustments. The letter in turn is often divided into frictiona, structural, seasonal, real-wage, technological cyclical, unemployment.

Deficient demand unemployment occurs when there is not enough aggregate demand

to produce work for the whole labour force no matter how it is trained or deployed.

Frictional or search unemployment: The type arises because it takes time and resources for workers to change jobs, either voluntarily or involuntarily, even though suitable job vacancies exist and can be found without the workers having to adjust his broad occupational status or his reservation wage. Thus, frictional unemployment that corresponds to (unfilled) variant of normal unemployment - hard-core unemployment (irreducible minimum value) being the long-term variant.

Structural unemployment: On the other hand, exists when there is a mismatch between the unemployed and the available jobs in terms of geographic location require skills or any other relevant dimension.

Seasonal unemployment: is seen as unemployment due to the existing too high level of real wages.

Technology unemployment: technology unemployment arises when machines replace men in the production process. This is a regular feature of technologically advanced nations of Europe and America.

Cyclical employment: This however, is traditionally associated with the trade cycle, especially recession and depression. This explains why some experts classify it as a variant why some experts classify it as a variant of deficient-demand employment. One may note that labour market is in contiguous internal motion with workers moving rapidly between jobs, unemployment, and out of the labour force, even during periods of stable economic activity.

Causes of Unemployment

- Increase in rural-urban migration
- Increase in population figures
- Inadequate fund for establishment of industries
- Increase in student enrolment especially tertiary institutions
- The only way out of employment challenges is involvement in acquiring entrepreneurial skills.

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a multi-disciplinary concept. Aruwa (2006) in Sulayman et al (2014) states that the concept of entrepreneurship is not restricted to business or economic operation. It is also obtainable in non-business operations. They however stated that in the business cycle, entrepreneurship is a distinct resource and a necessary condition for business success.

According to Igwe in Adeyeye (2008), entrepreneurship has to do with the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas as well as management and organizational resources for the propose of satisfying the identified needs of the customers thereby creating wealth.

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that entrepreneurship is all about:

- i) Identification of business opportunities
- ii) Creativity and innovativeness
- iii) Bearing risk to utilize opportunities or implement a new plan(s)
- iv) Wealth creation

It should be noted that entrepreneurship is a risky venture, but yet, some people choose to become entrepreneurs. This choice may be due to the desire of becoming independent, personal and professional growth, profit making and ultimately contributing their quotes to the development of the societies.

Ways through which Business Education can Promote Entrepreneurship skills in Nigeria

As noted earlier, Business education is an education for and about business. Entrepreneurship also focuses on identification and utilization of business opportunities, setting up and properly running and enterprise. Based on these, the following are the ways through which Business education can promote entrepreneurship in Nigeria: (Sulayman et al 2014).

Identification of Viable Business Opportunities

Business education equips the recipients with skills that would enable them to identify viable investment opportunities in their societies.

Through this, they would be able to see opportunities where others see chaos. It would also equip them with skills that would make it possible for them to use the SWOT

(strengths, weakness, opportunity and threats) analysis to function well as entrepreneurs. With the background in mind, it could be observed that Business education could promote entrepreneurship by promoting people to strive toward the utilization of the identified opportunities through taking calculative risks.

Skills for financial management

Accounting education is an integral part of Business education. It is thus, a potent tool for promoting financial prudence and business success, the inability of some small and medium-scale entrepreneurs to keep financial records negatively affect the growth of their businesses, ability to secure loans from financial institutions and determination of cost and profit. The knowledge of Business education would therefore help toward proper keeping of financial records. It would also guide the entrepreneurs in cost analysis, inventory control and profit determination.

Utilization of proper marketing skills

Inculcation of marketing skills is among the focus of Business education. According to Gidado (2011), marketers conduct surveys leading to the identification of people's needs and wants. This implies that Business education could promote their entrepreneurial functions. This is because the knowledge of marketing would prompt them to make good because of the four-ps of marketing namely; product, price, place and promotion. It is expected that this would lead to the development of sound product idea which would be translated into an acceptable product in the market. Similarly, if it is a business of trading, understanding of the appealing to the customers. Finally, acquisition and utilization of proper and acceptable pricing of the product, making it available at the right place and time as well as using the right promotional technique(s) to stimulate customer too buy the product.

Skills for proper business management

Management is crucial to the success of any entrepreneurial effort. Managerial incompetence of some Nigerian entrepreneurs is among the problems of entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Business education can therefore help in ameliorating these attaining proficient skills in economics and management is among the aims of Business education. The acquisition of requisite management skills would their ventures through the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling the available human and material resources. Similarly, their knowledge of Economics is expected to make them to be rational and also ensure proper allocation and utilization of the

available resources.

Avoidance of business failure

It is desire of every entrepreneur to ensure that his business survives as a going-concern. But some business ventures do not last long. Once a business of Business education, it has the potentials of helping entrepreneurs with skills for identifying the symptoms of business failure. Some of these symptoms include; declining sales, deteriorating working capital, declining profit and high debt ratio. With this information in mind, the entrepreneurs stand the chance of avoiding the failure of their businesses.

Conclusion

Business education is skill-based course which inculcates entrepreneurial skills in the recipient. Entrepreneurship on the other hand, deals with creative identification and utilization of business opportunities. This paper establishes that Business education has the potentials of promoting entrepreneurship in Nigeria since it could lead to the acquisition of skills for identifying viable investment opportunities, proper marketing, financial management, proper management and avoidance of business financial. The implication of this work is that, for Nigeria to encourage entrepreneurship, reduce unemployment and an help the practicing entrepreneurs to be successful and achieve the aim of making their ventures to be going-concerns, Business education should be taken serious and highly encouraged; otherwise, the desire of Nigeria to encourage self-employment through entrepreneurship may end up as a mirage.

Suggestions

The paper suggests as follows:

Nigerian youth should be encouraged to study Business education

Our youths should be stimulated to study business education. This could be done through career counseling both at home and school as well as creation of awareness through the national Orientation Agency (NDA). The essence of this is because Business education could lead to the production of high level and competent

entrepreneurs. These people would also be able to encourage other people to venture into entrepreneurship and turn Nigeria for better.

Only business educators should be allowed to teach Business education

Teaching of business education should be left exclusively to the business educators. This is because, by their training and orientation, they are in better positions of inculcating entrepreneurial skills in the learners.

There should be adequate funding for Business education

Business education is a skill-based course which requires a lot of money for the purpose of procuring the requisite teaching materials. To ensure that the society reaps from its benefits, it should be adequately funded by stakeholders. These stakeholder are; government at all levels (Federal, State and Local), corporate organizations, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), philanthropic individuals and the Parents-teachers Association (PTA).

Entrepreneurs that lack Business education skill should be encouraged to acquire the skills

The entrepreneurs that lack Business education skills should be encouraged to acquire the skills. This encouragement can be done by the government through its agencies such as small and medium-scale Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and National Directorate of employment (NDE) as well as NGOs and professional organization. The business education skills could be acquired through seminars and workshops to be organized by the aforementioned agencies of the government, NGOs, and professional bodies.

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