



## BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: A TOOL FOR ALLEVIATING SOCIAL VICES

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### **Abstract**

*The paper was aimed at examining Business Education in Nigeria as a Tool for Alleviating Social Vices. Business Education as a discipline bridges the gap between theory and practice thereby making our youths to be gainfully employed which also translates into reducing the high rate of social vices. Social vices have become a cankerworm in the Nigerian educational system over the years. The paper further identified various causes, forms, role, goals, measures, ways, challenges, and prospects aimed at alleviating social vices in our educational system. Social vices have been on the increase for many years now considering the fact that the Nigerian government has contributed greatly in alleviating them such as child abuse, child trafficking, insurgency, examination malpractice, alcoholism, promiscuity, prostitution, drug abuse, kidnapping, cultism among others. despite all the measures put in place by the government for alleviating the social vices, the crime rate continued at a disturbing rate. It was concluded that Business education remains an important tool or strategy for the alleviation of social vices in Nigeria and recommended among others that to alleviate social vices through important functioning of business education, Business educators should be guided by moral, psychological and physical supports to students by teaching it, preaching it, and living by it as it will go a long way in helping the students in avoiding or containing social vices.*

**Keywords:** *Business Education, Social Vices, Causes, Forms, Measures, Challenges, and Prospects of Social Vices.*

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## **Introduction**

Business Education is a veritable tool that is used to alleviate social vices in every sphere of life. Business education is a diverse discipline that is included in all levels of educational delivery system such as primary, secondary, and post secondary. Business education is a wide discipline which encompasses a number of specialist areas such as Stenographic/Secretarial studies, Accountancy, Business Management, Computer studies, Distributive education and all other areas of Business education (Nwaokolo, 1994). This definition indicates that Business education covers a wide range of economic activities in any society. Business education is a systematic learning experience which is designed to fit individuals for gainful employment in recognized occupations and prepares students and the youths to handle their own business affairs and to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in the business community (Osuala, 1981). In his view, Chika (2005), sees Business education as an embodiment of vocational knowledge and skills needed for employment and advancement in a broad range of business. Any country that cannot provide for her citizenry the basic skills for employment or self-employment will continue to experience all forms of societal vices or challenges. Njoku (2006) in Shaibu, Ameh and Barinem (2016), Business education is an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills. Therefore, Business education should be seen as an important tool in alleviating social vices.

Hence, social vices are forms of evil, wicked and criminal actions or behaviour in the society. Vices on the other hand are social problems and have been thought of as social situations that a large number of observers feel are inappropriate and need remedying. Social Vices are acts and conditions that violate societal norms and values. Nwadike (2013), sees social vices as wicked evil and criminal actions or behaviour in the society. They are social situations, acts and conditions that violate societal norms and values. The qualitative aspect of education should be viewed as a living and moving thing whose goodness resides not only in its excellence, relative to certain standards, but in its excellence and fitness to the changing needs of the students and the society it is intended to serve. Qualitative education should therefore, lead to detectable gains in knowledge, skills and values. There are however, several societal vices that seem to be militating against realization of the desired goal. Some of the common ones (vices) include cultism, drug abuse, examination malpractice, obscene dressing, and sexual promiscuity/harassment. Social vices are forms of evil, wicked and criminal actions or behaviour in the society (Cook, 2012). Social vices are those acts and conditions that violate social norms and



values (Miller, 2001). Igbo (2013) emphasized that vices are like the viruses that destroy the moral condition of the society and make way for social maladies or ills and if the vices are curbed or controlled, the risk would be greatly reduced.

In the assertion of Jonathan (2013), the increase in social vices like armed robbery, kidnapping, ritual killings and drug peddling can be attributed to the deterioration of value system in the society. To Ede (2010), the high rate of social vices in Nigeria has been linked to poor educational system and high level of youth unemployment. Social vices in the country include: drug and child-trafficking, rape, armed robbery, kidnapping and hostage taking, cultism, ethno-religious conflicts, militant activities which sometimes degenerate into terrorism, and cultism (Ede, 2010).

### **Causes of Social Vices**

Social vices are caused by the following: unemployment, too much parental affection during the individual's childhood, not enough parental affection during the individual's childhood, too much corporal punishment in the home, not enough corporal punishment in the home, inconsistent corporal punishment in the home, underprivileged childhood, overprivileged childhood, too much education, insufficient education, absence of religious training, over stringent religious training, broken homes, unbroken home when they would have been more wholesome if broken by divorce, poverty, affluence, over permissive police, feeble-mindedness, intellectual brilliance, comic books, depiction of violence in movies and on Television (TV), weak government, widening income inequality, poor quality labour force, rural-urban migration, lack of access to credit facilities and other productive resources, drop out among youths, increased discrimination, etc. (Dressler, 2008).

### **Forms of Social Vices**

The following among others are some forms of social vices:

**Examination Malpractice:** Examination malpractice is seen as any act of omission or commission, which compromises the validity and integrity of any examination (Ministry of Education, Benue State, 2001). Malpractice therefore, refers to counter practice that is against ethics of examination. It is an act of disrespect to all rules and regulations guiding the good conduct of any examination or any evaluation process. In the recent times, examination malpractice has grown from simple 'giraffing' where students occasionally strain their necks to catch glimpse of what they want to copy from other students' scripts to a variety of sophisticated methods. Some



candidates write relevant information on the subject or course to be taken on different objects or parts of the body or even clothes and recopy same during examination. Some students smuggle in lecture notes from where they copy, while others exchange their question papers with answers jotted on them during examination. Some students even hire other more brilliant ones to write examinations for them. Other social vices such as cultism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity and truancy are also encouraging examination malpractice on our campuses as students devote more time to them than their studies. Examination malpractice has grave danger on the individuals and institutions of learning, communities and society at large.

**Cultism:** Cultism is a system of religious belief and practice or an ideology (Denga, 1991). However, Orukpe (1988) sees secret cults as a group of people who share and propagate peculiar secret beliefs divulged only to members or themselves. Secret cult groups are now dreaded on the campuses following their secret activities and ascribed mysticism and power, members enjoy an aura of boldness especially from non- members. There are about 45 secret cults in the Nigerian institutions of learning and are all equipped with an elaborate hierarchy, insignia and distinct attire (Nwadike, 2013). Some of the most notable of these secret cult groups include the Sea Dogs, Black Axe, Aiye, Vikings, Amazons, White Angels, Black Brassiers, Buccaneer Confraternity, Egede, and a host of others. Cultism leads to outbreak of violence on campuses and its attendant destruction of lives and property. In most cases, youths join cult groups to gain recognition and popularity and to enhance social life on the campus. Cult members hardly pay attention to their studies, as they are fond of cajoling their lecturers into passing them in examinations whether they have done well or not.

**Drug Abuse:** A drug is a substance of biological or chemical origin which when applied to a living tissue, produces an effect (Olatunde, 1979). Drugs include what are commonly called medicine and not only substances which alter mood, perception or normal awareness as some people erroneously believe. Jaffe (1975) sees drug abuse as the use, especially by self-administration, of any drug in a manner that deviates from an approved medical or social patterns within a given culture. Government agencies refer to any use of an illicit substance as drug abuse e.g, heroine, marijuana (Indian hemp), tramadol, etc.



**Obscene Dressing:** Tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria have been bedeviled with obscene dressing particularly by female students. Most girls go bare, display their navels and boobs and wearing what are just ample cleavages on display, depicting size and shape of the private parts with minis that barely skim the bottom. It appears now that to be fashionable, one has to become half nude, dressed in sleeveless/see-through tops without breast wear. This however, constitutes Weapons of Mass Distraction (WMD) and sexual harassment (Irtwange, 2004). This seductive dressing thus has profound negative effect on both the students and the lecturers alike as they can hardly concentrate in their academic work under such an environment. There must be a moderate position that allows the students to dress in a certain way that would meet societal value. The higher institutions of learning have been fighting against other social vices such as cultism, examination malpractice, and drug abuse but the issue of obscene dressing has not received comparable attention.

**Sexual Promiscuity:** Sexual promiscuity among students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is another serious vice that calls for serious attention. Most of the students who for the first time, gain some social freedom from their parents' watchful eyes and guidance easily fall prey to the temptation of having sex. Some of them become so wild on the illicit lovemaking that they give most of their time and attention to it to the detriment of their studies. They become so much engaged in nocturnal activities that they sleep throughout the daytime in hostels or during lectures, for those who would want to register their presence in classes. Some other ones completely abandon their lecture to keep appointments with boy- friends or "sugar daddies". Some of the students are so morally bankrupt that they rely absolutely on their womanhood to "pass" their examinations. They seduce fellow male students or examiners to assist them write their examinations or award them pass marks as the case may be, thereby exposing them to danger.

### **Role of Business Education in Curbing Social Vices**

Consequently, social vice is a very serious problem that can destabilize any society or nation. Business education is a programme that prepares learners for future life. The philosophy and goal of Nigerian education is the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as equipment for the individual



to live and contribute to the development of the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). The aim of establishing business education is therefore, to develop in the students vocational skills and ability to engage themselves in productive activities at their leisure time, rather than getting involved with social vices. Education is a long-term investment by the state to make itself a better place in which to make a living. What this statement simply means is that education is an instrument of change and transformation in order not to lag behind in changing times and changing conditions. This is what Business education as a course was established to achieve. Business education as a value free and value laden subject has the capacity to build sound morals and integrity in all facets of the life. It serves as an aid to changing the value system of the people and as a means of re-appraising undue obsession to materialism and primitive wealth accumulation which is the mania that is somehow responsible for corrupt practices in the society which invariably thwarts our national development.

### **Goals of Business Education and Implication for Social Vices**

Business education has been carefully designed to meet basic skills, knowledge and capabilities to function either as a business teacher or business executive. When speaking about the objectives of Business education, the following goals are outlined:

To help develop in all students, the ability to choose wisely the goods and services that business has to offer.

To make available to all students the opportunities to explore and learn about the world of business and the possible interests and potential careers it has to offer.

To assist in developing an intelligent understanding on the part of all students of the various occupation to be found in the world of business.

To develop in practical ways an understanding and an appreciation of the actual function of our economic system.

To enable students acquire business knowledge and skills that may be needed for personal use.

To prepare students to enter into and follow business as a career.

To prepare students for more effective study in the field of business.

To prepare students to perform business activities common to many professional areas.



### **Measures for Alleviating Social Vices**

Establishments that are out to tackle the problem of social vices in Nigeria include the police, courts, prisons, private social work organizations, among others.

**The Police:** Many laymen as well as penologists hold that the police are all too often corrupt or incompetent (Hess, 2008). In the views of MCfeely (2001), the police do a fairly effective job of combating crime by arresting offenders. The simple fact is that the civilians' knowledge and professional skills have been inadequate in handling crime and criminality.

**Courts:** The courts are praised by some for their dispassionate adherence to "the rule of law", criticized by others as unscientific, inhumane and failing to match dispositions to the needs of the community and the individual defendant. Courts do a reasonably efficient job of convicting the guilty and freeing the innocent, but if mistakes are made, the guilty sometimes go free and the innocent on comparatively rare occasions go to prison or are executed (Crotts, 1996).

**Prisons:** According to Chikpandu, (2012) many people including wardens and superintendents themselves, declare that prisons are abysmal failures that they turn prisoners back into the community worse than they were when they came in.

**Private Social Work:** Many private social work agencies and institutions are highly regarded by some observers and considered superior to their public counterparts in the areas of prevention and treatment (Dressler, 2008). He however, pointed on the other hand that although some benefits can be derived from these sources, such results as are measureable and have been measured indicate that we do not know enough as yet to be able to bring about basic changes in personality, attitude and behaviour with any degree of consistency attached.

### **Business Education's Challenges and Prospects in Alleviating Social Vices**

Education by way of emphasis is an instrument of change and development. According to Akpa, (2000), Business education is seen as a course that prepares students for entry in advancement in jobs within business, and prepares them to handle their own business affairs and function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy and should be harnessed to see its possibility of alleviating social vices.

Business education is the production of manpower who possess the requisite knowledge, skill and attitudes for harnessing other resources and bringing them into a



cooperative relationship that yield the goods and services demanded by the society for the satisfaction of their wants and needs. The implication is that business education takes the lead in providing the recipients with self-employment which will indirectly alleviate the social vices in a nation. One can recall the usual saying that "an idle man is a devil's workshop". Hence, if one does not have something doing he/she may indulge in one form of social vices or the other.

As pointed out earlier, Business education acts as a means of reducing social vices in that, those who graduate reading Business education never depend on white collar jobs only as they go into businesses and ensure that they earn a living. Also, the magnitude of social vices could be reduced through functional business education, which should be integrated into school curriculum right from primary school to enable the students to develop vocational skills that will make them to be self-employed even if they find it difficult to proceed to the higher level of education.

Business education however, is that education which prepares students for entry into and advancement in jobs within business and prepares them to handle their own business affairs and function intelligently as consumers and citizens of a given economy (Nwaokolo, 1994). This indicates that business education has a formidable force in equipping youths with the appropriate skills, knowledge, abilities and competencies to enable the individuals or group of individuals to be self-employed and self-reliant leading to sustainable economic growth and social vices reduction in any society.

### **Ways of Reducing Social Vices**

As a tool for alleviating social vices, Business education can employ the following ways:

- Establishment of agricultural related centers
- Establishment of business centers which involves acquisition of computers for typing documents and photocopier for photocopying documents.
- GSM business like phone call, sale of GSM starters pack, sale of handset and repairs.
- Establishing of private vocational schools which involves training of secretaries, computer operators and so on.
- Organizing workshops and seminars for organisations in recruitment activities.
- Having stationery shop
- Being a consultant like secretarial consultancy
- Supplying and distribution of goods and services
- Sales promotion of all products for different establishments and advertising.



## **Conclusion**

In conclusion therefore, social vices arise mostly from unemployment and lack of parental upbringing. Business education remains a veritable tool for alleviating social vices in Nigeria and plays a great role in stemming social vices found in most institutions of higher learning today. Business Education and each of the arms has professional associations. Hence, the federal government's effort in alleviating social vices can only be meaningful if all hands must be on deck, if measures for alleviating social vices can be identified and if the officers of the Nigeria Police Force are ready to do an honest job. Our graduates must possess self-management, conceptual, analytical and lifelong learning skills beyond the basic training provided by the traditional educational system. It is on the bases of these that Business education is seen as the education for a vocation, and bridging the gap between theory and practice.

More so, Business education stands out as the way forward for one to become self-employed. It is a means to an end and it has been able among other disciplines to cut across every profession, as it is a versatile profession. The qualitative production of business education graduates would indeed help in the reduction of social vices in the country. However, this poses a great challenge to business educators, government, parents, and indeed all stakeholders.

## **Recommendations**

The following among others were recommended to alleviate social vices:

Awareness about Business education programme should be made known to the members of the public.

Career information should be provided by schools to help students to relate interest needs and abilities to occupational opportunities in business.

Children should be encouraged by their parents on the need to enroll for business education programme as it offers the necessary skills, knowledge and competences which help to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Government should provide adequate employment to all job seekers through financing and granting of loans.

The police force should be well equipped for effective patrol, thereby curbing social vices.

Business education teachers / lecturers should live an exemplary life style as it is easier for students to learn from teachers and to make them role models

Business educators should be guided by moral, psychological and physical support to students by teaching it, preaching it, and living by it, as this will help students avoid or deal with social vices.

Parents should be vigilant and not leave everything to teachers as moral education is not only for schools.