

OBJECTIVES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper examined the objectives of business education for national development. Employment creation as a driving tool for national development as well as the role of business education in national growth and development. Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Policy on Education (2004) institutionalized the teaching of Business Education subjects at the lower, middle and upper Basic Education levels, with the hope that if properly taught at these levels, Business Education subjects will help to develop in the youth, the desired knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and competences that will make them to be useful and effective members of their society. It is believed that Business Education will help the youths to acquire social and civic literacy that will promote and enhance national development in Nigeria.

Key words: Business Education, employment creation, national transformation

Introduction

It is obviously been consider that the developmental transformation of any country is equal to the educational attainment of the people in that society. The economically developed countries of the world are the countries which outstand by the excellence of their educational system. Business Education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all types of educational delivery systems, elementary, secondary and post-secondary. Business Education includes education for office occupation, business teaching, business administration and economic understanding (Igboke, 2000).

For one to be transformational literate and an informed citizen, wise consumers and Competent workers, each person must have some understanding of the world of business and how it functions. Necessarily everyone should possess at least minimum knowledge, skills and understanding with which to make accurate judgement needed in our free enterprise society and to Make contributions to the world of work (National Policy on Education, 2013). Business Education aids in providing students at all levels with the ability to function effectively in the business world (Yahaya *et al.*, 2014).

Business Education is a conglomerate of courses/subjects that is concerned with the acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value for the survival of the individual and the society, the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate environment; the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community, the acquisition of an objective view of local and external environments (National Policy on Education, 2004). The poor implementation and consequent positioning of Business Education worsens the dwindling situation of myriads of problems experienced in Nigeria today. As a result, the poverty and unemployment rates in Nigeria remain on the high side

(NEEDS, 2004). As noted by Osuala (2000), the success or failure of any economy depends on the functionality of its Business Education system. It is in recognition of the desire to create job-makers out of Nigeria, through Business Education, which aim at providing employable and



saleable skills for the scope of this paper which is to focus on the objectives of Business Education programme: challenges to National Development.

Concept of National Development

Development is the conversion of community into socially, economically, politically, educationally, orderly, and materially desirable status, with the sole aim of improving the quality of life of the people. It is also referred to as the collective distribution of resources, the integration of the people into national economy; it is a socio-economic process which seeks to bring about a more equitable distribution of resources and income within the society (Mundi, 2008). According to Ohagwu (2010) development is not the same thing as change, growth or modernization, but the nature, content and course of a society, it is the choice about goals for achieving the realization of human potential. Gboyega (2002) described development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in material well-being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not imperil the future, it also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihoods and expansion of life chances

National development also can be the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens in terms of human capital, economy, social improvement, democracy building, among others.

According to Lawal (2014), it is an exploitation and utilization of both human and material resources to improve the lots of a nation as it embraces the improvement in the social welfare of the people of that nation. Education serves as a cornerstone to any form of development as it lies at the heart of every society. It is a key and a vital element in the broad development of the nation's youth's capacity to address and solve surrounding problems or difficulties. According to Ezeani (2012), education consolidates and holds upon basic education to empower the youth to really live, function as a productive member of the society, earning a living, and contributing to societal progress.

Objectives of Business Education

The focus of Business Education is the orientation of recipients which enhances wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction are very important in the people life. All of which reduce and indeed capable of eliminating youth restiveness, promote national development and cohesion and unloading responsible citizenry. All these are dividend of development of a nation's economy and the absence of which portend under-development of the economy. This is necessarily so because with responsible citizenry, less restive youths and peaceful societal coexistence, nationalism and the desire for higher productivity are embraced by all and sundry. Hence, the aims/objectives of Business Education, as contained in section 6, sub-section 49 of the National Policy on Education (2004) are to:

- i. provide the business knowledge and vocational skills necessary for industrial, commercial and economic development.
- ii. provide trained manpower in applied technology and commerce, particularly at sub-professional grades.
- iii. provide people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of economic and environmental problems for the use and convenience of man.
- iv. enable our young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

Furthermore, Aina (1994) posited that the objectives of Business Education broadly include:

- i. contribute to goal attainment of the total educational programme.
- ii. provide basic and business knowledge for all students

- iii. develop their economic understanding, personal consumer competency and personal-use competency; and
- iv. provide vocational skills for persons preparing for a business occupation, i.e. business competency.

Akinola (2006) identified the objectives of Business Education as to:

1. prepare students for employment after graduation;
2. meet the manpower needs of the society;
3. increase the options available to each student and serving as motivation in order to enhance all types of learning;
4. present a laboratory in which practice skill, knowledge and attitude are learnt to make the classroom instruction more meaningful and relevant;
5. provide an opportunity through the use of local business for the student to acquire additional skills and knowledge;
6. give the students background of training this will contribute to rapid advancement on the job;
7. make students' development of such personality traits as punctuality, dependability, accuracy, for effective and good sense of responsibility that makes for effective work;
8. help develop the right attitude towards and the habit of mind conducive to the proper use of technology;
9. provide the knowledge and skill necessary for industrial, commercial and economic development;
10. provide people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement, solution and convenience of man;
11. give training, and impart the necessary skills leading to the promotion of craftsmanship, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be encourage creativity and to enable young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology; and
12. stimulate and encourage creativity and to enable young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

Ikpe (2013) noted that generally accepted and defensible long range aims and objectives for Business Education are to:

1. equip the business students with the capacity to solve practical problems;
2. give the business students the capacity to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing;
3. provide the business students with a detailed knowledge of the intricate performance of a complex economic system; and
4. afford him/her through understanding of the functional arrears of business.

Objectives of Business Education in Primary School

Business Education as a field of study cuts across all levels of education. However, at the primary school, it does not stand out as a subject of its own. Rather, it is incorporated in some other subjects taken at that level. One of the aims of primary education is to provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

From a cursory look at the subject areas in Business Education, one will quickly identify areas like Business Mathematics, Business Communication, Social Studies where concepts like buying and selling, transportation, advertising, and storage of goods are mentioned. The basic counting and arithmetic operations upon which accounting, statistical and commercial mathematics are based, are part of arithmetic curriculum. Also, the communicative skill, ability to read and write which is essential to any business studies programme has its introduction or

background from the primary school English Language. From this, one can affirm that Business Education is evident in the primary school curriculum though not pronounced or documented as Business Education subjects like any other discipline (Okorie, 2011). Reasons for the introduction of business education at primary school are simple,

It will help to instil:

- (a) spirit of critical thinking in the children at such an early age;
- (b) spirit of rationality, honesty and business in the children;
- (c) essence of budgeting for every expenditure;
- (d) source of family needs and purchasing power;
- (e) need to acquire keyboarding skills and the use of computer in both business and offices;
- (f) why money is used and qualities of good money; and
- (g) time consciousness – ability to use time optimally.

Skills to be added include:

1. Elementary book-keeping to cover topics like:
 - petty buying and selling
 - daily accounting
 - profit and loss accounting
 - budgeting
 - family accounts
2. Elementary Marketing – market, trade & money
3. Elementary keyboarding and computer appreciation
4. Elementary Office Practice to cover time management.

Objectives of Business Education in Secondary School Business Education

Significantly, the goals of business studies at the junior secondary school (JSS) level as stipulated in the Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) for Junior Secondary Schools (BEC, 2013) include:

1. enabling students to acquire the basic knowledge of Business Studies;
2. preparing students for further training in Business Studies;
3. providing students with orientation and basic skills with which to start a life of work for those who may not undergo further training;
4. developing in the students the basic skills in office occupation; and
5. equipping the students with the ability to relate the knowledge and skills to the national economy.

The following are the skills components of Business Education to be taught:

- (i) Keyboarding/Word Processing
- (ii) Microsoft Office Professional
- (iii) Communication in Business
- (iv) Business skills
- (v) Digital literacy
- (vi) Financial literacy
- (vii) Web Design & E-Commerce
- (viii) Ethical, moral and legal considerations in business

The curriculum of Business Education at the JSS level is Business Studies taught as prevocational subject. The emphasis here is not for skill acquisition but to create general awareness of the basic business subjects. Business Studies are integrated subject and the following subjects are incorporated into it and taught as one: Office Practice, Commerce, Bookkeeping, Shorthand and Typewriting. Core subject such as Mathematics, English Language, Nigerian Language Science, Art and Music, Religion Education, Moral instruction and Practical Agriculture are included. At the senior secondary school (SSS) level, the subjects

that make up the Business Studies in the prevocational level now become vocational (business) subjects and offered as single subjects. The emphasis is for an in-depth knowledge and skill acquisition. The subjects are: Commerce, Economics, Shorthand, Typewriting and Bookkeeping/Accounting.

Objectives of Business Education in College of Education

The philosophy of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) is to make the business teachers understand the concept and philosophy of the National Policy on Education as regards Business Education and the importance of Business Education in National development.

The objectives of NCE Business Education as contained in the National Policy on Education (2013) are as follow:

1. To produce well qualified and competent NCE graduate in business subjects who will be able to teach business subjects in our junior secondary schools.
2. To produce NCE business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of Business Education into the society.
3. To produce NCE business teachers who will start with so much desired revolution of vocational development right from the Nigeria Primary and Secondary schools.
4. To prepare students in Business Education with necessary competence so as to qualify them for a three-year post-NCE degree programme in Business Education in Nigerian Universities.
5. To equip graduates with the right skills to engage in a life of work in the office as well as for self-employment.

Objectives of Business Education in Polytechnic

Some of the major objectives of polytechnic education include among others:

- a. Provision of full-time courses of instruction and training in engineering, other technologies, applied science, business and management leading to the production of trained manpower.
- b. Provision of technical knowledge and skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development of Nigeria; and
- c. Give exposure on professional studies in the technologies (NBTE, 1991).

The elements of Business Education in the polytechnics programmes are in the area of Accountancy, Business Administration, Marketing and Office Management and Technology.

Objectives of Business Education in University

At the university level, Business Education is offered in the faculty of education. The goal of the programme is to make an optimum contribution to national development and preparation of vocational business teachers. It also prepares professional business teachers' education curriculum to reflect our national requirements. The following are the roles of business education at the university level:

1. To provide business teachers with the necessary competencies In both business and professional education.
2. To provide competent and well competent graduates in business subjects who will be able to teach all the business subjects in the basic secondary schools and all the secretarial and accounting subjects in senior secondary schools.
3. To provide graduate business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of business education in society.
4. To provide teachers who will occupy teaching research and leadership positions in secondary schools, tertiary level of education and the business community.
5. To encourage and promote scholarship and research in all aspects of business education.

Role of Business Education in National Development

It is glaring that Business Education plays an important role in the preparation of the citizenry both vocationally and professionally for divergent careers in business. The numerous roles of Business Education in a dynamic business environment are as obvious as they prepare educators to cultivate creative behavior to become proud business operators. They could identify and exploit business venture opportunities to enhance entrepreneurship in the system.

The academic exposure enables them to interact with successful business men in the community and share the benefits of their successes in the community of their business empires. This enhances job creation and entrepreneurship development (Rufai, 2013). According to Osuala (2000), business graduates have the understanding of the economic system and therefore can intelligently position him in a manner that he can take advantage of latent choices which abound by the uninitiated. Recipients of Business Education are well groomed for manifold purposes in the society. It produces specialists for various fields such as Business Management, Secretarial Duties, Office Technology, Accounting, Marketing, Banking and Finance, Distributive Education to mention but a few. This creates avenue for career opportunities which has tremendous impact on global economy.

This is more so in the light of the contextual issue facing the discipline in the present day Nigeria. Business represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all types of educational delivery systems. It can begin at any level. It can be interrupted for varying periods of time and can be continued throughout the lifespan of an individual. Business education includes education for office occupations, distribution and marketing occupations, business teaching, business administration and economic understandings (Osuala, 2004). Its objective is to prepare entrepreneurs, managers, and employees for effective work relationship with the institutions of business and to give extension and rehabilitation education to those already employed in business occupations.

It is a veritable tool of overcoming the precarious unemployment situation in the nation. Unemployment as a social menace is assuming an upward trend in the world today and is posing serious threat to global economy on daily basis. Business Education has the necessary potentialities and capacities to reverse this trend and halt the present rural– urban drift and/or migration by elites. Training acquired in business is capable of making graduates to be self-employed through the acquisition of adequate skills to make them mentally and manually dexterous so as to contribute modestly to the global economy (Rufai, 2013). In the same vein, when a business educator establishes an enterprise, he/she would certainly employ oneself and others, thereby reducing and combating unemployment problem in the economy.

Problemsinhibiting the Development of Business Education Programme in Nigeria:

The Need for repositioning having highlighted the objectives of Business Education and the developmental changes it brings along with it, it is important to state that such may be far from being realizable given the present constraints of business education programme. The problems of business education among others are poor funding, inadequate of infrastructure, teacher and government/parental factors, poor curriculum content, qualification and quality of teaches and so on. There are myriad of such constraints as noted by Yahaya et al (2014), prospects of business education despite the challenges facing most African countries today, some hold measures have been undertaken to bring Business Education into the mainstream of education and to bring it closer to the world of work. This is being carried out through a wide range of educational reforms and innovation as well as the restructuring of national economics to provide more employment opportunities. Oranu (2001) posited that a common goal has been, to make education more functional and development related by bringing Business Education into the mainstream of general education. Some of the most common innovations include the following:

1. Introduction of business education in early childhood education (at the primary school level) to inculcate positive attitudes towards Business Education in the world of work.
2. The diversification of Business education at the secondary school level to offer more opportunities to learners in order to enable them to choose and pursue careers of their interest.
3. The expansion and strengthening of Business Education, programmes at the post secondary level including teacher education.
4. The articulation of Business Education in higher education to ensure that those who are able and are motivated can pursue their education to the highest level possible.
5. Fostering a closer link between education institution and enterprises, to ensure quality and relevance in the Business programmes.
6. The introduction of entrepreneurship education in most Business Education programmes in order to prepare graduates for self-employment in the growing informal sector.
7. The promotion of associations for heads of Business Education institution and teachers to enable them participates more effectively in the decision making and management of Business Education in the country

Concept of Functional Business Education

A programme study can only be said to be functional if the experience acquired would enable the learners perform those things they could not do before and perform better those things they could only do well earlier. Mkpa (2002) stated that education is functional when it is not merely theoretical but rather it is skills oriented, geared towards the cultivation of intellectual skill, vocational and technological skill, social skills and the like.

1. If Business Education will be functional and justify the objectives stated above, the old way of inculcating knowledge into the learner must change. Computer literacy is a must for all Business Education Students.
2. Obanya (2002) opined that developing the intellectual and non-intellectual abilities of the child, rather than “feeding” the child with facts that are readily forgotten because they are “like foreign substances without any connection to the child’s life” this is the concern for Education.
3. The use of “functional instruction, to enable the learner gain thinking habits and develop the technical means needed for them. This will help in solving practical problems” this should be the focus of Business Education.
4. Education is not just a preparation for life, but life itself. Over the years, this paradigm has shifted from “function” to functional context, to functional skills”. Business Education should stress functionalism of skills rather than certificates. The old standard must give way to the new concept.

Advantages of Functional Business Education

Computer Education is the standard now. If computer must be part of Business Education then it must be functional. Students must be taught the computer operations of business education skills. Functional Business Education seeks and helps to promote learning and to get the best out of the learners for a useful living.

Functional Business Education Skills enable the learner, within the context to become a Business functioning member of the society. The essence is to equip him/her with the functional Business Education skills needed for doing so in a meaningful manner. Therefore, the curricular must be so directed.

Functional Business Education will go a long way in the development of our great Nation. This is because this course equips its beneficiaries especially tertiary education graduates, with the

right skills that will enable them engage in the world of work either as office executives or as private practitioners, employers of labour or for self-employment in a private small-scale industry, thereby increasing the gross domestic product (GDP) of the nation.

Conclusion

If the objectives of business education are anything to go by, the recipients are expected to advance on their chosen career throughout life. In other words, they are to remain relevant in their chosen business career – office educator/secretary inclusive. This occupation is highly dynamic, lucrative and enormous. Business education remains the basis of human resource development which provides knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding needed to perform in the business world as a producer or consumer of economic goods and services that business offers. To ensure national transformation as being emphasized as slogan on daily basis, there is immediate need to tackle the challenges of business education programme headlong to pave way for the fulfilment of its roles in national life.

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