

UNIVERSITIES-INDUSTRIES COLLABORATION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSITIES IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

The study sought to determine the universities-industries collaboration in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 288 respondents (28 Business Education lecturers from public universities in Enugu State and 260 SME owners in Enugu metropolis). The population was adopted entirely for the study due to its manageable size. A 15 items structured questionnaire validated by two experts in the field of Business Education and one expert in measurement and evaluation was used for the study. The reliability of the instrument using Cronbach alpha yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of .82. The copies of the questionnaire were administered personally by the researcher with the help of two (2) research assistants. Data were analysed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. Findings showed among others that finance for purchase of instructional tools; field trips engagement; Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme; undergraduates involvement in business board meetings, are some of the possible areas of collaborations between universities and industries. It was also found that university-industry collaborations help train students to handle equipment effectively; provides opportunities for transfer of knowledge from classroom to field; prepare students for real world business experiences; and help students acquire business acumen. Finally, lack of political will, cultural differences between universities and industries, infrastructure deficit, poor staff training were identified as factors hampering the collaboration between universities and industries. It was recommended among others that universities managements should devise strategies to help their Business Education programmes explore the identified areas of possible collaboration with industries.

Keywords: *Universities, Industries, Collaboration, Business Education, Small and Medium Enterprises, Curriculum Implementation*

Introduction

Education remains a veritable instrument for the development of any nation and her citizens towards self-reliance. The type of quality education provided in universities, can instigate rapid social, economic, scientific and technological changes needed to guarantee the nation's march to the future with pride and confidence because education still remains the most potent weapon for hope among our youths and ability to negotiate better quality life for the people. The National University Commission (NUC) is charged with the responsibility of balanced and coordinated development and implementation of university education curriculum among others. A curriculum is the systematic arrangement of academic activities within a timeframe, geared towards achieving a desired educational goal. Curriculum is an organized, planned educational experiences administered to the learners under the guidance and supervision of the school. It is the set of structured lessons to be taught to a targeted learner or group of learners within a defined period. According to Okoro (2015) Business Education curriculum entails educational training which an individual receives in order to acquire adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for vocational usage in careers as an administrator, manager, and teacher or wherever he/she may find him/herself in the business world. Akpanobong and Asuquo (2016) observed that it is the efforts together with the resources and processes involved in getting the learner(s) to absorb these set of structured lessons as intended that is called curriculum implementation.

Curriculum implementation is the actual execution and administration of the planned educational experiences to the learners. It involves a number of activities culminating in translating curriculum documents into classroom practice and involves translation of theory into practice or proposals into actions. Curriculum implementation can therefore be seen as the translation of the objectives of the curriculum from



paper to practice. It is a key factor that will determine whether or not a student learns and understands for examination purpose only or for solving practical problems in real life (Ogunode, Ohibime & Oluwaseun, 2023). Similarly, Onyeachu (2008) defined curriculum implementation as the process of putting all that have been planned as a curriculum document into practice in the classroom through the combined efforts of teachers, learners, school administrators, parents as well as interaction with physical facilities, instructional materials, psychological and social environments. Okebukola in Ogunode et al. (2023) defined curriculum implementation as the transition of the objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. This means that only effective curriculum implementation ensures achievement of the objectives for which the curriculum was designed to attain.

Business Education is a course designed to equip individuals with the necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed to perform in the business world either for job occupations or self-employment. Business Education is one of the vocational programmes studied in universities in Nigeria. Emeasoba and Muo (2018) view Business Education as a tripartite program of instruction which prepares the recipient or the learner with skills, competencies, knowledge, attitudes and values to be a Business Education teacher, an office worker or to be an entrepreneur. Expanding further on the concept of business education, Okoro (2015) noted that business education is a core branch of vocational education which provides students with requisite skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical, that equip the learner with knowledge and makes him effective to teach, work in office or be self-reliant. It is offered in colleges of education and universities to provide students with appropriate skills, attitude and knowledge to take up career in teaching, business and office occupations (Edokpolor & Owenubiogie, 2017). Business Education curriculum is part of a continuous process of planning and development, which involves the selection or learning experiences that will help in the attainment of goals, objectives of the programme and for the recipients to fit into the world of work or be entrepreneurs' upon graduation.

The goals of Business Education, as stipulated by Edokpolor and Egbri (2017), are to: prepare students for specific career in office occupations; equip students with the requisite skills for job creation and entrepreneurship; and expose students with knowledge about business, including a good blend of computer technology, which incorporates Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The first two goals involve education 'for' 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 (Edokpolor & Egbri, 2017). These goals are in line with the intentions of the National University Commission (NUC) for introducing the core curriculum and minimum academic standards (CCMAS). The newly introduced curriculum (CCMAS) in the Nigerian universities was aimed at promoting specialization of the undergraduate. It is an organized curriculum designed for the Nigerian universities with the objectives of improving the standard of the Nigerian universities, making graduates from Nigerian universities more employable and to equip them with local, national and international skills, knowledge and character that are globally acceptable (Ogunode, Ohibime & Oluwaseun, 2023). The Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS), provides 70 percent of what should be taught along with the expected outcome, while the university will provide 30 percent based on their individual contextual peculiarities and characteristics. The objective of any level of education cannot be achieved if the planned programme for such level of education is not well implemented. This is where universities collaboration with the industries becomes very important.

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). University education is the main instrument to prepare individuals for 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. On the other hand, industry is a group of manufacturers or businesses that produce a particular kind of goods or services. Hence we can say that Industries are concerned with production of good, provision for services among others.

Collaboration is a link between companies to create and support a service or product for its services. Collaboration is also a number of autonomous organisations working together, pooling and sharing resources, information, systems and risk for mutual benefits. Collaboration in Business Education curriculum implementation implies cooperation with industries. Nwosu in Azih, Atah and Ukah (2021) noted that the major consumers of Business Education graduate job sectors are the industries. To ensure effectiveness and efficiency in the production process, and to ensure that of Business (Industries), the industries therefore, need to be co-opted and be involved in the process. It is on the premise of the above

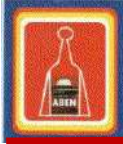


that industrial collaboration in Business Education is viewed as a necessity if the graduates of Business Education are going to stand the taste of time and competition in employment opportunities. Industrial collaboration will as well help to create a new ground of interaction, context and breaking ground information in Business Education especially to the benefit of the teachers and students in Business Education (Azih, Atah & Ukah, 2021).

According to Wagner and Ramsey (2015), school-industry collaboration is when a school and an industry join together to share resources. This can take the form of monetary donations, contribution of time from local professionals, donating equipment, offering internships depending on what the school needs, and what the industry has to offer. It is an opportunity to access untold resources which stand to benefit students tremendously and when a school collaborates with an industry, everybody wins. University-industry collaboration is simply the joint efforts of universities and businesses in the training of students to ensure that they acquire the minimum market required skills (Tessema & Abejehu, 2017). Industry has been identified as a stakeholder that occupies one of the key positions, especially under such circumstances as high unemployment rate, inadequate structure of graduates' knowledge and skills, focus on competitive advantage, and the trend of entrepreneurship and innovation in the economy. It is further claimed that inclusion of industry in the realization of activities in all phases of curriculum design and implementation creates possibilities for a more successful cooperation with the university. Therefore, for proper implementation of Business Education curriculum in the universities using the CCMAS model, may have hinted the need for significant collaborative efforts between universities and industries. This call for collaboration is not even new as policy makers across continents seek to stimulate universities to become more entrepreneurial, engaging more actively with the productive sector. Emeasoba (2017) opined that one way of fulfilling the objective of the National Policy on Education (2013) is by encouraging more partnerships between universities and the business sector. It is important to note that university-industry collaboration can be in the forms of collaborative research projects, human resources transfer, including the training of industry employees at universities, the participation of adjunct faculty from industry, and cooperation in curriculum development, are only a few examples of a wide range of possible collaboration forms (Bermejo, Eynian, Malmskold & Scotti, 2021).

Furthermore, Emeasoba (2017) averred that four major types of university and industry relationship to include: research support, cooperative research, knowledge transfer and technology transfer. The intended gains of university-industry partnership are numerous and varied. Engender acceleration of infrastructure provision; faster implementation of projects; offer better risk allocation between public and private sectors; offer better sustainable incentives; improve accountability in fund utilization; improve overall quality of services; generation of additional revenue and value for money— all of which directly and indirectly aid the curriculum implementation within the universities. Tumiti, Wander and Theruwa (2013) opined that university-industry partnership is considered an alternative means of funding tertiary education in the country. These collaborations are to aid the sharing of investments, risks, responsibility and reward between partners. Ayomike, Igberadja, Igberaharha and Okeke (2014) posited that university-industry collaborations encourages private sectors to use their facilities to raise capital and the capability to build projects and to budget for the welfare of technical vocational institution without having to compromise its profit, motive and at the same time vocational institution will retain its responsibility to provide goods and services to the public at affordable rates. Azih et al (2021) noted that collaboration in Business Education will assist to create good windows of opportunities for experts in the field practicing to exchange ideas that would help to improve the teaching and learning process in Business Education. It will bring job creation, recognition and opportunities and inculcate growth and development among Business Educators in Nigeria universities.

Business education exposes its recipients to diversity 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 taught by male and female lecturers in universities. Emeasoba (2017) observed that there is no gender difference in partnership between institution and industries in teaching and learning of business education programme in tertiary institutions. In essence, well planned business education curriculum can be implemented to produce male and female business education graduates with necessary skills, competencies, knowledge, attitude among others to fit into the world of work and succeed. The system theory propounded by David Easton in 1965 serves as a significant framework for this study because it provided a rationale for understanding the importance of university-industry collaboration in Business Education curriculum implementation. It emphasizes the



interdependence and interconnectedness of various groups or components working together to achieve desired outcomes thereby reduce the high rate of unemployment, equip them to be entrepreneurs, self-reliant and employers of labour.

In spite of the noble goals and gains hoped to achieve through university and industry partnership, there was an extensive range of inter cultural differences, prevalent corruption among others. In the views of Emeasoba (2017) there are little or no government policies on university-industry linkages, poor continuity among universities managements, limited funding, and infrastructure deficit. All of these go a long way to hamper workable partnership between universities and the business sector in Nigeria. This study therefore sought to expand the body of literature on the subject of university-industry collaboration, especially as it concerns Business Education curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

University-industry collaboration is an extensive range of interactions or communication at diverse levels and connecting different activity for the exchange of knowledge and technology between them. Over the years, governments around the world have stimulated linkages to become more entrepreneurial, engaging more actively with productive sector in promoting economic development. Business Education programme is expected to equip its students with saleable skills and competencies that will enable them fit into the world of work and compete favourably with their counterparts globally. However, a wide gap seems to exist in the expectations of both universities and industries, probably as a result of poor understanding of this synergy expected of them. One of the most critical factors that are less talked about that has further worsened the poor state of the Nigerian university is its dependent almost entirely on government funding (Emeasoba, 2017). Universities-industries collaboration seems to be grossly lacking in this sector. Private investments in universities in Nigeria are far less than in developed nations and this problem has continued to create new challenges and perpetuate old ones within the universities – all of which culminate into poor curriculum implementation in the system. The study therefore, critically investigated the issue of collaboration between universities and industries, the areas of possible collaboration, the benefits and challenges as it relates to Business Education programme curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1. What are the areas of possible collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State?
2. What are the benefits of these collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State?
3. What are the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis were tested at 0.05 significant level:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and owners of small and medium scale businesses on the areas of possible collaboration between universities industries in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and owners of small and medium scale businesses on the benefits of these collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and owners of small and medium scale businesses on the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programme for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey research. This method involves the researchers going into the field to administer structured questionnaire to the respondents. The population of the study is 288 and comprised of the 28 lecturers of Business Education in Enugu State University of Science and Technology



(ESUT), Enugu and University of Nigeria, Nsukka and the 260 owners of registered small and medium scale enterprises in Enugu metropolis. The entire population was adopted for the study owing to its manageable size. A four-point rating scale questionnaire with 15 items were used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts from ESUT. It was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach Alpha, which gave a coefficient of 0.82. Mean and standard deviation were used for analyzing the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Mean values of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agreed while those below 2.50 were regarded as Disagreed. For the hypotheses, when the calculated value (t-cal) is less than -1.96 or greater than 1.96, the hypotheses is not rejected, otherwise, it is rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the areas of possible collaborations between Universities and Industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State?

Table 1: Respondents’ mean ratings on areas of possible collaborations between Universities and Industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities.

S/N	Areas of possible collaborations include:	Lecturers N=28			SME Owners n=260		
		\bar{x}	SD	Decision	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1.	Industries helping to provide finance for purchase of instructional tools for Business Education programme	3.01	0.81	Agree	2.88	0.89	Agree
2.	Industries allowing Business Education Undergraduates to come for field trips for first-hand experience	2.99	0.93	Agree	2.91	0.92	Agree
3.	Partnering of Industries with Universities for students Industrial work experience scheme	3.32	1.00	Agree	3.04	1.01	Agree
4.	Industries involving Business Education Undergraduates in business board meeting for first-hand experience of management practices	2.87	0.98	Agree	3.00	0.89	Agree
5.	Creating business managers student interactive sessions to practical experience	3.03	1.01	Agree	2.96	0.92	Agree
	Cluster mean	3.04	0.95	Agree	2.96	0.93	Agree

Table 1 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 2.87 – 3.32 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This applied that the respondents admitted that the items are possible areas of collaboration between universities and industries. However, the cluster mean score of 3.00 shows respondents’ agreement that possible areas of collaborations are industries helping to provide finance to purchase instructional tools, industries allowing undergraduates to come for field trips, partnering of industries with universities in SIWES among others. The standard deviation scores for all the items are within the range of 0.81-1.01 showing that the respondents are homogeneous in their ratings.

Research Question 2

What are the benefits of these collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State?



Table 2: Respondents' mean ratings on the benefits of collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities.

S/N	Benefits of collaborations	Lecturers N=28			SME Owners n=260		
		\bar{x}	SD	Decision	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1.	Training of students to handle equipment effectively	3.00	1.00	Agree	3.00	0.89	Agree
2.	Provision of solutions to classroom unanswered questions	3.01	1.01	Agree	2.96	0.92	Agree
3.	Provision of opportunities for the transfer of knowledge from classroom to field	2.99	0.93	Agree	3.01	1.02	Agree
4.	Preparation of students for real world business experiences	3.02	0.96	Agree	2.91	0.92	Agree
5.	Acquisition of business acumen	3.00	0.99	Agree	3.04	1.01	Agree
	Grand mean	3.00	0.98	Agree	2.98	0.95	Agree

Table 2 shows that the mean scores of all the items are greater than 2.5 mean score. This means that both Business Education lecturers and SME Owners agreed to all the items as benefits of collaborations between universities and industries in business education programmes for effective curriculum implementation. However, the cluster mean score of 2.99 shows respondents' agreement that collaborations between universities and industries will provide opportunities for the transfer of knowledge from classroom to the field, prepare students for real world business experiences, acquisition of business acumen, effective manipulations of office equipment and machines among others. The standard deviation scores for all the items are within the range of 0.89-1.01 showing that the respondents are homogeneous in their ratings.

Research Question 3

What are the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State?

Table 3: Respondents' mean ratings on the factors inhibiting collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities.

S/N	Factors inhibiting these collaborations include:	Lecturers N=28			SME Owners n=260		
		\bar{x}	SD	Decision	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Lack of political will or policies to foster such collaborations	2.99	0.93	Agree	3.01	1.02	Agree
2	Cultural differences between universities and industries create areas of disagreement between universities and businesses	2.92	0.95	Agree	3.00	1.00	Agree
3	Infrastructure deficit in universities impair their ability to incorporate industrial recommended practices to business education classroom	3.00	1.00	Agree	3.00	0.89	Agree
4	Poor staff development and training hampers smooth harmonization of industrial practices and academic theories	3.01	1.01	Agree	2.96	0.92	Agree
5	Distrust between universities and industries causes sabotage in implementing areas of common interest	2.89	1.00	Agree	2.98	0.98	Agree
	Grand mean	2.96	0.98	Agree	2.99	0.96	Agree



Table 3 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 2.89 – 3.01 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. The implication of this finding is that respondents agreed that all the items are inhibiting factors to universities-industries collaboration. The grand mean of lecturers and SME owners are 2.96 and 2.99 respectively, which further affirm the above submissions. The standard deviation scores for all the items are within the range of 0.89-1.01 showing that the respondents are homogeneous in their ratings.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant differences between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and SME Owners on the areas of possible collaborations between industries in Business Education programmes curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Table 4: t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers and SME owners on the areas of possible collaborations between industries and Business Education programmes for curriculum implementation.

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Sign. Level	T-cal	T-crit
Lecturers	28	3.04	0.95	286	0.05	0.8806	± 1.96
SME Owners	260	2.96	0.93				

The t-test analysis presented in Table 4 revealed that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.8806 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of -1.96 and less than $P \leq 0.05$ levels of significance and at 286 degree of freedom (df). This showed that, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers and SME Owners on the areas of possible collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

Ho₂: There is no significant differences between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and SME Owners on the benefits of collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Table 5: t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers and SME owners on the benefits of collaborations between industries and Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation.

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	Sign. Level	T-cal	T-crit
Lecturers	28	3.00	0.98	286	0.05	0.454	1.96
SME Owners	260	2.98	0.95				

The analysis in Table 5 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of t-cal is 0.4546, which is not greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96. The null hypothesis is accepted meaning that there were no significant differences between the mean responses of business education lecturers and SME Owners on the benefits of collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and SME Owners on the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State



Table 6: t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers and SME owners on the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities.

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	Sign. level	T-cal	T-crit
Lecturers	28	3.80	1.22	286	0.05	0.408	1.96
SME owners	260	3.74	1.18				

The analysis in Table 6 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of t-cal is 0.408, which is not greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96. The null hypothesis is accepted meaning that there were no significant differences between the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and SME Owners on the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one sought the areas of possible collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu state. It was revealed among others that: Industries could provide finance for purchase of instructional tools; allow undergraduates come for field trips; support students industrial work experience scheme; involve undergraduates in business board meetings for first-hand experience of management practices; and create interactive sessions between business managers and business education students. The study is in agreement with Emeasoba and Mmuo (2018) who submitted that there are several areas of possible school-industry collaborations. Emeasoba (2017) concluded specifically that universities and industries may partner in areas such as curriculum development, improving practical training through Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), knowledge transfer, financial support for universities developmental projects, scholarships, career guidance initiatives among others to enhance graduate skills and ensure a smooth and effective transition between university and the business environment through collaborations. This finding also showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents on the possible areas of collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes curriculum implementation in Universities in Enugu State.

Research question two inquired into the benefits of these collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State. The findings showed that some of the benefit of such collaborations are that: students are trained to handle equipment effectively; it provides solutions to classroom unanswered questions; provides opportunities for the transfer of knowledge from classroom to field; prepare students for real world business experiences; and help students acquire business acumen. This study is in line with the studies of Tessema and Abejehu (2017) and Bermejo, Eynian, Malmksold and Scottie (2021) who found that university-industry collaboration is a veritable tool for capacity building in the Business Education programmes in universities. Furthermore, the findings showed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and SME Owners on the benefits of collaborations between universities and industries in business education programmes curriculum implementation in Universities in Enugu State.

Research question three sought the factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programmes for effective curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State. It was revealed that lack of political will or policies to foster such collaborations; cultural differences between universities and industries create areas of disagreement between universities and businesses; infrastructure deficit in universities impair their ability to incorporate industrial recommended practices to Business Education classroom; poor staff development and training hampers smooth harmonization of industrial practices and academic theories; and distrust between universities and industries causes sabotage in implementing areas of common interest are all factors inhibiting the collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programme. In a related study, Emeasoba and Mmuo (2018) identified poor government support, weak institutional capacity, ineffective communication between both stakeholders (university and industry) and the existing huge gap between theory and practice in the entire education system as challenges hampering University-Industry collaboration. In the same vein, Bermejo, Eynian, Malmksold and Scotti (2021) further emphasised the huge gap between theory and practice as a significant challenge. Furthermore, the findings showed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of Business Education lecturers and SME



Owners on the factors inhibiting the collaborations between universities and industries in Business Education programmes curriculum implementation in Universities in Enugu State.

Conclusion

The study concludes that possible areas of collaboration between universities and industries in Business Education programme curriculum implementation are: Industries could provide finance for purchase of instructional tools; allow undergraduates come for field trips; support students Industrial work experience scheme; involve Undergraduates in business board meeting for first-hand experience of management practices; and create interactive sessions between business managers and Business Education students. University-industry collaborations help train students to handle equipment effectively; provides solutions to classroom unanswered questions; provides opportunities for the transfer of knowledge from classroom to field; prepare students for real world business experiences; and help students acquire business acumen. Lack of political will or policies; cultural differences between universities and industries; infrastructure deficit in universities; poor staff development and training; and distrust between universities and industries hamper university-industry collaborations on Business Education programme curriculum implementation in universities in Enugu State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. University management must devise strategies to help their Business Education programme explore the identified areas of possible collaboration with industries. The use of field trip is one easy strategy that could be easily adopted.
2. Government should formulate and implement strong policies that will encourage public universities to engage in these universities-industries partnerships. This way, Business Education graduates from such universities will be practically grounded like their counterparts in developed countries
3. All stakeholders should make concerted efforts to help reduce or eliminate the identified factors hampering university-industry collaboration so as to foster practical learning as recommended in the Business Education programme curriculum.

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