



INVESTIGATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND CHALLENGES CONFRONTING BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The primary objective of the study was aimed to investigate the contributions and challenges confronting business education for sustainable national development in Nigeria. The study had two specific objectives from where two research questions were raised. The study adopted descriptive survey design and the population constitutes 60 business educators which were drawn from two universities and three colleges of education in Adamawa and Bauchi States, Nigeria. There was no sample since the population size was small and manageable. The instrument for data collection was 30 items structured questionnaire titled: Contributions and Challenges Confronting Business Education for Sustainable National Development Questionnaire (CCCBESNDQ) and was validated by two experts from the Department of Vocational Education, Faculty of Education, Modibbo Adama University, Yola and one expert from Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In order to determine the reliability, the instrument was administered to 20 business educators, who were not part of the research study. Their responses were analyzed using the Cronbach alpha method, which yielded the coefficient alpha value of 0.77. The instrument was further administered to respondents by the researchers, with the help of two trained research assistants. The major findings of the research include the following: Business education contribute positively in promoting and sustaining national development in Nigeria, business education is confronted with many challenges in achieving a sustainable national development in Nigeria and adequate provisions of facilities and proper funding are among the major possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria. It was concluded that business education contributes tremendously in promoting a sustainable national development in Nigeria. Despite the contributions of the programme it is however confronted with many challenges in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria. In line with the findings and conclusion, the study recommended among others that business educators should intensified their efforts in educating people and government on the contributions of business education in developing human capacity in Nigeria through seminars, workshops, national/international conferences among others.

Key Word: Contributions, Challenges, Business Education and Sustainable National Development.



Introduction

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is commonly understood as education that encourages changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable a more sustainable and just society for all. ESD aims to empower and equip current and future generations to meet their needs using a balanced and integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The concept of ESD was born from the need for education to address the growing environmental challenges facing the planet. In order to do this, education must change to provide the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower learners to contribute to sustainable development. At the same time, education must be strengthened in all agendas, programmes and activities that promote sustainable development. In short, sustainable development must be integrated into education and education must be integrated into sustainable development. ESD is holistic and transformational education and concerns learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment (UNESCO, 2014).

With regards to learning content such as curricula, the complex sustainability challenges facing societies cut across boundaries and multiple thematic areas. Education must therefore address key issues such as climate change, poverty and sustainable production. ESD promotes the integration of these critical sustainability issues in local and global contexts into the curriculum to prepare learners to understand and respond to the changing world. ESD aims to produce learning outcomes that include core competencies such as critical and systemic thinking, collaborative decision-making, and taking responsibility for present and future generations. In order to deliver such diverse and evolving issues, ESD uses innovative pedagogy, encouraging teaching and learning in an interactive, learner-centered way that enables exploratory, action oriented and transformative learning. Business education enables learners to think critically and systematically develop values and attitudes for a sustainable future.

Business Education is an integral part of vocational and technical education. It is a form of vocational education that enables the students or the learners the opportunities to be self-reliant. Amoor (2015), noted 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 (Odunaike & Amoda, 2008).

Edokpolor and Egberi (2017) had stipulated that the actual goals of business education shall be to:

1. Prepare students for specific career in office occupations;
2. Equip students with the requisite skills for job creation and entrepreneurship; and
3. Expose students with knowledge about business, including a good blend of computer technology, which incorporates Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The contributions of business education for sustainable national development are tremendous. This is because the programme helps in providing basic foundation upon which the students build an awareness and understanding of business concept (Modibbo, 2019). Nzekwe (2010) 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, 2016). 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, 2016). 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, 2013). 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 individual's intellect, enable individuals acquire vocational skills and work habit (Bloom, 2009). Richard and Eric in Nzekwe (2010) stated that the objectives of business education include; provision of manpower, possession of 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, 2013).

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 (2013) 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 turns 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 the 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 individual's, provision of goods and services, information acquisition etc. Hallak in Nzekwe (2010) 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.

Despite all these benefits of business education, the programme continually faces a lot of challenges confronting its effectiveness in the society such as: 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. Moses (2014) identified the challenges of business education which include; lack of adequate qualified and committed personnel, high rate of teacher turns 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. In addition to above, inadequate provision of financial resources has been identified as greatest challenge facing education in Nigeria (Asiyai, 2015). However, in view of the contending demands for financial resources by various sectors of the Nigerian economy, business education has been finding it difficult to employ manpower in terms of quality and quantity, develop or renew curriculum, and offer a wide-range of modern



infrastructure and facilities, such as the state-of-the-art lecture halls, workshops, studios, libraries, entrepreneurial research centres, and Information Technology (IT) services.

The existence of all these identified issues and challenges are mere pointer to the fact that business education programme is currently delivered theoretically, and as such not capable of equipping recipients with the requisite attributes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) for gainful employment and further education. Commenting on this unpleasant situation, Obunadike (2015) argued that the practical courses that are supposed to expose individual students to real-practical training in order to strike a balance with or match the theory learnt in the classroom have become a myriad.

Business education is also faced with the problem of inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities. Presently, in virtually all institutions involved in the teaching of business education, there is an acute shortage of laboratories, libraries, studios and entrepreneurship research centres. In support of this, Aworanti (2015) observed that the basic infrastructural facilities have declined both in quality and quantity. Even where these infrastructural facilities are available, they are not only in bad and non-functional state but also very obsolete. According to Abassah (2011), the federal and state governments have not been providing proper financial resources to address this critical area. Abassah claim that all we are getting is just lip-service to vocational education. Abassah also lamented that even when the teachers are ready to improvise instructional materials, the little amount of funds needed could still not be received from the school authorities. This situation has hindered the proper application of instructional delivery of business education. In spite of all the aforementioned challenges, adequate provision of teaching and learning facilities would motivate both the lecturers and students to achieve the goals of business education.

Oziengbe (2009) 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 (2019) 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 and 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.).

Aworanti (2015) also suggested some basic solutions to the challenges confronting business education in Nigeria to include: adequate provision of funds at all levels of education, reviewing the curriculum from time to time to reflect the current trend in the society, business educators should strive hard to gain public interest. This issue seems to have contributed to limitation faced by business education today. Others are adequate provision of qualified manpower in teaching the course and adequate provision of modern facilities for teaching and learning.

It is on the basis of this background that the study seeks to investigate the contributions and challenges confronting business education for sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite of the laudable contributions of business education in promoting national development in Nigeria, the programme continued to suffer many challenges. As observed by Edokpolor and Egberi (2017) that the inadequate optimization of resources for the effective



delivery of business education in Nigeria is receiving a growing attention. This is because vocational education in general has been considered as a viable programme that helps to promote sustainable economic growth and development (Agrawal, 2013). It is believed that for any nation to help in promoting sustainable economic growth or development, effort shall be made to invest sufficient amount of financial resources on business education programme. 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 were established to help alleviate 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 (2017) Business education helps in creating job opportunities for teeming graduates for national development.

Business education has been constantly starved by proper funding, qualified staff, modern facilities, and quality curriculum, coupled with proper attention. This situation has devalued the image and reputation of business education both in the education and labour market, and has contributed to the high rate of unemployment and poverty among business education graduates. Thus, there were no enough teaching and learning facilities for preparing students to become a job provider not a job seeker and increasing the number of unemployed graduates of business education. The high rate of insecurity has also contributed to the under-development of Nigerian economy such as; terrorist attacks, kidnappings, suicide bombing, high crime rate, vandalism, thuggery, and break down of law and order.

Research Questions

The study was guided by these research questions: -

1. In what ways does business education contribute to promote sustainable national development in Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges confronting business education in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria?
3. What are the possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria?

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey design. It involves structured collection of data using questionnaire from a sizable population (Bryman, cited in Al-Mubarak and Busler, 2017). The total population of the research study comprised of 60 business educators from two universities and three colleges of education in Adamawa and Bauchi States and there was no sample since the population size was small and manageable. The instrument for data collection was a 30-items structured questionnaire titled: Contributions and Challenges Confronting Business Education for Sustainable National Development Questionnaire (CCBESNDQ) and was validated by two experts from the Department of Vocational Education, Faculty of Education in Modibbo Adama University, Yola and one expert from Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In order to determine the reliability, the instrument was administered to 20 business educators, who were not part of the research study. Their responses were analyzed using the Cronbach alpha method, which yielded the coefficient alpha value of 0.77. The instrument was further administered to respondents by the researchers, with the help of two trained research assistants. The questionnaire was retrieved as soon as they were completed. A total number of 60, out of 59 business educators responded to the instrument. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using



mean and standard deviation statistics. The mean and standard deviation was used to the answer research questions. In the questionnaire, the items were based on 5-Likert scale, and weighed on the following scale: Strongly Agreed (SA) 5 points, Agreed (A) 4 points, Undecided (U) 3 points, Disagreed (D) 2 points, Strongly Disagreed (SD) 1 point (5+4+3+2+1) 15. $15/5 = 3.00$. Cut off point for decision rule as to agreed or disagreed. A weighted mean of 3.00 and above was considered as agreed, while a weighted mean of 2.99 and below was regarded as disagreed.

Results

Research Question One: In what ways does business education contribute in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria?

To answer research question one, the responses obtained from respondents were analysed using mean and standard deviation as shown herein;

Table 1: Presents the Means and Standard Deviations of Responses on Contributions of Business Education in Promoting Sustainable National Development.

S/N	Items/Statements	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Business education helps in providing basic foundation upon which the students build an awareness and understanding of business concept in Nigeria.	4.00	1.00	Agreed
2	Business education helps in developing skills and attitude that are required for the successful promotion and administering of business enterprise in Nigeria.	3.50	0.93	Agreed
3	Business education helps in producing competent businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work in Nigeria.	3.01	0.86	Agreed
4	Business education helps to provide the students with information and competences which are needed in managing private business and working in public office in Nigeria.	3.82	0.97	Agreed
5	Business education helps in provision of manpower and possession of the requisite knowledge for harnessing other resources in Nigeria.	3.87	0.98	Agreed
6	Business education helps in improving the chances of economic development in Nigeria.	3.93	0.99	Agreed
7	Business education helps in improving participation in the economic and cultural roles in the society in Nigeria.	3.55	0.94	Agreed
8	Business education helps in improving participation in the economic and cultural roles in the society in Nigeria.	3.03	0.87	Agreed
9	Business education helps in development of mental and physical skill of an individual's, provision of goods and services in Nigeria.	2.90	0.85	Agreed
10	Business education helps in developing human capacity in Nigeria.	2.58	0.80	Agreed
	Grand Weighted Mean	3.41	0.92	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2021.



Table 1 data revealed the respondents mean rating and standard deviation of the contributions of business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria. The responses of item one to ten in the questionnaire were analysed and the study revealed that business education helps in promoting a sustainable national development in Nigeria. (The grand weighted mean was 3.41, and the SD stood at 0.92).

Research Question Two: What are the challenges confronting business education in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria?

To answer research question two, the scores collected were summarize in Table 2.

Table 2: Presents the Means and Standard Deviations of Responses on Challenges Confronting Business Education in Promoting Sustainable National Development in Nigeria.

S/N	Items/Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
11	Business education suffers from challenges of proper provision of instructional materials in Nigeria.	3.41	0.92	Agreed
12	Business education suffers from challenges of lack of development of well-timed modern courses linked of local and global demand in Nigeria.	2.65	0.81	Agreed
13	Business education suffers from lack of adequate qualified teachers in our schools in Nigeria.	3.49	0.93	Agreed
14	Business education is not considered as compulsory subjects at lower basic education, upper basic education and secondary schools in Nigeria.	3.73	0.96	Agreed
15	Business education suffers from challenges of poor government appreciation in Nigeria.	3.11	0.88	Agreed
16	Business education suffers from challenges of epileptic power supply in Nigeria.	3.36	0.91	Agreed
17	Business education suffers from challenges of poor curriculum content in Nigeria.	2.92	0.85	Agreed
18	Business education suffers from challenges of non-functional libraries in Nigeria.	3.62	0.95	Agreed
19	Business education suffers from challenges of poor planning in Nigeria.	3.23	0.89	Agreed
20	Business educators in Nigeria suffer from poor condition of service.	3.55	0.94	Agreed
Grand Weighted Mean		3.30	0.90	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 2 data revealed the respondents mean rating and standard deviation of the challenges confronting business education in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria. The responses of item 11 to 20 in the questionnaire were analysed and the study revealed the major challenges confronting business education in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria. (The grand weighted mean was 3.30, and the SD stood at 0.90).

Research Question Three: What are the possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria?

To answer research question two, the scores collected were summarize in Table 3.



Table 3: Presents the Means and Standard Deviations of Responses on Possible Solutions for Overcoming the Challenges Confronting Business Education in Promoting Sustainable National Development in Nigeria.

S/N	Items/Statements	–	SD	Decision
		×		
21	There should be adequate provision of teaching aids and infrastructural facilities to facilitate teaching and learning process in Nigeria.	4.12	1.01	Agreed
22	There should be adequate provision and development of well-timed modern courses linked of local and global demand in Nigeria.	3.97	0.99	Agreed
23	Only professionals and experienced teachers should be employed to teach business education subjects and should be well remunerated and motivated in Nigeria.	4.03	1.00	Agreed
24	Business education should be considered as compulsory subjects at lower basic education, upper basic education and secondary schools in Nigeria.	3.89	0.98	Agreed
25	The government at all levels should introduce vocational teacher's allowances to appreciate the contributions of the few available business educators in Nigeria.	4.11	1.01	Agreed
26	There should adequate provision of uninterrupted power and generators to ensure a steady power supply in all the institutions that offers business education in Nigeria.	3.79	0.97	Agreed
27	The curriculum content of business education should be harmonize and written by business educators in Nigeria.	3.92	0.98	Agreed
28	There should be adequate provision of functional libraries and fully equipped with business education and related disciplined in Nigeria.	3.77	0.98	Agreed
29	Students without academic ability and interest in business education should not be admitted into business education at higher level in Nigeria.	3.18	0.89	Agreed
30	Seminars, conferences, workshop and in-service training should be encouraged and made available to all Business educators at all level of education in Nigeria.	3.84	0.94	Agreed
Grand Weighted Mean		3.84	0.94	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 3 data revealed the respondents mean rating and standard deviation of the possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria. The responses of item 21 to 30 in the questionnaire were analysed and the study provided proper and possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria. (The grand weighted mean was 3.84, and the SD stood at 0.97).



Findings of the Study

The study established that:

1. Business education helps in promoting a sustainable national development in Nigeria.
2. Business education is confronted with many challenges in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria.
3. Adequate provisions of facilities and proper funding are among the major possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria

Discussion of Findings

The study determines: the contribution of business education for sustainable national development in Nigeria, the challenges confronting business education programme for sustainable national development in Nigeria and possible solution for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria. In achieving these, the result of the study in table 1 indicated that business education contributes in achieving national development through provisions of basic foundation upon which the students build an awareness and understanding of business concept in Nigeria. This finding agreed with what (Modibbo, 2019) stated that business education is a programme that helps in providing basic foundation upon which the students build an awareness and understanding of business concept. Business education 'helps in developing skills and attitude that are required for the successful promotion and administering of business enterprise in Nigeria. This results synchronized with the viewed of (Ango, 2016) who opined that business education is the sum total of knowledge, skill, attitude that are required for the successful promotion and administering of business enterprise. In same vein, the findings of this study which reveals that business education helps to provide the students with information and competences which are needed in managing private business and working in public office in Nigeria was in conformity with what Iwu (2016) noted on business education as 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.

Business education is confronted with many challenges in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria as revealed in table 2. The findings are in conformity with what Moses (2014) discovered in his study where he stated that some of the challenges 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. Similarly, the result of the study is in line with what Asiyai (2015) opined that inadequate provision of financial resources has been identified as greatest challenge facing education in Nigeria.

However, there many possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria as reveals in table 3 such as adequate provision of teaching aids and infrastructural facilities to facilitate teaching and learning process. This result synchronized with the views of Edokpolor and Egbri (2017) who established that adequate provision of teaching aids and infrastructural facilities enhances students' interest and learning of business education in Nigeria. Coupled with, Aworanti (2015) also suggested some basic solutions in overcoming the major challenges confronting business education in Nigeria to include: adequate provision of funds at all levels of education, reviewing the curriculum from time to time to reflect the current trend in the society, business educators should strive hard to gain public interest. This issue seems to have contributed to limitation faced by business education today, adequate provision of qualified manpower in teaching the course and adequate provision of modern facilities for teaching and learning.



Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that business education contributes tremendously in promoting a sustainable national development in Nigeria. Despite the contributions of business education, the programme however are confronted with many challenges in achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria such as; inadequate instructional materials, lack of development of well-timed modern courses linked of local and global demand, lack of adequate qualified teachers in our schools, non-functional libraries to mention but few. These can be adequately addressed with adequate provisions of facilities and proper funding are among the major possible solutions for overcoming the challenges confronting business education in promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Business educators should intensify their efforts in educating, people and government on the contributions of business education in understanding of business concept, developing skills and attitude that are required for the successful promotion and administering of business enterprise, improving participation in the economic and cultural roles in the society and developing human capacity in Nigeria through seminars, workshops, national/international conferences among others.
2. The government at all levels should provide adequate financial supports in provision of instructional materials, well-timed modern courses linked of local and global demand, employment of only qualified teachers and functional libraries equipped with business education and related disciplines at all levels of education.
3. In other to ensure a sustainable national development in Nigeria, government at all levels of education should introduce vocational teacher's allowances to appreciate the contributions of the few available business educators as well as sponsoring them to attend seminars, conferences, workshops and in service training. These will encourage the few available business educators to update their knowledge and motivate them in putting in their best in achieving the goals of business education in Nigeria.

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