

AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF BUSINESS FIRMS FOR FUNDING AND SKILL ACQUISITION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN UNIVERSITIES IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

Skill acquisition is paramount for effective Business Education programme in Universities in Enugu State and this can only be achieved if the programme is properly funded. Poor funding of the programme motivated the researchers to carry out this research to determine the level of awareness and extent of utilization of philanthropic social responsibility of Business firms' strategy in Enugu State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. It was a survey study that sought the opinion of Business Educators teaching in Universities offering Business Education programme on their level of awareness and utilization of corporate social responsibility of Business firms. The population comprised 26 Business Educators and no sample was drawn due to the small population. A self-designed questionnaire was used to obtain data used for the analysis. The instrument was subjected to validation by experts. The results obtained showed that the level of awareness of Business Educators on the corporate social responsibilities of the Business firms is high but the utilization of these services are very low. The researchers recommended among others that since Business firms provide philanthropic services to institutions as part of their corporate social responsibility strategy, Business Educators in Universities should effectively utilize these services for funding and effective skill acquisition in the programme.

Keywords: Funding, skill acquisition, Business Education and Corporate social responsibility of business firms.

Introduction

Funding has been a major challenge in Education industry especially in under developed country like Nigeria. Business Education programme is a skill oriented programme that requires lots of resources in order to achieve its objectives and prepares the recipients with saleable skills for the world of work. Therefore, it needs to be properly funded. Ekeke in Dambo (2021) noted that Business Education is a programme of study that emphasizes the production of graduates who will engage in professional studies in business and also strong advocates and promoters of viable industries. These objectives can only be achieved through effective skill acquisition.

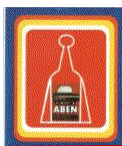


Equally, Nwokike and Ezenwafor(2021) posited that Business Education develops skills for all aspect of Business in students. There is no viable business Education programme without effective skill acquisition. The need for skill acquisition programme in Business Education programme cannot be over emphasized. Skill acquisition in Business Education programme is a valuable tool for national development and employment generation. Shaibu and Okpe(2020) viewed skill acquisition as the ability that an individual acquires through training, education or experience which enables an individual to effectively carry out a function for the benefit of self and mankind.

In the view of Nwokike and Ezenwafor (2021), Skill acquisition is the process of training a learner on the manual dexterity involved in performing given functions or tasks until they can expertly perform them. Skill acquisition is the practical knowledge acquired over a period of time through training and retraining in any given trade or course. Effective skill acquisition needs both the financial human and material resources. This corroborates with the opinion of Garba (2021) that skill acquisition through repetitive activities is obtained through training and retraining. Nwokike and Ezenwafor noted that business Education is a skill oriented programme directed towards equipping the recipients with relevant skills for success in paid or self-employment. Various areas of skill acquisition in Business Education include: Accounting skills, Marketing skills, Office Technology Management skills and entrepreneurship skills only to mention but few. Further, Odewumi, Bakshak and Felix cited by Shaibu and Okpe highlighted the following types of skill acquisition in Business Education programme to include: Arithmetic, communication, book-keeping, typing, marketing and filing skills etc. Acquisition of skills in this areas are geared towards employability in the paid jobs of self-employment. The relevance of skill acquisition in Business Education includes but not limited to self-employment, crime reduction, improved standard of living and diverse job prospects.

For Business education students to stand the taste of time on graduation, they must acquire relevant skills needed by today's employer of Labour. Pilot cited by Nwokike and Ezenwafor (2021) affirmed that companies today are searching for people who have many skills as against those who have good paper qualifications. Observations and experiences shows that today's employer of labour are looking for skilled graduates that can perform many functions effectively for the progress and growth of the industry. The authors observed that one of the challenges to skill acquisition in Business Education programme is poor funding. This necessitates the justification for adequate funding of Business Education Programme in universities for skill acquisition. It is only when the programme is properly funded that the resources including the material and human resources could be provided.

Funding of education is an enormous task that should not be left for the government alone and observation shows that both the Federal and State Government have failed in their responsibility to fund education. The current prolonged Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike attest to that. Funding is the act of providing money to finance a project. It is usually in form of cash or goods. In the context of this study, funding of business education refers to money released or given by the government for purchase of materials, machines and equipment for running the programme. Funding of Business Education programme is beyond payment of salaries of Business Educators and provision of materials for teaching and learning but include among others, provision of facilities such as business machines, digital libraries, ICT facilities, recruitment of qualified teaching and non-teaching staff and funding of educational infrastructural development etc. It can now be deduced that funding business education programme for effective skill acquisition is an enormous task and observation shows that the government has failed in their responsibility to fund education in Nigeria. Therefore, the researchers are of the opinion that Business Educators in Universities in Enugu State should utilize corporate social responsibilities of business firms as an alternative source of funding Business Education programme in the Universities. No Business exists in isolation. The responsibility of Business towards the locality or community where it is located is called social



responsibility. A business firm that is socially responsible should not work solely for profit maximization but should also make an effort to seek the welfare of different sections of the society.

Corporate social responsibility (CRS) is a term that has no exact definition because a different business has different perceptions of its meaning. Corporate social responsibility describes how a company gives back to or improve the community where their business is located.. According to Vanco (2021) Corporate Social responsibility is also known as corporate citizenship. Vanco defined corporate social responsibility as a business model and practice in which a company establishes initiatives, programmes and policies. The main goal of corporate social responsibility is to build, create and impact in the lives of the citizens where their business is located through its corporate social responsibilities strategies.

Business firms in Enugu state could help in funding of Business Education programme through its corporate social responsibility strategies. Corporate Social responsibility strategy is a mapped out plan that a firm uses to actualize and achieve its corporate social responsibility. This corroborates with the assertion of Rachel (2020) that CRS Strategies is the comprehensive plan companies use to design, execute and analyze their corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility of business firms include the following categories; environmental, ethical, economic and philanthropic social responsibility. (Tim 2021)

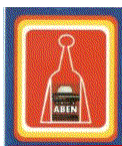
Environmental social responsibility refers to the belief that organizations should behave in an environmentally friendly way as possible through reducing pollution and increasing reliance on renewable energy while ethical social responsibility is concerned with ensuring that an organization is operating in a fair and ethical manner.(Tim 2021) On the other hand, economic social responsibility involves improving the firms' business operation while Philanthropic social responsibility involves donating portion of their earnings to schools. Such donations can come inform of cash or kind. For the purpose of this research work, the researchers focused on the level of awareness and utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibilities of Business firms in Enugu State as an alternative source of funding Business Education.

Tim (2021) described philanthropic social responsibility as a business aim to actively make the world and society a better place. Philanthropic social responsibility of business includes funding educational programs, supporting initiatives and supporting community beautification projects etc. Business firms engage in donating portion of their earnings to schools. Such donations can come in form of cash or kind; it also include things such as funding of educational programs, supporting health initiatives and other community projects.

This tallied with the opinion of Jinsoo, Jink and Seokhoon (2020) that making donations for community improvements is an example of philanthropic activities of corporate social responsibility. The authors further stated that such monetary and non monetary of CRS can be found in various areas such as banks could donate money to fund the purchase of materials and equipment to institutions as part of their CRS. Below is the list of highest spenders in corporations/firms in corporate social responsibility in Nigeria in 2020:

UBA: ~~N~~1.5 million, MTN Nigeria: ~~N~~4.14 billion, Zenith Bank: ~~N~~2.96 billion
,Dangote Cement:~~N~~2.96 billion and Access Bank: ~~N~~2.6 billion (<https://nairametrics.com>)

Raheem (2020) noted that many business organizations in Nigeria are singled out not because of their brand image created in the market Share or space but because of the impact or value created by the quality of their investments in CRS. From the foregoing, it is evidenced that Business firms engage in CRS in order to boost and create their long lasting loyalty to the community where their business is located. Equally, beyond donations of cash and equipment to schools as part of their CRS, Business firms also engage in youth empowerment. For instance, Nigerian bottling company in 2019 trained about 6,000 youths across various states n life, business and networking skills under its youth empowered umbrella program (Raheem 2020). Eze cited by Raheem (2020) stated that youth empowered program was developed to help young people to achieve their career



ambitions by providing guidance, support assistance in order to have competitive advantage to succeed in today's work environment. The level of awareness and extent of utilization of corporate social responsibilities of business firms by Business Educators in Enugu State as an alternative source of funding of Business Education programme for skill acquisition of the students is yet to be ascertained.

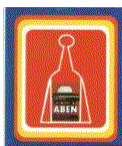
Awareness is the state or ability to perceive, feel or be conscious of events or something. It is also a process that seeks to inform or educate people about something. It equally refers to the knowledge about an object or event. In the opinion of Gafoor (2012) awareness generally means knowledge, being conscious, cognizant, informed and alert. Gafoor further defined awareness as the state or ability to perceive, to feel or to be conscious of events, objects or sensory patterns. In the context of this study, awareness refers to the knowledge of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms such as donation of cash and materials to institutions by Business Educators in Enugu State. This has to do with the level of information Business Educators have on the services provided by Business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility strategy.

Utilization of corporate social responsibility of business firms involve effective use of the philanthropic services provided by business firms in funding Business Education programme for skill acquisition. The extent Business Educators utilize the philanthropic services rendered by business firms in Enugu State is yet to be ascertained. Hence, the need to ascertain the level of awareness of the services rendered by business firms and the extent of utilization of this services for funding of Business education programme in Universities. An empirical study of this nature must be anchored on a theory. This study was anchored on the theory of skill acquisition theory by Robert Dekyser. This is a theory of learning that ranges from cognitive to psychomotor skills. According to Dekyser (2014), learning of a wide variety of skills shows a remarkable similarity in development from initial representation of knowledge through initial changes in behaviour to eventual fluent, spontaneous, largely effortless and highly skilled behaviour. This theory is relevant to the present study because if Business Education programme is properly funded, it will result to acquisition with the qualified and skilled personnel employed, materials, machines and other facilities provided, Business Education Students would acquire saleable skills for either paid or self-employment.

It is against this backdrop that the researchers seek to determine the level of awareness and extent of utilization of philanthropic services needed by Business firms in Enugu state for funding Business Education programme for skill acquisition. The findings of this study, if actually implemented, will benefit Business Education students. Business Education students will immensely benefit from this study because if there is adequate funding, the resources needed such as qualified and adequate personnel for the programme are readily available, students would acquire the practical skills they need for self-employment. This study was delimited to Business Educators level of awareness and extent of utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of Business Firms and no other form of CRS. The respondents are the Business Educators in Public Owned and Private Universities offering Business Education Programme in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem.

Education is a social service that involves and requires adequate financial provision from the three levels of government. (Federal, State and local government). Available records showed that for the past ten years, Nigerian Education sectors has not reached the UNESCO recommended 10 to 15% of the budget in developing countries. Nigerian government through Education trust has made frantic efforts in order to ensure adequate funding of Education in Nigeria but observation shows that education sector is still poorly funded. Therefore, Education Industry continues to decline as a result of poor funding. This attributes to the incessant strikes by Academic staff union of the universities. This poor funding results to non acquisition of practical skills by the students of Business Education programme either for paid employment or self-employment. Non acquisition of practical skills for



self-employment may likely expose the graduates of the programme to social vices. Therefore the problem of this study posed as a question is: what is the level of awareness and the extent of utilization of corporate social responsibility of Business firms as alternative sources of funding of Business Education programme for skill acquisition in universities in Enugu State. The general purpose of the study was to determine the level of awareness and extent utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of Business firms in Enugu State for funding and skill acquisition in Business Education programme in Universities. Specifically, the study sought to determine the: Level awareness of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of Business firms for funding and skill acquisition in Business Education programme and the extent of utilization of the philanthropic services rendered by Business firms for funding and skill acquisition in Business Education programme.

Research questions

The following research questions were answered by the study

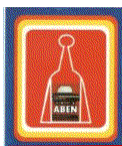
1. What is the level of awareness of philanthropic corporate social responsibility provided by business firms for funding and skill acquisition in Business Education programme
2. What is the extent of utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility provided by business firms by Business Educators for funding and skill acquisition in Business Education programme.

Method

This study was carried out in Enugu State. Enugu State is one of the six geo-political zones in the South-East of Nigeria with two public Universities and one private university offering Business Education programme. The study utilized survey research design. According to Nworgu (2015), survey research is the type of design that uses questionnaire to elicit information from identified population. The justification for utilizing survey research design was that the researchers utilize structural questionnaire to elicit information from the identified Business Educators. The population comprised 26 Business Educators in the three universities offering Business Education in Enugu State. The entire population was studied because the population was not too large. A 32 item structured questionnaire on a four point rating scale of Very High level (4) High Level (3) Low Level (2) and Very Low level (1) for research question 1 and very high extent (4) high extent (3) Low extent (2) and very low extent (1) for research question two was used to collect data from the respondents, 16 items were on the level of awareness and 16 items were on the extent of utilization. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. The researchers distributed the instrument with the help of three Research Assistants. All the 26 copies of the instrument distributed were retrieved and used for the study giving 100% return rate. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. Decision was taken using lower and upper limit of the scale values on a four point.

Scale: very high level	3.50-4.00
High level	2.50-3.49
Low level	1.50-2.49
Very low level	1.00-1.49

Standard deviation was used to determine the closeness of the opinions of the respondent while ANOVA (Analysis of variance) was used to test the hypotheses. The null hypothesis was not rejected when F Calculated was less than the critical F ratio at the appropriate degree of freedom but rejected if the F calculated exceeds the critical F ratio.



Results

The results of the study were obtained from the research questions that guided the study and the hypotheses tested and the data analyzed were based on the 26 copies of questionnaire returned.

Research Question 1

What is the level of awareness of philanthropic services provided by business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviation of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private Universities on the level of awareness of philanthropic services provided by business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility in Enugu State

S/ N	Funding educational programme such as;	Overall		Decision
		X_G	SD_G	
1	Cash donation to support research centers	2.81	0.98	HL
2	Provision of ICT centers	2.73	0.60	HL
3	Human capital development	2.58	0.95	HL
4	Donation of computer	3.42	0.58	HL
5	Scholarship sponsorship for students	3.19	0.85	HL
6	Provision of e-library	3.04	0.34	HL
7	Donation of books	2.89	0.65	HL
8	Construction of classroom blocks	3.04	0.77	HL
9	Provision of computer lab	2.46	0.81	LL
10	Conference sponsorship	2.81	0.57	HL
11	Sponsorship for workshops	2.62	0.64	HL
12	Sponsorship to attend seminar	2.54	0.65	HL
13	Construction of staff office	2.88	0.86	HL
14	Provision of internet facilities	2.88	0.95	HL
15	Donation of business machine apart from computer	2.54	0.86	HL
16	Creation of leisure activities such as play grounds	2.32	0.92	LL
	Cluster Mean/SD	2.79	0.75	High Level

N/B: High Level(high level), LL(Low level)

The analysis of data presented in Table 1 above shows that the level of awareness of philanthropic corporate responsibility provided by business firms in Enugu State on the two items items 9 and 16 with mean score of 2.46 and 2.32 are low.(Provision of computer Lab and creation of leisure activities such as play grounds).. The remaining 14 items have their mean ratings ranging from 2.54 to 3.42 showing that the level awareness of Business Educators in Enugu State on the philanthropic services provided by business firms in Enugu State is high. The cluster mean of 2.79 indicates that the level of awareness of Business Educators on the philanthropic services provided by business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility in Enugu State is high. The low standard deviation of 0.75 indicates that the respondents opinion is homogenous.



Null hypothesis one

Significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private Universities on the level of awareness of philanthropic services provided by business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility in Enugu State.

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of Variance on the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private university on the level of awareness of philanthropic services provided by business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility in Enugu State.

Business Educator in Federal, State and Private Universities in Enugu State	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig	Dec.
Between Groups	129.235	2	64.618	1.864	.178	NS
Within Groups	797.111	23	34.657			
Total	926.346	25				

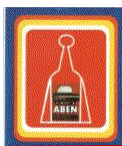
Note: NS= Not Significant

The result of item by item analysis of variance (ANOVA) in Table 2 shows that the F. values is 1.864 at .05 level of significant and degree of freedom between group 2 and within group 23 with significant value of .178. Since the significant value of .178 obtained is more than 1.864 at .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis for the items is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference regarding the 16 items on the mean ratings of Business Educators in the Federal, State and Public Universities on the level of awareness of philanthropic services provided by business firms as part of their corporate social responsibility in Enugu State.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms for funding of business education programme in Enugu State?

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviation of university business educators on the extent of attraction of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms for funding of business education programme in Enugu State

S/N	Extent of utilization of philanthropic services provided by business firms in Enugu State	Overall \bar{X}_G	SD _G	Decision
1	Cash donation to support research centres	2.15	0.73	Low Extent
2	Provision of ICT centres for schools	1.92	0.69	Low Extent
3	Human capital development	2.16	0.67	Low Extent
4	Donation of computer to schools	2.04	0.92	Low Extent
5	Scholarship sponsorship for students	2.27	0.72	Low Extent
6	Provision of e-library	2.19	0.75	Low Extent
7	Donation of books	2.31	0.84	Low Extent
8	Construction of classroom blocks	2.15	0.54	Low Extent
9	Provision of computer lab	2.27	0.60	Low Extent
10	Conference sponsorship	2.15	0.78	Low Extent
11	Sponsorship for workshops	2.04	0.45	Low Extent
12	Sponsorship to attend seminar	2.23	0.65	Low Extent
13	Construction of staff office	2.04	0.53	Low Extent
14	Provision of internet facilities	2.15	0.83	Low Extent
15	Donation of business machine apart from computer	2.27	0.67	Low Extent
16	Creation of leisure activities such as play grounds	1.96	0.72	Low Extent
Cluster Mean/SD			0.69	Low Extent
2.15				



The data presented in Table 3 indicates mean rating for the 16 items ranges from 1.92 to 2.31 depicting low extent. This shows that the utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms for funding of business education programme in universities in Enugu State is to a low extent. The overall cluster mean rating of 2.15 attests to the result. This implies that the Business Educators in Universities in Enugu utilize the philanthropic services rendered by business firms as alternative source of funding Business Education programme for skill acquisition to a low extent. The low standard deviation of .69 shows that the respondent's opinions do not differ remarkably.

Null hypothesis two: A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of federal, state and private university business educators on the extent of attraction of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms for funding of business education programme in Enugu State.

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of variance on the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private university on the extent of utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms for funding of business education programme in Enugu State

Business Educator in Federal, State and Private Universities in Enugu State	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig	Decision
Between Groups	17.610	2	8.805	.318	.730	NS
Within Groups	635.929	23	27.649			
Total	653.538	25				

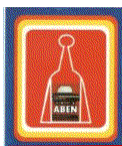
Note: NS= Not Significant

The result of t-test analysis in Table 4 shows that the f values is .318at .05 level of significant and degree of freedom between group 2 and within group 23 f-value with a significant value of .730. As the significant value of .730 is more than the .318 at .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference with respect to the items on the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private University on extent of utilization of philanthropic corporate social responsibility of business firms for funding of Business Education programme in universities in Enugu State.

Discussion of findings

The result obtained from research question 1 Table 1 showed that level of aware of Business Educators in universities on the philanthropic corporate social responsibility is high. This indicates that Business Educators in universities in Enugu State were highly aware that business firm provides philanthropic services to institutions such as cash donation by business firms to support research centres and provision of ICT centres for institution. The finding of this study corroborates with the statement made by Jinonso, Jink and seokhron (2020) that making donation for community improvement including monetary and non-monetary donations to academic and health programs are examples of C R S . The authors further noted that organisation like banks can donate cash to fund the purchase of materials and equipment for institutions and health care sectors.

Further, the findings of the study from research question two revealed that Business Educators in universities in Enugu State utilize philanthropic services rendered by Business firms to a low extent. The finding of this study is in accordance with porter and Kramer cited by Carol, John, Tarp and Neda (2019) who argue that concentrated sectors have lower rates of CRS adoption. The authors found a positive relationship between adoption of CRS initiatives and firm efficiency. This



could be utilized by Business Educators to improve skill acquisition in Business Education programme in universities in Enugu State. Companies can build partnerships with universities or other local educational institutions to conduct on-site specialized training courses or other events to improve the skills of employees and workers. This is an indication that companies that are socially responsible engage in improving the skills of employees. Therefore, Business Educators need to utilize corporate social responsibility of business firms as an alternative source of funding and skill acquisition in Business Education programme.

Nevertheless, significant difference did not exist between the mean ratings of Business Educators in universities on the level of awareness and extent of utilization of corporate social responsibility strategy provided by Business firms in Enugu State. Thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. This study tallied with the findings of Hadiza (2021) that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Education Lecturers regarding the extent of usage of information and communication technology for teaching in Colleges of Education.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that the level of awareness of philanthropic services provided by Business firms to institutions is high but the extent of utilization is low. The viability of Business Education programme is determined by the extent it is properly funded. It is disheartening that there are no facilities to train students in the universities and Business Educators have no tools to work with. Therefore, there is need to sought for an alternative source of funding the programme for skill acquisition of Business Education students.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Skill acquisition is paramount in Business Education Programme; therefore, Business Educators should device alternative sources of funding Business Education programme.
2. Since Business firms provide philanthropic services to institutions as part of their corporate social responsibility strategy, Business Educators in Universities should effectively utilize these services for funding and effective skill acquisition in the programme.

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