



FUNDING BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN SOUTH-EAST UNIVERSITIES FOR PROMOTING SKILLS ACQUISITION

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Abstract

The study sought to ascertain the funding of business education programme of universities in South East, Nigeria for promoting skills acquisition. The study employed the survey research design. Three research questions were raised and three null hypotheses were formulated that guided the study. The population of the study comprised all the eighty-five (85) business educators in universities in South East, Nigeria hence census sampling technique was used. The instrument was validated by experts in business education and measurement and evaluation from Enugu State University of Technology, Enugu. Cronbach alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument with coefficient of 0.83. A four-point response type of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed with 22 items were used. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. Findings of the study revealed that business educators agreed that governmental integrative, institutional and non-governmental strategies are all funding strategies for business education programme of universities in South East, Nigeria for promoting skills acquisition. The findings further showed no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on government integrative funding strategies, institutional funding strategies and non-governmental organizations funding strategies for promoting skills acquisition in public universities in the South East, Nigeria. The study concluded that the use of government integrative funding strategies, institutional funding strategies and non-governmental funding strategies in business education instructional delivery is of vital importance in equipping its graduates with the current skills required in the modern business world for sustainable development. It was recommended that government should budget more funds and also explore public-private partnership in funding business education programme in Nigerian universities, institution administrators and heads of business education departments should look inwards on how to internally-generate revenue to fund Business education. External aids should be sought from non-governmental organizations to assist in funding business education programme. These will enable business education programme to produce skillful quality graduates that can fit into the world of work and be self-reliant so as to contribute their quota in national development.

Keywords: Funding, Strategies, Business Education, Skills Acquisition, Universities.



Introduction

Education is a critical tool for ensuring national development. This is because, it is the means through which individuals learn ideas, skills, attitudes and knowledge that carry them through life. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2017) education has a vital role to play in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. Education needs to aim to do more than prepare young people for the world of work, it needs to equip students with the skills they need to become more active, responsible and engaged citizens.

University education provides high level skills and competencies that are required for the labour market. It promotes better career opportunities, clear advancement and enhancement of personal growth among others (Enang, 2016). Adebalan, Ajadi and Subair (2015) also explained that university education is the main instrument to prepare individuals for a rapid changing demanding world of work and to improve their employability. It encompasses different disciplines with related skills to be acquired for effectiveness and efficiency in the place of work. This discipline among others is Business Education. Public universities in south east is made of Federal and State Universities. Federal Universities are sponsored by the Federal Government while the state universities are sponsored by State government.

Business education exposes its recipients to diversify curricula, hence, it is that type of education that inculcates in its recipients' attitudes, knowledge, skills, and values that are required in business world. According to Emeasoba and Nwatalari, (2021) business education at university level is concerned mainly with the development of relevant saleable skills and knowledge that would enable an individual to function effectively in the world of works. Business education is a skill-based course. In the same vein, Njoku (2015) explained that business education is a programme of study that prepares individuals with multiple skills to teach, or work in industry and to equally set up a business as an entrepreneur and employ others. Mulan in Utoware and Edionwe (2012) opined that the success of any business education programme depends largely on the objectives of the programme, availability of equipment, fund, adequate textbooks, a well-defined curriculum and availability of effective and efficient teaching staff, as well as other educational resources. It is an integral part of general education which involves the acquisition of practical skills, competencies, attitudes, understanding and knowledge of occupations in various sectors of the economy. Therefore, the success of any business education programme depends largely on the funding of the programmes so as to cater for the needs of its recipients which is to acquire the requisite skills for employability.

Skills acquisition in business education is among the potent tools for repositioning of Nigeria's economy. Amesi (2017) posited that skill acquisition is a deliberate, systematic and sustainable effort which leads to capacity that makes a person to effectively and efficiently carry out complex activities or job functions involving cognitive, technical and interpersonal dispositions. This implies that skills are cognitive, psychomotor and affective. They are acquired through learning and lead to competence which enhance better performance of tasks and enable a person to contribute to societal growth and development. Skill acquisition is one among other policies embarked upon in Nigeria with the sole aim to alleviate poverty, youth restiveness, sophisticated crimes and reduce corruption rates, rural-urban drift, unemployment and other social vices by providing technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development (FGN, 2013). Acquisition of the requisite skills for employment is a means of increasing productive power of any nation. The acquisition of skills is important because it tends to promote personal and national development. Maximum skills acquisition by business education students will help to enrich the Nigerian economy as well as make possible sustainable national development. Acquiring practical skills according to Udo (2015), will enable the recipients of business education to impact positively to boost sustainable national development in Nigeria. Skill acquisition in business education in our universities need proper



funding. The success of any system of education is hinged on adequate funding among others. Plans cannot be executed and efficient administration cannot be discharged, if funds for financing them are absent or inadequately provided. Funding is the fuel that drives skill acquisition in business education programme.

Funding is the act of providing resources, usually in form of money (finance, or other values such as effort or time (sweat equity), for a project, a person, a business, or any other private or public institutions (Amesi and Nnadi, 2015). It is necessary for the implementation of any educational policy. Abiola, (2019) also noted that funding is a vital mechanism in maintaining, ensuring and enhancing effective implementation of any education programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. For an institution, organization, government or individuals to carry out their laudable programme objectives, adequate funds must be made available because it is an indispensable component to success in every establishment. It is a tool for quality assurance in a discipline like business education.

In the same vein, Unegbu, Uzo, Okonkwo and Odeh (2012) explained that some of the funding strategies are Government integrative funding where funding of education is a joint responsibility of the federal, state and local governments. They noted that the level of development or under development of education in Nigeria has been a function of policy changes and funding. Unegbu and Uzo-Okonkwo further noted that another funding in business education can be through creative funds which is supplementary funds by Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA), Alumni, Consultancy, community participation, NGOs and institutional funding. In support of this, Okpo and Hassam (2012) noted that Public-Private Partnership is becoming an obvious facilitator and approach to sustainable national development of any society. And the conceptual aspect of such relationship is based towards contributing and providing for Technical and Vocational Education for the realization of set goals of Vocational Technical Education in Nigeria

Abiola, (2019) in support of integrative funding opined that grants from the federal, state, and local governments is necessary for funding of business education programme. Wealthy philanthropist individuals from the communities, alumni associations, free will donations, aids and trading activities can act as regular financial and materials assistance for sustainable educational development. Similarly, Obasi and Asodiike in Odou and Anietie (2019) noted that financing education is therefore the responsibility of all stakeholders; such a responsibility is ranged from non-governmental organisations, external aids voluntary agency contributes and donations from philanthropic individuals. Furthermore, Amesi and Nnadi (2015) also explained that such grant can come from non-governmental organisations, international bodies like World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA and other financial assistance through belated agreements between Nigeria and other countries. Amesi also noted that large corporative should give regular contributions to education in their operational state either in cash or by building classrooms, lecture rooms and by supplying equipment.

For proper and effective upgrading of business education programme in institutions there is the need for consistent funding in form of payment of salaries, purchase of instructional materials and teaching facilities among others. Agbo (2012) noted that tertiary institution should receive a reasonable proportion of their revenue through students' fees, especially with the introduction of part-time programme. Institution of higher learning should undertake researches for big organizations like the oil firm. Money accrued from these researches can be used by the institutions. Consultancy services can also be undertaken by the institutions and the proceeds from these used to fund the institution. Department can embark on projects that can bring additional funds through consultancy services, agricultural projects, rental services, investment in landed properties. The projects from these laudable projects can be used to fund business education programme.

Similarly, Odou and Anietie (2019) noted that institutional funding strategy is through school fees, levies and school fund raising ceremony. Schools should always patronize school bookshops



cafeteria, etc. so that the profit made should be used to fund the programme. School farm proceeds, free will donations, school stock and trading activities are funding strategies institutional. Olofunwa, Waziri and Olorunmolu (2013) made it clear that no meaningful achievement could be made in Business Education if the programmes are not well funded and that will guarantee quality assurance in Business Education. In the same vein, Onojetah (2013) believed that funding is an invaluable input that provides all that is needed for successful advancement in skill-related programme like business education.

Skills acquisition in business education programme at university level require adequate funding. Business educators are made of male and female lecturers. In the opinion of Okoli and Osi (2019) gender does not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the adequacy of funding for skill acquisition in tertiary institutions. Similarly, Abiola (2019) also stated that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female business educators on the impact of alternative funding strategies on enhancing business education programme. The study hinges on Human Capital Theory by Adam Smith (1776) which believed that there is a need for adequate investment in education and human capital for a sustainable economic growth and development to transpire. Human Capital Theory believes that investment in human capital will lead to greater economic outputs and funds.

Funding has always been a critical constraint to the development of effective business education programme in universities. Business education is more expensive to run because of the nature of its content and the equipment needed to run it. Most of the departments offering business education programmes today are ill-equipped, ill-financed and lack fund for the training and re-training of business education teachers. The problem of inadequate funding over the years has resulted in the inability of the business education programme to expand their physical facilities to cope with the ever increasing demand of the 21st century (Abiola, 2019). For education to achieve the desired effect of development and integration, it has to be functional in order to enable those who receive it cope with life skills. Funding is a tool for quality assurance in a discipline like business education. It is against this backdrop, that this study is designed to determine the funding of business education programme in South- East Universities for promoting skills acquisition.

Statement of the problem

Skills acquisition in business education is among the potent tools for repositioning of Nigeria's economy and solving of unemployment problems among our youths and graduates. It is a systematic and sequential development of skills that promotes efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of a specified job. The importance of skill acquisition cannot be over emphasized that is why the Federal Government of Nigeria made it mandatory for tertiary institutions to inculcate skill acquisition in their curriculum. Business education is aimed at equipping business education students with relevant skills and competencies to make them function well in any business office or become self- reliant as a business person after graduation. To achieve the goals of business education, funding is a vital mechanism in maintaining, ensuring and enhancing effective implementation of business education in the universities. It is an academic project that can only be effectively upgraded with adequate instructional resources and equipment and should be adequately funded due to its capital intensive nature. Unfortunately, it was posited by Okeke and Eze (2010) that sufficient fund has not been channeled to business education programme. The implication is the turnout of graduates without the necessary skills and competencies that will enable them face global competition and world of work. With recession of the Nigerian economy, the government has been finding it extremely difficult to finance education single headedly. As a result of this, most institutions cannot meet up with the huge financial involvement in funding business education. This study therefore determined the funding of business education programme in South-East Universities for promoting skills acquisition.



Research Questions

The specific research questions for the study are stated below as follows:

1. What are the government integrative funding strategies of business education programme in South-East universities for promoting skills acquisition?
2. What are the institutional funding strategies of business education programme in South- East universities for promoting skills acquisition?
3. What are the non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education programme in South East universities for promoting skills acquisition?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the integrative funding strategy of business education programme in South-East universities for promoting skills acquisition.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the institutional funding strategy of business education programme in South East universities for promoting skills acquisition.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the non-governmental organizations funding strategy of business education programme in South- East universities for promoting skills acquisition.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population for the study consisted of 85 business educators in universities in South East Nigeria offering business education programme. The entire population of 85 business educators in the universities in South East Nigeria offering business education programme used as sample for this study. Therefore, census sampling technique was used. A validated structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Funding of Business Education programme for promoting skills acquisition" (QFBEPSA) was developed by the researcher with insight from the literature was used for the study. The instrument contains 22 items, 08 items on government integrated funding strategies; 06 items on institutional funding strategies while 08 items on non-governmental organization funding strategies. The instrument is a four-point rating scale of: Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD) with values of 4,3, 2 and 1 respectively. Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency of the instrument and co-efficient of 0.84, 0.76 and 0.86 were obtained respectively. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while t-test of independence was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The decision was based on the cluster mean score in relation to the boundary mean score of 2.50. A cluster with mean score equal to or above 2.50 was agreed while the one with mean score less than 2.50 was disagreed. The null hypothesis was not rejected where the calculated value is less than the significant level of 0.05 and rejected if the calculated value is equal to or greater than the significant level of 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the government integrative funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition?



Table 1: Respondents’ Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Government integrative funding strategies of business education programme for promoting skills acquisition.

S/N	Item statement: The following Government Integrated funding strategies are as follows:	X ₁	SD ₁	Rmks	X ₂	SD ₂	Rmks
1	Increase in budget allocations to business education by Federal, State and Local governments.	3.68	0.81	SA	3.75	0.89	SA
2	Public-private partnership funding between government, development agencies and organized private sector.	2.75	0.88	A	3.07	0.68	SA
3	Government should make available Education Tax Fund for business education programme.	3.11	0.75	SA	2.84	0.50	A
4	Government should make available TETFUND for business education programme.	2.80	0.69	A	2.57	0.55	A
5	Government grants to Business Education programme from other taxes collected.	2.75	0.66	A	2.83	0.55	A
6	Increase in tuition fees.	2.75	0.68	A	2.80	0.80	A
7	Government should make available Industrial training fund for business education.	2.80	0.75	A	2.82	0.67	A
8	Government should purchase equipment needed for business education programme.	3.36	0.95	SA	3.83	0.65	SA
	Cluster mean	3.00	0.77		3.06	0.66	

Data in Table 1 reveal the item-by-item analysis on government integrated funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. The analysis revealed that items 1, and 8 with mean scores 3.72 and 3.60 were rated strongly agreed while items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were rated agreed. However, the cluster mean of 3.03 summarized that business educators agreed on the use of government integrated funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. The standard deviation scores ranging from 0.50 – 0.89 show that business educators do not vary too much in their ratings on government integrated funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition.

Research Question 2: What are the institutional funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition?

Table 2: Respondents’ Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on institutional funding strategies of business education programme for promoting skills acquisition.

S/N	Item statement: The following Institutional funding strategy are as follows:	X ₁	SD ₁	Rmks	X ₂	SD ₂	Rmks
9	Universities administration should request and use development levies from students for promoting skills acquisition in business education programme.	2.68	0.81	A	3.25	0.89	SA
10	Tuition and other fees from students	2.75	0.88	A	2.97	0.68	A



11	Universities should sponsor research work and raise money for business education programme.	2.80	0.75	A	3.04	0.50	A
12	Universities administration should raise fund for business education programme through collection of workshops registration fees.	2.50	0.69	A	3.47	0.55	SA
13	Establishment of consultancy service by Institutions.	2.75	0.66	A	2.83	0.55	A
14	Funds can be generated through organizing conference by business education department.	2.55	0.68	A	2.76	0.80	A
	Cluster mean	2.67	0.75		3.05	0.66	

Data in Table 2 reveal the item by item analysis on institutional funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. The analysis revealed that all the items with mean scores ranging from 2.50-2.99 were rated agreed. However, the cluster mean of 2.86 summarized that business educators agreed on the use of institutional funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. The standard deviation scores ranging from 0.50 – 0.89 show that business educators do not vary too much in their ratings on institutional funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition.

Research Question 3: What are the non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition?

Table 3: Respondents’ Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education for promoting skills acquisition.

S/N	Item statement: The following Non-governmental organizations funding strategy are as follows:	X_1	SD_1	Rmks	X_2	SD_2	Rmks
15	Support from International Bodies such as UNICEF, World Bank, USAID	2.58	0.81	A	2.68	0.89	A
16	Support from the Hosting community	2.85	0.88	A	2.68	0.68	A
17	Donations from Alumni Association.	2.80	0.75	A	2.84	0.50	A
18	Donations from corporate organizations and private establishments.	2.80	0.69	A	2.57	0.55	A
19	Support from Philanthropists	3.45	0.66	SA	3.83	0.55	SA
20	Voluntary contributions from private individuals	2.55	0.68	A	2.60	0.80	A
21	Contributions from Social Clubs	2.55	0.68	A	2.60	0.80	A
22	Contributions from religious bodies.	2.55	0.88	A	2.96	0.68	A
	Cluster mean	2.75	0.76		2.88	0.66	

Data in Table 3 reveal the item by item analysis on non-governmental organizations funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. The analysis revealed that items 19 with mean scores 3.64 was rated strongly agreed while items 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, and 22 were rated agreed. However, the cluster mean of 2.82



summarized that business educators agreed on the use of non-governmental organizations funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. The standard deviation scores ranging from 0.50 – 0.89 show that business educators do not vary too much in their ratings on non-governmental organizations funding strategies in business education programme in universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition.

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the government integrative funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skill acquisition.

Table 4: t-test summary on government integrative funding strategies

Groups	Number	Mean	S.D	D.F	T.Cal	T.tab	Level of Sig.	Decision
Male	28	3.00	0.77	83	1.22	2.000	0.05	Not significant
Female	57	3.06	0.66					

The t-test analysis presented in Table 4 reveals that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 1.22 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 2.000 at $P \leq 0.05$ levels of significance and at 83 degrees of freedom (df). This showed that, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the government integrative funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

Hypotheses 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the institutional funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skill acquisition.

Table 5: t-test summary on institutional funding strategies

Groups	Number	Mean	S.D	D.F	T.Cal	T.tab	Level of Sig.	Decision
Male	28	2.67	0.75	83	1.02	2.000	0.05	Not Significant
Female	57	3.05	0.66					

The t-test analysis presented in Table 5 reveals that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 1.02 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 2.000 at $P \leq 0.05$ levels of significance and at 83 degrees of freedom (df). This showed that, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the institutional funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

Hypotheses 3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skill acquisition.



Table 6: t-test summary on non-governmental organizations funding strategies

Groups	Number	Mean	S.D	D.F	T.Cal	T.tab	Level of Sig.	Decision
Male	28	2.75	0.76	83	0.62	2.000	0.05	Not Significant
Female	57	2.88	0.66					

The t-test analysis presented in Table 6 reveals that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.62 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 2.000 at $P \leq 0.05$ levels of significance and at 83 degrees of freedom (df). This showed that, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in research question one revealed that business educators agreed on the government integrated funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. This means that both federal, state and local governments should use the following funding strategies; increase budget allocations to business education, make use of private-public partnership in funding business education programme, government to make available Education Tax Fund, TETFUND, grants to business education, increase in tuition fees and purchase of equipment among others. This finding supported the finding of Olufunwa, Waziri and Olorunmolu (2013) that government should fund business education programme for quality assurance to be guaranteed.

The result revealed in hypothesis one showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on government integrated funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. This finding agreed with the finding of Onojetah (2013) that there was no significant difference between male and female business studies teachers on funding as a determinant of quality assurance for business studies programme in junior secondary schools in Delta State Central Senatorial district.

The findings in research question two revealed that business educators agreed on the institutional funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. This means that institutions should use the following funding strategies; request and use development levies from students for promoting skills acquisition, tuition and other fees from students, sponsor research work and raise money for business education programme, establishment of consultancy services, organizing workshops, conferences, seminars among others. This finding supported the finding of Agbo (2012) that institution can raise funds for business education programme through the following ways: proceeds from organizing social activities; launching of departmental journal, establishment of bookshop, periodic fund raising by the management, establishment of a commercialized relaxation centre by business education department; offering secretarial services at cost to the public; commercializing the typing of students project; organizing short term courses for business education staff; establishment and operating business centres by the department among others.

The result revealed in hypothesis two showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on institutional funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. This finding agreed



with the finding of Amesi (2015) that for business education programmes to give adequate sustainable development in the Niger Delta, funding of the programmes is necessary and essential.

The findings in research question three revealed that business educators agreed on the non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. This means that non-government organisations can fund business education programme using the following funding strategies; support from international bodies as UNICEF, USAID, World bank, donations from alumni associations, donations from hosting communities, contributions from social clubs, religious bodies, private individuals, philanthropists among others. This finding is in line with the finding of Odou and Anietie (2019) that external aid is accepted to be one of the major sources of education funding which are given to countries and some philanthropist who are willing fund education by supporting the country to fund their education.

The result in hypothesis three showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on non-governmental organizations funding strategies of business education programme of universities in South East for promoting skills acquisition. This finding agreed with the finding of Odou and Anietie (2019) that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural principals on the strategies for funding secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that business educators agreed on the use of government integrated funding strategies, institutional funding strategies and non-governmental organizations funding strategies to fund business education programme of universities for promoting skills acquisition. However, funding has always been a critical constraint in the acquisition of requisite saleable skills in business education programme that will enable its recipients compete favourably with global competitors. Hence, the need to explore all these alternative sources of funding than government alone.

Recommendations

1. Federal and State Government should budget more funds and also explore public-private partnership in funding business education programme in Nigerian universities.
2. Institutional administrators and Heads of business Education departments should look inwards on how to get Internally-generated revenue (IGR) from institutions to fund Business education.
3. Federal government and Institutional administrators should seek for external aids from non-governmental organizations to assist in funding business education programme.

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