

INFLUENCE OF POOR FUNDING OF BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON STUDENTS' SKILL ACQUISITION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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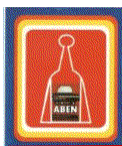
Abstract

The paper examined the influence of poor funding of business education programmes on students skill acquisition in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. The study was carried out in public universities and Polytechnics in the South East Nigeria. Descriptive survey design method was used. The population of the study was 810 students and 110 business education lecturers. Simple random sampling techniques was adopted to select 400 students and 65 lecturers for the study.. The instrument used for data collection was structured questionnaire. A pilot test was carried out using Cronbach alpha to determine the reliability of the instrument and the result of the analysis yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.79. Data collected were analysed using mean. The result of the study revealed that poor funding affects provision of infrastructural facilities, recruitment of qualified teachers and provision of instructional material for business education programme in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria. Based on this, the study recommended that the Federal and state government of Nigeria should increase the allocation of funds to the education sector. This should be extended beyond the 12% which has been the highest over the years, to between 18% and 22% to align with the recommendation is not in consonance with UNESCO 26% of total expenditure, which would trigger huge improvement in the sector

Keywords: Poor Funding, Skill, Acquisition, Influence

Introduction

The primary concern of every society is how to survive. This can only be possible through education (which may be either formal or informal education). Education is a purposeful activity directed at achieving certain aims, such as transmitting knowledge, fostering skills, attitude and character traits. According to Olaleye (2019) education is the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life. The aims of Education may include the development of

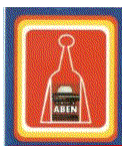


understanding, rationality, kindness, and honesty. In the context of this study, education is the transmission of idea, knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitude from one person to another. The main aim of education is to enable the recipient to be well informed so as to contribute meaningfully to the wellbeing of the society thereby improving the lives of humanity. Education has been a crucial instrument for actualizing societal goals. It creates and circulates images of social reality in terms of its system of knowledge; its values as well as its pattern of thoughts and behaviour (FRN, 2009). For education to effectively carry out these functions, there is need for adequate funding.

Funding is the act of providing resources to finance a need, programme, or project. While this is usually in the form of money, it can also take the form of effort or time from an organization or company. Generally, this word is used when a firm uses its internal reserves to satisfy its necessity for cash, while the term financing is used when a firm acquires capital from external sources. According to Abiola (2019) funding is a vital mechanism in maintaining, ensuring and enhancing effective implementation of any education programme. For institutions, organizations, governments or individuals to carry out their laudable programme objectives, there is need for adequate funding. Funding lubricates all the strata of an organisation. In educational institutions, adequate funds is an indispensable component to its success in programme delivery. The state of education is one of the crucial indicators of the seriousness of a society's in its quest for national development because the quality of education in a society determines the quality of the society manpower. For education to achieve the desired effect of development and integration, it has to be functional in order to enable its recipients to come out with life and saleable skills. Supporting the above statement, Ile, Nwogu, Udoye and Oru (2013) asserted that funding is a tool for quality assurance in a discipline like business education.

Business education is an aspect of vocational education which provides skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes necessary for effective employment in a specific business occupation. According to Eze (2018) business education is an aspect of vocational education that provides students with requisite skills, abilities and competencies both mentally and physically, to become competent teachers of business, work in offices or be self-reliant. It can also be seen as an educational programme that prepares students for entry and advancement in jobs within business and to handle their business affairs as well as to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy. According to Igboke in Nwandu (2021) the main objective of Business Education at all levels of education is to equip the recipients with skills in business occupation, office management and unentrepreneurial skills for self-employment and job creation. The author further noted that Business Education provide orientation and basic skills with which to start a life of work for those who may not undergo further training. Abiola (2019) further stated that the goals of business education include education 'for' and about business, which is aimed at equipping recipients with the requisite attributes (knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes) to become gainfully employed in the world of work, whereas the later addresses education 'about' business, which is aimed at providing a sound basis for further studies at the graduate and post-graduate levels. In line with the above, Udo (2015) stated that business education is a comprehensive activity-based occupational education programme that is concerned with skill acquisition in business.

Skill acquisition is the art of learning to do something in order to earn a living and or to survive. Skill acquisition can also be seen as the ability to be trained on a particular task or function till the recipient becomes experts on the skill. A skill is an ability to perform an activity in a competent manner. Skills can be classified into three main types: transferable/functional, personal traits/attitudes, and knowledge-based. According to Udo and Babangide (2007) skill acquisition in business education is the capacity to be trained on a particular business occupation and become a proficient professional in it. In the view of Mshelia (2019), Omidiji and Ogwu (2019) skill in business education include communication skill, reading skill, manipulative skill, shorthand skill, keyboarding



skill, computer skill book keeping skill among others. From the foregoing, skill acquisition in business education would a veritable method for employment creation and sustainable development.

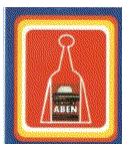
From the forgoing, it can be deduced that business education is a skilled oriented programme. Unfortunately, despite the importance of business education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria as a whole and South East Nigeria in particular, there has been public outcry on the level of poor performance of students in the course. This can be noticed in the poor skill acquisition of the graduates of the noble course. It is also on record that Business Education is that most students of business education lack requisite skills to be employed in various firms (Azubuike 2021). According to Nwigbo (2022), most graduates of business education employed through NYSC scheme in the ministries in South East Nigeria lacked competent skills in the areas of accounting, office management, filing and bookkeeping as well as ICT use. This anomaly might be attributed to poor funding as both human and material resources in various tertiary institutions are in pitiable conditions. Onah (2018) also reported that there are poor infrastructural facilities, lack of teaching aids, lack of qualified and competent teachers among others in various tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria. All these inadequacies might be attributed to poor funding.

For proper and effective upgrading of business education programme, there is the need for consistent funding, in form of payment of salaries of personnel (lecturers, technologists and other staff), purchase of instructional materials and teaching facilities, building of classrooms, equipping the computer laboratories, typing pools and offices with modern technological devices. According to Okeke and Eze (2010), it is a known fact that business education is capital intensive. Fund is needed to procure relevant equipment, machines, materials, facilities, staff development and maintenance of items and equipment. Unfortunately, it was posited by Okeke and Eze (2010) that sufficient fund has not been channelled to business education which is a major problem affecting its proper upgrading. Ezekwesili (2013), opined that Nigeria is under- funding education. According to Ezekwesili, education budget to GDP was 7.9% for South Africa, 4.4% for Ghana, 4.2% for Angola and Nigeria 0.79%. The author further stated that, worse than the funding issue was the misallocation of investment issue which had adversely affected the effective upgrading of business education programme irrespective of huge sums disbursed to Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) through Education Tax.

Statement of the Problem

Funding has always been a critical constraint on the development education programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Among all the educational programme, Business education is among the most expensive to run because of the nature, its content and the equipment needed to run it. Most of the departments offering business education programmes today in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria 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.

In tertiary institutions where business education is offered, Laboratories need to be well equipped with new ICT gadgets such as computers, projectors interactive smart board and should be well connected to the Internet to support teaching and learning. All these required a lot of funds. Supporting this, Ugwuanyi (2012) noted that the expensive nature of business education is due to the much practical and costly equipment and materials. 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 education. This poor situation might be the major cause of production of unskilled and unemployable graduates, since the institutions lack instructional materials to equip students with requisite employability skills. It



is based on this that the researchers sought to examine the effects of poor funding on business education programme on students' skill acquisition in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the effects poor funding on the provision of infrastructural facilities for teaching skills in business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of poor funding on the recruitment of qualified teachers to teach skills in business education in Tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria?
3. What are the influence of poor funding on the transfer of employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria?

Method

The study was carried in public universities and Polytechnics in the South East Nigeria. Descriptive survey design method was used. The population of the study was 810 students and 110 business education lecturers. Simple random sampling techniques was adopted to select 400 students and 65 lecturers for the study. The instrument used for data collection was four points rating scale structured questionnaire of strongly Agree (4), Agree (3) Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The instrument contained 17 items, and was validated by three experts in business education. A pilot test was carried out using Cronbach alpha to determine the reliability of the instrument. The result of the analysis yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.79 which is regarded as reliable. In taking decision, 2.50 was used as the criterion mean. Therefore, any item in the instrument with the mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed and any item with mean score below 2.50 was adjudged to be disagreed by the respondents.

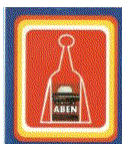
Results

Research question 1: What are influence of poor funding on the provision of infrastructural facilities for teaching skills in business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria?

Table 1: The mean score of the effects poor funding on the provision of infrastructural facilities for teaching skills in business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria N = 465

S/N	Items statement	\bar{x}	STD	Decision rule
1	Poor funding influences the availability of electricity in the tertiary institutions	3.32	.886	Agreed
2	Poor funding influences the availability teaching tools in the school	3.26	.872	Agreed
3	Poor funding influences the availability adequate libraries in the school	3.32	.886	Agreed
4	Poor funding influences the availability consumable materials	3.18	.847	Agreed
5	Poor funding influence the availability practical materials	3.18	.847	Agreed
6	Poor funding influences the availability ICT facilities in the tertiary institutions	3.12	.824	Agreed
	Grand mean	3.23		

Table 1 shows the mean score of how poor provision of infrastructural facilities as a result of poor funding in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria is a problem for teaching skills. From the Table, items 1-6 was with



the mean scores of 3.32, 3.26, 3.32 3.18, 3.18 and 3.12 respectively which were above 2.5. This means that poor provision of infrastructural facilities as a result of poor funding in Tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria is a problem to skill acquisition in business education. Finally the table has the grand mean of 3.4 to support the claim

Research question 2: What are influence of poor funding on the recruitment of qualified teachers to teach skills in business education in Tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria?

Table 2: The mean score of the the effects of poor funding on the recruitment of qualified teachers to teach skills in business education in Tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria N = 465

S/N	Item statement	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
7	Poor funding influences the availability of adequate number of skilled teachers	3.09	.937	Agreed
8	Poor funding influences the availability of office educators	3.04	.977	Agreed
9	Poor funding influences the availability adequate library attendants	3.20	.926	Agreed
10	Poor funding influences the availability of adequate number of skilled accounting lecturers	3.16	.948	Agreed
11	Poor funding influences the availability keyboard teachers in tertiary institutions	3.06	.875	Agreed
Grand mean		3.11		

Table 2 showed how inadequate number of qualified lecturers needed to teach skills in business education tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria constitute problems as a result of poor funding. From the Table, it is indicated that items 7-11 are with means scores of 3.09, 3.04, 3.20, 3.16 and 3.06 respectively which were above 2.5. This means that inadequate number of qualified teachers to teach skills in teaching business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria constitute problems which are as the result of poor funding.

Research Question 3: What are the influence of poor funding on the transfer of employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria?

Table 3: The mean score of the influence of poor funding on the transfer of employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria N = 465

S/N	Items statement	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
12	Poor funding affects the transfer of ICT skills	3.16	.948	Agreed
13	Poor funding influences the provision of ICT teacher	3.06	.875	Agreed
14	Poor funding influences the provision of skills workshops/laboratories in tertiary institutions	3.06	.805	Agreed
15	Poor funding influences the provision of internet facilities in school	3.12	.835	Agreed
16	Poor funding influences the provision of tools for practical excises	3.01	.905	Agreed
17	Poor funding influences the provision internet services	3.08	.863	Agreed
Grand mean		3.08		



Table 3 shows the mean score of the influence of poor funding on the transfer of employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria. The table shows that items 12-17e have mean scores of 3.16, 3.06, 3.06, 3.12, 3.01 and 3.08 respectively which are above 2.5. This means that poor funding affects transfer of employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria. Finally, the table had the grand mean of 3.05. This means that affects transfer of requisite employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

Table 1 shows the mean score of how poor provision of infrastructural facilities as a result of poor funding in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria is a problem for teaching skills. From Table, items 1-6, it was indicated that respondents agreed that poor funding influence the availability of electricity in the tertiary institutions. This result is in line with Abayomi (2012) who reported that poor funding of educational institutions affects the availability of power supply in the tertiary institutions. The result from the table also indicated that poor funding influence the availability teaching tools in the school, poor funding influence the availability adequate libraries in the school, poor funding influence the availability consumable materials and poor funding influence the availability practical materials. This result is in accordance Okpara (2015) who noted that reported that poor funding influence provision and adequate maintenance of school libraries and laboratories in tertiary institutions. The re result from the study further revealed that poor funding influence the availability ICT facilities in the tertiary institutions. This result is in tandem with Onyekpe (2007) who reported that poor funding affects the provision of ICT tools for effective skill acquisition ICT skills.

Table 2 shows the mean score of the the effects of poor funding on the recruitment of qualified teachers to teach skills in business education in Tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria. The result from the table indicated that the respondents agreed that poor funding influences the availability of adequate number of skilled teachers. This result is in accordance with Umoh (2014) who reported that when educational institutions have enough fund, they can employ skilled personnel and vice versa. The result from the table also indicated that poor funding influences the availability of office educators, Poor funding influences the availability adequate library attendants and poor funding influences the availability of adequate number of skilled accounting lecturers. These results were in accordance with Ajayi and Alani (2016) who reported that availability of fund influence the recruitment of qualified and competent technicians for effective teaching and learning in schools. The result from the study further revealed that poor funding influences the availability keyboard teachers in tertiary institutions.

Table 3 showed the mean score of the influence of poor funding on the transfer of employability skills to students of business education in tertiary institutions in the South East Nigeria. From the table, it was indicated that the respondents agreed that poor funding affects the transfer of ICT skills. This result is in accordance with Azubuike (2021) who reported that poor/lack of adequate fund in tertiary institutions affects their ability to employ ICT technicians for teaching of ICT skills to students in tertiary institutions. The results from the study further revealed that poor funding influences the provision of ICT teacher, poor funding influences the provision of skills workshops/laboratories in tertiary institutions, poor funding influences the provision of internet facilities in school, poor funding influences the provision of tools for practical excises and that poor funding influences the provision internet services. The results were in accordance with Uchendu (2016) who reported that poor funding affects provision of ICT tools for teaching and learning in tertiary institutions. Ajayi and Alani (2016) also reported that poor project planning and implementation is one of the major cause of poor teaching materials in teaching in tertiary institutions.



Conclusion

Problem of poor funding of education programmes is one of the major problems of educational development in Nigeria. Though there were growth rates in recurrent expenditure allocation in Nigeria under the period of study, there were myriads of problems. The amounts spent yearly on education during the period were far lower than the amount recommended by the UNESCO which is 26% of the nation's annual budgets. As a result of poor funding, Nigeria's educational system is bedevilled by a myriad of problems, which keeps worsening by the day. Education expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures continuously nosedive in Nigeria. Until there is adequate budgetary allocation to the education sector, there will be no significant development in the sector.

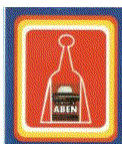
Recommendations

Based on the data collected and analysed, the following recommendations are made

1. The Federal government of Nigeria should increase budgetary allocation of funds to the education sector. This should be extended beyond the 12% which has been the highest over the years to between 18% and 22%. Though this recommendation is not in consonance with UNESCO 26% of total expenditure, it could trigger huge improvement in the sector.
2. Strategic planning should be a major component of policy initiatives for education and enacted policies should be feasible and well implemented within specific time frame. Moreover, there is the need to minimize policy inconsistencies in the sector.
3. Government should increase capital investment in the education sector such as new schools building, provision of basic equipment (educational) needed for the students to learn, and maintenance of the ones already available. This will aid continuous development in the sector.

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