

ENHANCING BUSINESS EDUCATION RESEARCH WORK FOR JOB CREATION AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study was aimed at finding out problems that are associated with poor research work by business education students in our tertiary institutions and ways of improving it for job creation and sustainable national development. The study was a survey. Eleven Ph.D holders in business education from the three tertiary institutions in Anambra State formed the population of the study. Structured questionnaire made up of 34 items was used to collect data which was analyzed using mean statistics. The study revealed that insufficient funds, facilities and poverty were the major causes of poor research work in business education. Poor staff remuneration made supervisors develop negative attitude towards embracing current pedagogies in research, which also resulted to students not coping with current trends in carrying out education research works that are dependable, relevant and adequate for knowledge advancement, progress promotion in business education and society in general. It was recommended that management of institutions of higher learning should as a matter of urgency, make it compulsory that every tutorial staff should attend at least two in-service training course programme annually so as to acquaint themselves with current happenings in the society and be able to inculcate in their students education research that will make them job creators rather than job seekers.

Introduction

A country is said to be self sufficient when her education system is directed towards addressing the needs and goals of that nation. Attending to the needs and goals of the nation, Meaza (2009) maintained that adequate and in-depth research work have be conducted so as to ascertain the likely benefits and obstacles, thereby putting in place adequate control measures.

Research according to Maduakonam (2004) is an organized, systematic and scientific method of collecting data. That is to say, it is an organized inquiry carried out to provide information for the solution to a problems. Osuala (2005) in his own part defined research as a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection analysis and interpretation of data,

stressing that it is a most important tool for advancing knowledge, promoting progress and enabling man to relate more effectively to his environment. Business Education on the other hands is concerned with the development in individual sound:

- personal skills and attitudes
- communication and computational skills
- technological literacy
- employability skills and
- broad and specific occupational skills and knowledge (Aria, 2002).

If business education is capable of providing their students with the above designated positive skills, it is quite disheartened to see majority of business education graduates incapable of solving their individual and societal problems. This according to Osuala(2005) could be as a result of poor background knowledge on how to carry out dependable, relevant and adequate research work capable of advancing knowledge, promoting progress in business education and society in general. Meaza (2009) in his own part observed that developed nations have recognized that strong based scientific research that can address local needs or that allow it to adapt external technologies for a sustainable development is superior to over reliance on externally developed technologies. Relying highly on external assistance according to Meaza could make some of the students in the tertiary institutions face difficult situation when trying to apply their knowledge in solving the needs and goals of the country. This is true because these students were not well equipped with the appropriate modern

educational research methods, therefore lack the problem solving skills to generate or adapt locally relevant technological inputs. This also shows that no attempt is made in identifying and tackling the issues of the moment as regards job creation and sustainable national development.

Most often, some lecturer's insensitivity and nonchalant attitude towards updating their knowledge in the use and application of appropriate/dependable education research methods do contribute to students poor research work ((Umezulike, 2008). Making her own contribution on the evils of high rate of examination frauds in our tertiary institutions, Omemgboji (2009) frowned at the arbitrary and unconcerned manner which some lecturers employ to exploit their supervisees by asking them to pay some amount of money and they will be given old projects to reproduce. These lectures with obsolete knowledge in research work according to Meaza (2009) are nothing but illusion towards education and economic development but they think they are helping the students.

The researcher also observed that stagnation in knowledge has caused many supervisions ignorance of current happenings in the society. This according to Aina (2008) and Anazonwu (2009) made most supervisors to went ahead approving and approving research topics that no bearing to the current education and economic situations. They (lecturers) are not perturbed on the slogan "publish or

perish “because they feel comfortable with the money they are collecting from students. Some, in the effort to avert the problem of not being promoted, resort on publishing in the local journals and books of reading that are assessed by editors/ colleagues who are no longer current in writing research report.

Some serious minded students that find themselves in the hands of such mischievous staff seek for reassignment to more dedicated staff. This, the researcher suggested could lead to students abuse and disrespect to their lecturers.

Furthermore, laxity on part of the supervisors and supervisees according to Umezulike (2009) makes the research work loose face and content validity. Making further submission based on her observation Umezulike in analyzing most of the research work noticed that they are scanty in terms of scope and therefore cannot give true picture of the results of the study.

If nothing is done urgently to address the situation our clamour for meeting up with qualitative and sound education for job creation, economic as well as sustainable development will be a mirage.

Problem of the Study

Thousands of research work are carried out by Business Education undergraduate and graduate students but only very few of them could make little

contribution towards solution to nation’s needs and goals or merit international recognition. Could this be from government, supervisors, supervisees or from both?

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to:

1. find out from business educators problems that contribute to poor research work in business education.
2. ascertain from the business educators various effects of poor research work in Business Education.
3. find out from business educators ways of enhancing business education research work for job creation and sustainable national development.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do business educators agree to various problems that contribute to students’ poor research work in business education?
2. To what extent do the business educators agree to various effects of poor research work in Business Education?
3. What according to business educators are ways of enhancing

business education research work for job creation and sustainable national development?

$$\frac{4+3+2+1.}{4} = 2.5$$

Methodology

A survey research design was adopted for the study. Eleven respondents made up of five Ph. D holders in business education from Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka, four from Nwafor Orizu College of Education and two from Madonna University, Okija formed part of the population. The population was therefore eleven Ph.D holders from the three tertiary institutions. There was no sampling, hence the entire population was used.

A 34 items structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The data collected were analyzed using mean ratings. The instrument was validated by two professors in Business Education from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The internal consistency and the reliability of the instrument were tested using Cronbach Alpha and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. Scores obtained include: 0.82 and 0.86 respectively.

Four Likert response categories was used in providing answers to the questionnaire items. A mean rating of 2.5 and above was taken to be High Extent or Agreement while those below were taken to be Low Extent or Disagreement. The figure was obtained by adding

Thus Very High Extent = VHE (4points); High Extent = HE (3 points); Low Extent = LE (2 points) and Very Low Extent VLE (1 point). Strongly Agree SA (4 points); Agree A (3 points); Disagree D (2 points) and Strongly Disagree SD (1 point).

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question I:

To what extent do business educators agree to various problems that contribute to students' poor research work in Business Education?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of the Respondents as to problems of poor Research work by Business Education Students.

S/N	Problems	VHE	HE	LE	HLE	F X	\bar{x}	Decision
1.	Research topics are not researchable .	5	3	1	2	33	3.0	HE
2.	Research topics are not focused on solving education and nation's needs.	6	3	1	1	36	3.3	HE
3.	Neglect on part of the supervisors to embrace advance technology	6	2	2	1	34	3.1	HE
4.	Laxity on part of supervisors and supervisees to have access to information on the latest pedagogical of research work.	6	2	2	1	34	3.1	HE
5.	Laissez-faire attitude on part of supervisors to have access to information on the latest pedagogical advances.	6	2	2	1	34	3.1	HE
6.	Students not being equipped with appropriate modern educational and research methods.	5	4	2	0	36	3.3	HE
7.	Insufficient funds, equipment and poverty.	7	3	0	1	38	3.5	HE
8.	Insufficient time and un-conducive environment	2	3	2	4	25	2.3	LE
9.	Staff poor remuneration/Inequality in pay package	7	2	1	1	37	3.4	HE
10.	Unfair method of assessment for promotion	5	4	2	0	36	3.3	HE
11.	Supervisors lack of problem solving skills to generate or adapt locally relevant technological solution.	4	4	3	0	34	3.1	HE

Out of the eleven items listed as problems that are associated with students poor research work, only item 8 (insufficient time and un-conducive environment) was skipped. All other ten items were generally to a high extent agreed by the respondents to be problems associated with business education students poor research work.

Research Question 2: To what extent do stakeholders agree to various effects of poor research work in Business Education?

Table 2: Respondents Rating of Various Effects of Poor Research work on Business Students for job creation and sustainable National Development

Table 3: Stakeholders responses of various ways of enhancing business education research work for job creation and sustainable National Development.

S/N	Ways of Enhancing Business Education Research Work	S	A	D	SD	FX	X	Decision
27.	School or faculty board to make available list of research topics on current issues and students choosing from the list.	6	4	0	1	37	3.4	Agree
28.	Assigning Team Supervisors to every student	6	3	1	1	36	3.3	Agree
29.	Students to defend their research topics before the school or faculty board research committee.	6	3	1	1	36	3.3	Agree
30.	Students to provide evidence of instrument validation.	6	3	1	1	36	3.3	Agree
31.	Undergraduates to do proposal defence before the final one.	6	3	1	1	36	3.3	Agree
32.	Equipping the institution's library with current books and advance technologies.	7	2	1	1	37	3.4	Agree
33.	Creating further education and research opportunities by publishing good research work by students in the school journal free of charge.	7	2	1	1	37	3.4	Agree
34.	Organizing compulsory annual seminars and workshops on research and development which must comprise lecturers and students.	7	3	0	1	38	3.5	Agree

The respondents were provided with eight possible ways of enhancing business education research work. All the eight items were agreed to have great influence towards promoting sound research study capable of reforming Nigeria education system as regards job creation and sustainable national development.

Discussion of the Findings

The data in Table 1 reveals that in spite of the federal government and management of institutions of higher learning efforts to ensure update and reliable research work that will bring about better economic, social and education development, research studies undertaken in our tertiary institutions are still not fulfilling the objectives for which they were embarked upon. The respondents in Table 1 indicated that the major cause of students poor research work were inadequate funds, inadequate equipment/facilities and poverty. These shortcomings according to Nnadozie (2009) had resulted to abandoning in half way or natural death of most meaningful research study. The respondents also see poor remuneration as serious set back to promoting effective research work. Poor remuneration according to the study can also make supervisors develop negative attitude in employing dependable, relevant and adequate research work capable of advancing knowledge, promoting progress in business education and society in general (Osuala, 2005 and Anazonwu, 2009). Development of negative attitude as a result of poor remuneration, the

researcher believes could contribute to supervisors negligence in embracing advanced technology. Again, the inability of supervisors to access information on the latest pedagogical advances could be deduced from unfair methods of assessment for promotion and inequality in pay package. The unfair treatment of the supervisors according to Aina (2008) and Anazonwu (2009) could make supervisors remain stagnant in knowledge thereby resulting to choosing of researchable topics which do not focus towards solving education and national problems. Though some previous researchers like Adigun (1991), Chidebe and Iwuala (2009) were seeing time as constraints towards effective research work, the respondents responses indicate that time and un-conducive environment are not hindrances because there is no crown without cross.

Data in Table 2 showed that too many negative effects are accrued as a result of poor research work in Business Education. That majority of the Business Education research work cannot be utilized in solving/tackling the nation's developmental needs and problems. This according to the study could be as a result of institutional instructors failure to embrace scientific research guide that are dependable, relevant and adequate in addressing local needs instead of relying on externally developed technologies. This is in line with Meaza (2009) assertion that relying highly on external assistance could make Business Education graduates face difficult situation when trying to apply their knowledge in solving the needs and goals of the country. The researcher has

the same view with Meaza (2009) attestation that African (Nigeria included) over dependency to external assistance for their continent's sustainable development shall be a thing of past, if instructors from African Universities will wake up from their slumber and inculcate in their students strong based local scientific research knowledge capable of identifying and addressing the local needs and goals of the continents. Identifying the needs areas must be followed with means of attaining them by putting in place adequate machineries (such as making enough funds available, equipping institutional libraries, sponsoring enlightenment programmes etc), for absence of these machineries will make nonsense of Federal Government positive initiatives (Akpan, 2009).

Moreso, Nigerian citizens nowadays see education as a means of getting meal ticket (certificate) and getting a job. As a result of this trend, immorality and dishonesty become the order of the day. That is how to pass examinations and obtain certificates and not to measure ones ability in solving societal problems. There is no doubts that inadequate supervision of Business Education research work will make their graduates incompetent in applying critical thinking in a concrete situations because one cannot give what he do not have says Socrates. This also concur with Muchie (2009) assertion that the inability of the instructors in the African Universities to train their young graduates on the latest research pedagogies capable of tackling the continents problems will bring about increase in the number of unproductive and unviable business

managers and personnel. In a situation like this, there will be outbreak of unemployment and different sorts of crimes will become the order of the day.

The respondents in Table 3 unanimously agreed that assigning two supervisors to a researcher will help in checking the abuses of research work in the Nigerias' tertiary institutions. This is true because an Igbo dictum states that two people cannot be mad at the same time. Again it was said that two people have four eyes. Therefore, team supervisors will contribute ideas together in drilling their supervisees. They can even share the chapters of the research work, thereby making possible for quick completion of the research study. The respondents also see publishing good graduate research reports in the school or faculty journals as very interesting and effective measure for boosting positive research work among students. The researcher see with the respondents, as such will create spirit of competition among the students and supervisors will strive to ensure that their supervisees work are published. Furthermore, organizing annual compulsory seminars/workshops for the staff and students by the school or faculty board committee on research work is another effective way of improving the status of research work in our tertiary institutions. This is true because education is a continuous process. Therefore lecturers and students should always attend refreshment course programmes so as to update their knowledge on the current issues and trends in education and research work for sustainable national development.

This is in line with Denyer (1961), Idih (1991), Okwuanaso (2002) and Umezulike (2008) assertions that as vehicle license expires so as Ph.D certificates may expire if in ten years the holder does nothing to update his knowledge in the field.

Conclusion

Poor funding, inadequate supply of modern equipment/facilities, poor staff remuneration, poverty etc are seen as the major constraints to effective and reliable research work. These constraints have made supervisors to develop negative attitude towards embracing, accessing and applying modern research methods in guiding their supervisees. Supervisors' improper guide had also resulted to their project supervisees choosing un-researchable and unfocused research topics that had no bearing towards attaining or providing solution to education and national problems.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are put up:

1. Government should increase their funding on research and development as the study shows that enhancing research capabilities in tertiary institutions significantly improves the nation's development as graduates are trained to be productive employers and managers.
2. Supervisors should realize that being versatile in the use and application of modern technology is for their own good. Employing the skills (modern

tech) in guiding the students' research work is just an aspect. In other words, knowledge of modern technology is a pre-requisite to every profession.

3. To check the excess abuse of graduates research work, two supervisors should be assigned to one student so that, if one is not up and doing, the other one can pick up and do justice to the work.
4. School or faculty board committees on their own part should make available enough researchable and focused research topics to avoid students choosing unfocused and un-researchable topics.
5. Institutions of higher learning should equip their libraries with adequate modern textbooks and advance technologies to enable the researchers gather enough data for their studies.
6. School or faculty board committee on research should introduce competition among the students by publishing at least, three best students' research work in the school or faculty journals.

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