



Business Education: A Pathway to Economy Recovery in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Business Education is a necessary condition to achieve economy recovery because it makes one to establish and manage their businesses, create jobs for themselves and others, become self-reliant and self employed without any recourse to government and above all participate in public works and community development. Hence, this paper examines the need for Business Education, the concept of Business Education, important of Business Education to the nation, Business Education and national development, concept of poverty, constraints of poverty alleviation through Business Education were discussed in the paper and it further recommends that only qualified Business educators should be recruited to teach Business Education courses at all educational levels and the already recruited ones should as a matter of urgency go for retraining especially in the use of modern technology, and adequate fund should be made available for effective implementation of Business Education programmes.

Introduction

The roles of Business Education on the economic growth, development, sustainability and quick recovery from economic recession cannot be over emphasized. To his end, the modern societies demand a comprehensive type of education that can equip the individuals with knowledge that can make them functional and self reliance. The National Policy on Education (2004) highlighted Nigeria's desire to achieve her national goals through education; hence, the need for acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competence both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live and also contribute to development of the society.

Business education is by nature almost totally economic-oriented, and its contribution is significant to the realization of the national economy recovery. One of the two aspects of business education, "basic business", contributes to economic literacy and therefore to the general education of everyone. Basic business education is that broad area of knowledge that with a country's



enterprise system identifies and explains the roles of business a nation's economic institution and provides content and experiences that prepare individuals for effective participation as citizens, workers and consumers in nation's society (Osuala, 2009). Quality Business education is vital in the programme of services delivery in the economic vision of economy recovery of Nigeria. Etonyeaku (2009) affirmed that business education has a formidable force that will equip individuals with appropriate skills, knowledge, abilities and competencies that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant which will lead to sustainable economic development.

Business education is an aspect of vocational and technical education which is used as a term to refer to those educational processes involving the study of techniques, related sciences, acquisition of practical skills attitudes and knowledge relating to occupation in vocational sectors of economic and social life (Etonyeaku, 2009).

Regardless of the present economy recession in Nigeria, there must be a serious look at the reality on ground that we need to focus on the type of education that could help in creation of jobs for individual which can

contribute to the quick recovery of our economy in Nigeria.

Concept of Business Education

The definition of the concept of business education has evolved over time. This is evident in the different definitions offered by various authors and researchers in trying to make clear the meaning of business education. Agwumezie (1999) cited by Innocent et al (2015) defined business education as a course that prepares students for entry in advancement of jobs within business; and prepares them to handle their own business affairs to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy. Similarly, Amaewhule (2000) in Innocent et al (2015) opined that business education encompasses knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed by all citizens in order to effectively manage their personal businesses and economic system. Atakpa (2011) in Innocent et al (2015) remarked that business education is an embodiment of vocational knowledge and skills needed for employment and advancement in a broad range of business careers.

In other words, business education means education for business or training skills which is required in business offices, clerical



occupation and business policy analysis. In his own view, Okoye (2013) cited by Innocent et al (2015) extensively defined business education as an education program that orientate students in: art of business making (marketing), typing and shorthand skills (currently competing with computer appreciation and operation), service delivery, secretarial jobs, stenography, account clerking, office information system and management.

Objectives of Business Education

In line with National Policy on Education the objectives of business education includes:-

- i. To empower the individual with desirable skills, knowledge and values to perform specific functions so as to become self-reliant;
- ii. To empower the individual in such a way that the individual will develop his intellectual capacity that would help him to make informed decisions in all spheres of life;
- iii. To understand the political framework of a nation and contribute to national economic and development (Ezemoyih, 2011).

Importance of business education to the Nation

The following are the importance of Business Education to the nation as prescribed by Ajisafe, O. E, et al (2015)

- i. Business Education is important to the nation because more people would have skills that can make them ready employers of labour. Dependence on the nation would be minimized as people become job creators.
- ii. As people develop proper values towards work they tend to contribute more economically to the nation. For instance, the nation is divorced from violence, sexual immorality, pride, corruption and examination malpractice among others.
- iii. As individual citizens become judicious spenders, the country gains by way of investing excess resources on meaningful projects that would lead to economic development. Today, we are talking about poor infrastructural facilities in our educational and health systems, this can be avoided if we spend wisely.
- iv. If one understands one's right as a citizen of a country and enforces them the country would have less to worry about but would rather devote more time and resources on development.
- v. If citizens of a country develop sound moral value then the country will be free from insecurity and peace will reign supreme. More people will invest in the country and



there will be increased in growth and development.

- vi. Business education has made it possible for those who want to be retrained in order to upgrade their skills and have access to education. In this way, people who finish secondary grammar school with no saleable opportunity skills will have to acquire skills that make them become functional, through retraining programmes.

With the points given above it is important to embrace business education because it prepares youths for the world of work and it helps youths in taken decision of his/her career either to take up teaching or to become a business man.

Business Education and National Development

Business education has been defined in several ways, most of which highlight its vocational nature. It is a form of vocational education that is directed towards developing the learner to become productive in teaching, paid employment and self-employment (Idialu 2008 in Amoor, 2010). Business education prepares beneficiaries for gainful employment and sustainable livelihood. It is generally seen as education for and about business. Business education for business is

that aspect of vocational education which provides instruction and preparation for office occupations such as secretary, shorthand-typist or stenographer, bookkeeper, data processor, word processor, computer analyst and accountant. On the other hand, education about business provides knowledge and understanding of the economic, financial, marketing, accounting, management system and other branches of business endeavour. In other words, education about business prepares students to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy.

Amoor (2010) notes that business education plays a significant role in the economic development by providing knowledge and skills to the learners, thereby, enabling them to adequately impart knowledge into others, and handle sophisticated office technologies and information systems. The goal of business education is primarily to produce competent, skillful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work. It has as its primary aim, the preparation of people for roles in enterprises



such roles could be as employee, entrepreneur and employer or simply as self employed.

Vocational and technical skills and competence has been identified (Rufia, 2013) as critical success factors in the actualization of Nigerian Vision 20:2020 which is about Nigeria becoming one of the first 20 economies in the world by the year 2020. Business education holds the prospect of contributing, through its job creation and self-employment packages, for the attainment of vision 20:2020. A gainfully employed individual contributes to GDP per capita, reduces poverty and unemployment which are some of the indices of development. A well trained business educator can successfully be engaged into the following areas:

- i. Teaching profession from secondary to university level depending on qualification
- ii. Business enterprise – as a promoter, manager, marketer, account clerk, secretary, word processor, sales representative, broker etc.
- iii. Proprietorship of private schools – primary, secondary, tertiary, computer training institute and so on.

There is no gain saying the fact that business education, an aspect of vocational education, is what Nigeria needs most now to help her

solve most of her social, economic and developmental problems.

Concept of Poverty

Poverty is one of the debilitating problems faced by people in many countries. Thus, individuals, groups of persons, developed and developing countries of the world have experienced different levels of poverty at different times. Poverty is a term that is familiar to both the affluent and the poor but what varies is the meaning attached to it by different people. Ndem (2010) stated that poverty is the deprivation of the basic needs such as food, shelter education and employment among others.

In the same vein Greenberg (2005) poverty means lack of power, choice and material resources. Greenberg further stated that the poor lack access to information that is vital to their lives and livelihood and about market prices for the goods they produce. The poor lack access to knowledge, education, and skill development opportunities needed to improve themselves. From the above definitions, it is clear that poverty is far more than financial solvency and can manifest in the form of unemployment, homelessness, and lack of education. Education in its entire ramification is the foundation for all



development. Okorie (2000) indicated that most of the richest economies of the world such as the USA, China and Germany make tremendous and expansive use of both general and vocational education. Business Education is an integral part of Vocational Education which is the education for employability. The Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) recognized it as such and defined it as the aspect of Technical Education which involves in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences; the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of the economy and social life.

According to Azuka, Nwosu, Kanu and Agomuo (2006) and Odah and Ogbaga (2010), unlike general education which is long in theory and short in fact, Business Education is practical oriented and provides individuals with skills in business-related occupations such as accounting, marketing and office occupation.

Moreover, Business Education is concerned with the area of knowledge and competences needed by individuals (skills, abilities, understanding and attitudes) that enable students to become a worthy human being

and effective member of the society (Etonyeaku, 2012).

Igboke (2000), Business Education is a dynamic field of study geared towards preparing youths and adults for and about business. It is a preparation for a career in business when instruction is designed to prepare youths and adults for actual practice in the world of business. On the other hand, education about business involves preparation of youths and adults for intelligent and effective consumption of economic goods and services offered to society in our free enterprise economy.

However, business education will produce responsible, productive and self-reliant citizens. This highlights the importance of Business Education in inculcating in the recipients knowledge, values, attitudes and skills needed in the business world.

The objectives of business education cannot be over emphasized, hence, business education generally are borne out of the needs of industry, commerce and society. In addition, it is career oriented that aims at preparing people for gainful employment.

Constraints of Poverty Alleviation through Business Education



The growth of business education in the country is not encouraging owing to so many factors. These factors if not addressed and improved upon will contribute to a greater iv. poverty level being experienced by the learners. The problems of business education include:

- i. **Unqualified Teachers:** Teachers are critical stakeholders in curriculum implementation. The employment of unqualified teachers to teach business courses is a great disservice to quality of business education graduates. It is a well known fact that most of the higher institutions that offer business education programme suffer from shortage of qualified teachers (Amoor 2010 in Ugwuogo, 2012). vi. Business education has become a dumping ground sort of for graduates from different disciplines employed in the name of business educator.
- ii. **Lack of Adequate Equipment:** Like other vocational programmes, business education lacks modern equipment for proper training of the students. Most of the available equipment are obsolete and do not meet needs of the time.
- iii. **Inadequate Teaching Staff:** There is death of staff in the business education departments. Most of those trained prefer working in

companies to teaching. This is because of poor societal perception of teachers in the country in particular.

Inadequate Infrastructures: There exists few lecture halls/classrooms for the business education courses. If available, there are few or no-desks for the students. In its totality, the learning environment is not conducive.

UBE Scheme: Little or no emphasis is made on the place of business education in the current UBE programme. With such, people will not be willing to enroll for the programme of study and as such will not acquire the skill needed for them to be self-reliant and employable.

Poor Societal Perception: The Nigerian society, has poor regard for vocational education programme with business education which is an integral part of vocational education inclusive. Nigerian views this form of education as education for the never do wells or drop outs. This is evident on the very low population of students receiving vocational education nation – wide. Most of the states in the country till date have not and are still unwilling to set up separate board for the management of vocational and technical education in their woman state. This is because they have little or no value and regard for vocational education.



vii. **Inadequate funding:** This is the major problem of vocational education in this country. The government finds it extremely difficult to release reasonable fund to this programme of education. Consideration is not given to acquisition of machines, tools and materials for practical which enhance students' skill acquisition. This therefore makes it difficult for the students to acquire the proper skill.

Conclusion

In this paper, it has been concluded that business education play an impact roles in the life of individual's and contribute to the development of a nation since business education is part of vocational and technical education through which country could tackled poverty, unemployment and control the economic situation. The paper points out some problems that are facing business education which has effect on the economy and possible way forwards were suggested as remedies.

Remedies

i. Only qualified business educators should be recruited to teach business education courses at all educational levels. The already recruited ones should as a matter of urgency go for retraining especially in the use of modern technology.

ii. Adequate fund should be made available for effective implementation of business education programmes in Nigeria.

iii. Government and school administrator should emphasize more on the benefits of Vocational/Technical Education to individuals and the public as a whole in order to improve the negative image of it.

iv. Government should be involved in developing and training of ICT experts who will work in partnership with Business educators and teachers

v. More functional equipment should be provided in every institution offering business education. This will enhance proper training to the students geared towards acquisition of the right skills.

vi. Enough structures should be put in place with modern and adequate facilities provided, for conducive teaching and learning exercise.

vii. The Nigerian society should be properly informed on the gains of business education, mainly on skill acquisition and self-reliance.

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