

CONTRIBUTIONS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PERCEPTION OF ACADEMIC STAFF AND STUDENTS OF NWAFOR ORIZU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION NSUGBE

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Abstract

The contributions of Business Education to national development being the focus of the study has diverse goals geared towards turning out the right caliber of work force of both gender with business and entrepreneurial ability and skills for positions in various sectors of the country. The study was survey. The population for the study was 30 academic staff and 736 Business Education Students of Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe. Through random sampling techniques a sample size of 200 was selected for the study, 20 from academic staff and 180 from the students. A structured five point scale of Likert type of questionnaire containing 24 items was used as instrument for data collection. Five research questions were postulated. Arithmetic mean was the statistical tool used for data analysis. In spite of so many challenges confronting Business Education the result of the study showed that Business Education contributes immensely to national development.

Introduction

The activity of creating goods and services with major target of making profit is business. Wikipedia (2006) identified four main types of business to include; sole proprietorship, partnership, private limited company and Limited Liability Company. Business therefore is economic money-oriented activities that are geared towards profit maximization (Onwuchekwa, 2006).

Nnabude (2009) suggested that the major key player in the evolution of nation from one economic level to another is education. It is a process by which children born into society are made to understand the environment into which they have been born. Alam (2008) in his opinion stated that education is a basic right considered by many as a key tool for national development. It is crucial for rapid economic growth and essential if we wish to increase the productivity of the poor by reducing fertility and providing people with the skills they need to participate fully in the economy and in society (Fegerlind and Saha, 1989).

On the basis of these, Business Education becomes the basic foundation upon which the students build an awareness and understanding of business concept. Wikipedia (2006) suggested that business education is an enterprise of education directed at the study and research in the field of business. It is the sum total of knowledge, skill, attitude that are required for the successful promotion and administering of business enterprise (Ango, 1986). It is also a branch of vocational education that provides the students with information and competences which are needed in managing private business and working in public office (Iwu, 2006). Business Education prepares students for entering into and/or advancement in job within business and prepares them to handle their own business affairs and function intelligently (Akhare, 2003).

Business Education strives to achieve the three inter-related domains of the taxonomy of education objectives namely; cognitive, psycho-motor and affective domains. These domains develop individuals intellect, enable individuals acquire vocational skills and work habit (Bloom, 1979). Richard (2005) and Eric (2006) in their work suggested Business Education goals and objectives to include; provision of manpower who possess the requisite knowledge and skills for harnessing other resources and bringing them into cooperative relationship, turning out the right caliber of workforce in the business and entrepreneurial ability for positions in various sectors of the economy, educating individuals for and about business, provide desired sound growth for the firm and its profits etc. Thus, Business Education standard is based on a vision and set of competences designed to prepare students to become knowledgeable and ethical decision makers as they fulfill their roles as consumers, workers and citizens (National Standard for Business Education, 2003).

Development of every nation depends largely on the successful performance of Business Education. Nwobi (2007) viewed development as a process of sustaining total structural transformation and modernization of the socio economic environment of a country. According to Tadaro and Smith (2003) development must be conceived as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, positive attitudes, acceleration of economic growth, reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty. Development in its sense must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system turn to the diverse basic needs. National development therefore is defined as a process of integrating all sectors of the economy into development for increased production, improve standard of living, employment, modernization of technology, industrialization etc. Ofe (2005) observed that national development encompasses all the aspect of national life which includes the social, political, religions and ideological citizens and government.

Economic development according to Molokwu and Molokwu (1999) is a process whereby the real per capita income of a country increases over a long period of time provided an absolute poverty line does not increase and that the distribution of income does not become more equal. To balance development in any nation there is great need for Business Education. Schweitzer (2006) was of opinion that Business Education equips individuals with tools and techniques of successful handling of various businesses and contributing to global economy. Tominsion (2006) and Schwertze (2006) outlined the followings as the functions of Business Education; development of mental and physical skill of an individuals, provision of goods and services, information acquisition etc. Hallak (1990) also included ecological development, socio cultural change; improve nutrition and health, individual creativity etc. These functions lead to national development. Oziengbe (2009) suggested self employment, technological improvement high standard of living, self reliance, consumer economic efficiency, man-power skill development and so on as benefits of Business Education.

In spite of the above benefits of Business Education, the programme continually suffer problem of unemployment, poor condition of service, poor planning and implementation, poor government appreciation , poor curriculum content, non functional libraries, epileptic power supply and so on. Eric (2006) suggested that obstacles of Business Education include; lack of adequate qualified and committed personnel, high rate of teacher turn over, poor condition of services, lack of adequate funds, poor planning and implementation, poor government appreciation of programme of the study, poor curriculum content etc.

Eric (2006) Suggested solutions of handling Business Education challenges include: provision of instructional materials and enlightenment campaign, provision of information communication technology (ICT) facilities to Business Education department, encouraging of Federal Teacher Training Program to enable Business Education teachers further their studies and so on. The World Bank Policy paper on Business Education (1991) also suggested that to get the maximum benefit of national development from Business Education certain factors must be considered:

- Well timed modern courses linked and global demand.
- Relevant and up-to-date Business Education Courses need to be developed.
- Proper justification in respect of individual country that at which level of schooling is best in offering Business Education courses and wider range of Business Education courses need to be developed terms of demand and cost effective (not only for offering various courses but also for duration of the courses for student classification in terms of their merit, ages, job market etc).

Statement of the Problem

The present economic down turn in the country leads to this investigation. Nigeria is characterized with abject poverty, poor standard of living, mal-nutrition, sickness and diseases, poor infrastructure, unemployment, poor technology etc. The government, public organization and other private bodies have made tremendous effort to tackle these problems but the impact is not yet felt. Fortunately, many Vocational and Technical Education Institutions and Secondary Schools were established to help alleviates these problems by turning out the right caliber of workforce of both gender with business and entrepreneurial ability and skills for various positions in various sectors for national development.

According to Nnabude (2009) Business Education helps in accomplishing 7 points Agenda for national development. Nkamnebe (2008) on his words suggested that Business Education has

potentials to help towards achieving, national development in a number of ways. UNESCO (2004) also affirmed that Business Education is a master plan for national development by declaring thus: since education is considered the key to effective development strategies, Business Education must be the master key that can alleviate poverty, promote peace, and conserve the environment improve the quality for all and help achieve sustainable national development. Lewin (1993), Fingalind and Saha (1989) and Knight and Sabot (1990) were also of the same opinion that Business Education is a key agent to national development either as a way of developing human capacity, increasing the skills of workforces for mobilization or as a matter of personnel freedom, development capability and empowerment etc. In spite of the benefits of Business Education, many developing countries like Nigeria are yet to feel the full contribution of Business Education towards national development. This study therefore is focused on determining the contributions of Business Education to national development and solutions for the elimination of obstacles challenging Business Education in achieving national development.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the contributions of Business Education to national development from the perspectives of academic staff and students of Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe , Anambra State.

Other specific objectives are:

1. To identify various ways Business Education could contribute toward national development.
2. To identify obstacles challenging Business Education in achieving national development.
3. To identify solutions for the elimination of obstacles challenging Business Education in achieving national development.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to guide the study.

1. In what ways could Business Education contribute towards the National development?
2. What are the obstacles challenging Business Education in achieving national development?
3. In what ways could the obstacles confronting Business Education in achieving national development be eliminated?

Methodology

The researcher adopted a survey research design in carrying out the investigation.

Population and Sample

The population for the study consists of seven hundred and sixty six (766) respondents' from Business Education, Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe Anambra State. Thirty (30) were academic staff, while seven hundred and thirty six (736) were students.

A sample size of two hundred (200) was selected through random sampling techniques twenty (20) from the academic staff and one hundred and eighty (180) from the students of Business Education of.

Research Instrument

The major instrument used for data collection was twenty four (24) items structured questionnaires which covers the study on investigation. Five point scale of Likert type of questionnaire was used. Ranging from 5 to 1 point in order of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UN), Disagree (DA) and Strongly disagree (SD).

Validation of the Instrument

Two experts from Business Education Department validated the research instrument. The correction suggested by the experts led to a modification of some items in the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Data collated were analyzed using arithmetic mean. The result was presented in tables according to the research questions. The mean of 3.50 represent acceptance. Item with a mean rating of 3.50 and above was regarded as agreed. While the rating between 2.50 and 3.49 was regarded as undecided and the mean rating that falls below 2.50 was regard as disagreed.

Result

Research Question 1

In what ways could Business Education contribute towards national development?

Table 1: Respondents responses on the contributions of Business Education in achieving national development.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	Remarks
1	Individual creativity.	4.81	Agreed
2	Improved participation in the economic, social and cultural roles in the society.	3.52	Agreed
3	Improved chances of economic development.	4.89	Agreed
4	Improve technological development.	3.60	Agreed
5	Improve socio cultural changes.	3.56	Agreed
6	Ecological development/equality of life.	3.52	Agreed
7	High standard of living and self reliant.	4.89	Agreed
8	Employment/job creation.	4.89	Agreed
9	Developing human capacity.	4.81	Agreed

The data presented in table 1 above revealed that all the items had their mean ratings above 3.50. This is an indication that Business Education contributes a lot in achieving national development.

Research Question 2

What are the obstacles challenging Business Education in achieving national development?

Table 2: Mean responses of obstacles challenging Business Education.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	Remarks
10	Unqualified and uncommitted personnel.	3.51	Agreed
11	Poor technology.	4.40	Agreed
12	Poor motivation and incentives.	4.47	Agreed
13	Unconducive teaching environment.	3.65	Agreed
14	Lack of teaching aids.	4.00	Agreed
15	Insufficient capital.	4.51	Agreed
16	Poor government support.	3.55	Agreed
17	Lack of infrastructures.	4.77	Agreed

The data in table 2 above indicated that the respondents have agreed in all the items as perceived obstacles challenging Business Education.

Research Question 3

3. In what ways could obstacles confronting Business Education in achieving national development be eliminated?

Table 3: Mean responses on the solutions of eliminating obstacles confronting Business Education from achieving national development.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	Remarks
18	Development of well-timed modern courses linked of local and global demand.	3.50	Agreed
19	Making Business Education subjects/courses compulsory at primary, and secondary schools levels.	3.51	Agreed
20	Provision of adequate teaching aids and infrastructural facilities to facilitate teaching and learning process.	4.65	Agreed
21	Seminars, Conferences, workshop in service training etc should be encouraged.	4.75	Agreed
22	Professionals and experienced teachers should be employed to teach Business Education subjects and should be well remunerated and motivated.	4.00	Agreed
23	Provision of modern up-to-date technological knowledge to students is required.	3.90	Agreed
24	Students without academic ability or interest to gain technical knowledge and skills in Business Education should not be admitted into Business Education at higher level.	3.10	Undecided

Data in table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed with all the solutions of strengthen Business Education except item 24, the last solutions where the respondents do not agreed

Discussions of Findings

The result of the study in table 1 indicated that Business Education contributes in achieving national development through: improving individual creativity, improving participation in the economy, improve socio and cultural roles in the society, improve chances of economic development, social cultural changes, ecological development of life, high standard of living, self reliant, employment creation and human capacity development. This results synchronized with the views of Oziengbe (2009) who established that Business Education create employment, improve technology, improve standard of living and so on. Hallak (1990) also supported this view by saying that Business Education contribution to national development include: ecological development, socio cultural changes, improve nutrition and health, individual activity etc.

On the perceived obstacles challenging Business Education the result revealed that: uncommitted personnel, poor technology, poor motivation unconducive teaching aids, inadequate capital, poor government, support, lack of infrastructures jeopardize the activities and contributions of Business Education to national development. These findings are inline with those of Eric (2006) who observed that the obstacles of Business Education include: lack of adequate qualified and committed personnel, high rate of teachers turn over, poor condition of service, lack of adequate funds, poor planning, poor implementation etc.

On the ways for elimination of obstacles hindering Business Education towards national development, the respondents agreed that development of well-timed modern courses linked of local and global demand, making Business Education compulsory at Primary and Secondary School levels, provision of adequate teaching facilities, infrastructural facilities, seminars, conferences, workshop, in service training, employment of professional and experienced teachers, provision of modern up-to-date technological knowledge to the students are some of the solutions for improving the contributions of Business Education to national development. This was in line with the opinion of World Bank Policy Paper on Business Education (1991) who suggested that, to get maximum benefit from Business Education for national development the following strategy must be considered: well

timed modern courses linked of local and global demand and relevant up-to-date Business Education courses need to be developed. Also Alam (2007) that investment in Business Education training, seminars, workshops etc produces benefit both to the individual and to society as a whole. Alam also stated his work that the return on investment for society will be a skilled workforce that will enable global competence and economic growth, while the return to the individual, will be better career, increased earning and better quality of life. Fagelind and Shah (1989) summarized this by his work that training raises productivity of workers and increases their lifetime earning capacity.

However, the study also reveals that admitting students with or without academic ability or interest to gain technical knowledge and skills in Business Education may or may not be effective solution for the survival in developing countries. The respondents were right in their decision because a student without academic ability or interest might on the course of receiving the Business Education skills and knowledge interest the field more or better than those with academic ability.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that Business Education contributes positively to national development in spite of all the obstacles challenging them. Contributions embrace all the components of national development such as: economic development, educational development, technological development and so on. Business Education also equips individuals with a lot of skills, knowledge and enabling environment to tackle challenges of national development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- a. Business Education subjects or courses should be made compulsory at all levels of education more especially at Primary and Secondary School levels to enable children acquire the necessary skills that will make them creative and self reliant for national development.
- b. Better timed modern courses should be given to the students of Business Education by qualified Business Education staff.
- c. Relevant and up-to-date business courses need to be developed.
- d. The government should provide financial supports to be Business Education Institutions.
- e. The government and the Business Education Institutions should also join hands in providing conducive environments, infrastructures facilities and teaching aids for effective and efficient learning process for the students of Business Education.
- f. Seminars, conferences, workshops and in services training should be sponsored by government and the institution and made compulsory for all the teachers of Business Education.
- g. The federal and state government should improve on the incentives and remuneration of Business Education staff. Sponsor them for further study and training for better performance.
- h. Finally both students of high academic performance and low academic performance should be admitted into the study of Business Education. This is because varieties of skills acquired or learned through Business Education will better their living standard by making them creative and self employed.

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