

IMPACT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND THE PROMOTION OF INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR LABOUR

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Abstract

This study determined the Impact of Business Education Curriculum in the Promotion of Inclusive Development for Labour Market in University of Calabar, Cross River State. This study answered three research questions and tested two null hypotheses. The study adopted survey research design and the population consisted of final year business education students. The sample comprised of 219 randomly selected final year Business Education Students. A structured questionnaire containing 42 items, grouped into three clusters that sought to elicit the impact of business education curriculum in promoting inclusive development for labour market. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were tested with the use of t-test statistical tool. Based on the data collected and analysed the study indicated that contents of business education curriculum and the quality of teachers has a very great influence on the students' skill acquisitions. Therefore, the study among others recommended that business education curriculum should be reviewed and expanded for inclusion of various skills required for students to be self-reliant upon graduation.

Keywords: Business Education Curriculum, promotion inclusive development, labour Market.

Introduction

The functionality of education for individual's growth among other reasons is the essence of business education. Business education is centered on the acquisition of skills for self and societal development. Business education is a functional education programme that provides individuals with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, understanding attitudes and values to fit in the field of work. To be functional means that the acquired skills are put to use by the individual in meeting various needs. This education also contributes to economic development of the nation through individuals' participation in their immediate society Ajoma, (2021). Oluwu, (2019) saw business education as an aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and basic scientific knowledge whose goals are embedded in the general goals and objectives of vocational education. These objectives are thus: providing trained manpower in the applied science, technology and business particularly at craft, and technical fields; provide the technical knowledge and

vocational skills necessary for agriculture, economic and commercial development, and giving training in necessary skills to individual for economic self-reliance and stability Olori and Olori, (2018).

Business education which is an essential aspect of education is concerned with the impartation of business orientation and knowledge for personal and national development. It involves teaching students the principles, fundamental, concepts, theories and processes of business. It is an important part of the general education which emphasises on skills and competencies acquisition for use in offices and business related occupation. It is important to note that one remarkable and functional characteristic of business education programme is that, her products can function independently as self-employed and employer of labour, consequently business education includes basic education for teaching career, entrepreneurship, business understanding and vocational practices. Ajua, (2020) opined that business education plays a significant role in the economic development of a country by

providing knowledge and skills to the learners which enables them to impart knowledge to others, handle sophisticated office technologies and information system aimed at producing competent, dynamic and skillful business teachers, office administrators, business men and women that can comfortably compete in the workplace.

Curriculum is a document which contains the goals and objectives of a particular course of study, the subject matter, the content, the learning experiences and evaluation. It is the life wire of a school programme and it is a track that prepares students for their future life. In school and colleges, curriculum is the core of any educational endeavour, as it determines what and how educational content should be taught and learned. Nwankwo and Obuah, (2021) define curriculum as a guide in designing courses that consists of external sets of events namely, principles, environment and needs that involve practical and theoretical considerations that will have a major effect in guiding the actual process of course production. According to the author, the inner sets of events consists of goals and its center, contents and sequences, format and presentation, and monitoring and assessment. The success or failure of any educational system depends on the successful planning and execution of the curriculum. Therefore, scholars claimed that the wealth or poverty of a nation depends on the content of the curriculum. Okenwa, (2018) noted that curriculum consists of carefully mapped out programmes of what to teach, and how to teach it, the author stressed that it is through curriculum that the values, the dreams, and the desires of a nation are better interpreted. Some scholars have hinted that the wealth or poverty of a nation depends on the content of the curriculum.

According to report by the International Bureau of Education, (2016), curriculum represents a conscious and systematic selection of knowledge, skills and values, a selection that shapes the way teaching, learning and assessment processes are organised by addressing questions such as what, why, when and how students should

learn. likewise, Curriculum must address needs to develop students' competency in such areas as communication, creativity, managerial skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and appreciation of diversity as well as learning outcomes. Obviously, business education curriculum is aimed at developing these competencies in graduates of her programme. Amadike and Obara, (2020) viewed business education curriculum as an educational process of action about opportunities for engagement of students to be educated in business and educational related discipline. Business education curriculum in this context is responsible for equipping students with skills, attributes, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours required for teaching, entrepreneurship, personal, administrative and clerical work. When a student is adequately equipped with basic knowledge through skill acquisition, he will effectively work and overcome the job challenge. Nwankwo, and Obuah, (2021) maintained that business education curriculum was prepared to provide students with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values required for graduate's gainful employment or self-reliance.

Inclusive development is an equitable developmental approach, built on the understanding that every individual and community of all diverse identities and experiences, is instrumental in the transformation of their own societies. Their engagement throughout the entire development process leads to better outcomes. The ideas of inclusive development according to Onuoha, (2017), emerged in the second half of the 20th century focusing on different levels including the individual, states and international relations. The development paradigm was traditionally dominated by an economic perspective, in which industrialisation and productivity were seen as key drivers of development. Implicit in this approach is the adoption of the modernization theory. The accumulation of capital, economic growth and the capacity to industrialise were thus important indicators of development for both developed and

developing nations. According to Utoware and Krren-Ikidi, (2013), this development led to a growing need for a new, more inclusive international economic order. Many Sub-Saharan African countries experienced a period of economic stagnation, characterised by military conflicts, economic mismanagement and an unsustainable external debt (Zamfir, 2016).

In the last decade, the environment has become an additional dimension of development due to growing concerns of climate change and environmental problems. These economic, social and environmental issues became the three dimensions of Sustainable development Gupta, (2015). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are adopted in the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030. The adoption of the SDGs to a degree shed light to the impressive change in development thinking over the last few decades. Ajagbe, (2021) highlights the process of growing inequality, and the dangers of inequality on development and social cohesion. The role of equity on development has thus gained serious attention recently. Inclusive development is a recent dimension of development that strongly emphasises on the most marginalised poorest in consideration of education, economic, social and environmental dimensions and structural factors that hinder the poorest from participating in the development process. Ezeyi and Ochoma, (2020). During the 1990s, the focus of development thus shifted to human development, reducing poverty and increasing entitlement. A growing movement within development advocated for growing awareness on participatory development and an increasing focus on capabilities and freedom. Gender inequality and “third world woman's survival” are an important part of that conversation.

Statement of Problem

The idea of introducing business education programme in the university system was to enable graduates to acquire skills for the development of functional skills which would enable them to depend less on government jobs but rely on their abilities to

provide for themselves the means of livelihood. Business Education prepares her graduates for self-employment in Nigeria through, its specialisation in marketing, accounting, management office and secretarial options. From the foregoing, it is important to place side by side business education and the curriculum, since curriculum is the roadmap to acquiring essential working skills and career competency for employment opportunities in the labour market. The quality of business education graduates in meeting the needs of the modern competitive business environment depends largely on the quality of her curriculum. But, unfortunately, since the introduction of business education, many graduates remain unemployed for a long time after graduation which makes one wonder whether the business education programme being delivered to the undergraduates meet the aims and objectives of the course, thus making a mockery of the contents of business education curriculum and programme. Most graduates of business education among other graduates are unemployed thereby increasing the teeming population of the unemployed in the labour market.

Opara, (2018) declared that the inability of business education graduates to gain employment in various corporate bodies and organisations resulted from incompetence which, according to him, is traceable to the quality of certificate issued to business education graduates, shortages of business education teachers, lack of maintenance of equipment, inaccessibility of teaching facilities, teachers and students interest. others are, inadequate textbooks and workbooks and other business teaching materials as well as Nigerian certificate which is centered on mentality. The researchers observed in addition, poor quality assurance in the educational system of which business education is part of, the level of practical skills acquired by students is nothing to compare with the demands of the labour market and technological advancement which in turn has been a problem to the society. Business education curriculum and the

promotion of inclusive development for labour market is the focus of the study.

Objectives of the Study

1. Determine the influence of business education curriculum content in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market.
2. Determine business education curriculum content seek to give learners 21st century basic employability skills in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market.
3. Determine the influence of business education curriculum content in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does business education curriculum influence students' acquisition of requisite job skills to promote inclusive development of the labour market?
2. Does business education curriculum content equips learners with 21st century basic employability skills in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market in Universities in Calabar, Cross River State?
3. What is the influence of business education curriculum content on student acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills for self-reliance in the labour market?

Hypotheses

1. Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students' acquisition of requisite job skills for teaching business courses to promote inclusive development of the labour market.
2. Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on learner's acquisition of 21st century basic employability skills in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market in Universities in Calabar, Cross River

State

3. Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students' acquisition of entrepreneurial or vocational skills for self-reliance to promote inclusive development of the labour market.

Research Methods

This study adopted a survey research design, which sought to determine the impact of business education curriculum in promoting inclusive development for labour market in universities in Calabar. This is because it involved collection of data from respondents from various institutions. The population of this study comprised all final year business education students in the two public universities in Calabar. Simple random sampling technique was used to arrive at a sample size of 219 business education students out of 1095. Data were collected through self-structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Business Education curriculum on Skill Acquisition of Business Education Student's Questionnaire (IBECoSABESQ)" comprising of 42 items, in three clusters to address issues of curriculum content for the development of the labour market. The questionnaire had a five item rating scale with weighted value of High Extent (5) high (4) undecided (3) low (2) low extent (1). Any item that scored a mean of 3.00 and above, was rated high extent, while items that scored a mean of less than 3.00 was rated low extent. The questionnaire was content validated by specialist in the field of research study. The items were validated, using Cronbach alpha and reliability coefficient of .82 was established. 219 respondents successfully filled the questionnaire and returned, comprising of 130 males and 89 females. Data collected were analyzed with the use of mean, standard deviation and t-test analyses to obtain results.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does business education curriculum influence students' acquisition of requisite job skills to promote inclusive development of the labour market?

Table 1: Responses to the question, to what extent does business education curriculum influence students’ acquisition of requisite job skills to promote inclusive development of the labour market?

S/N	Statements	SD	X	Decision
Business education curriculum content				
1.	Typewriting and keyboarding	.498	1.45	LE
2.	Entrepreneurship in Business Education	1.334	3.30	HE
3.	Principles of Management	1.293	3.61	HE
4.	Business Communication	1.103	3.80	HE
5.	Office Technology and Management Education	.908	4.05	HE
6.	Information Technology and Computer Application	1.615	3.17	HE
7.	Principles of Accounting, Business Mathematics	.969	4.16	HE
8.	Introduction to Monetary Economics	1.464	3.24	HE
9.	Cost and Management Accounting	1.015	3.97	HE
10.	Shorthand Theory and practice	.474	1.34	LE
11.	Introduction to International economics	1.561	2.87	LE
12.	Public Sector Economics	1.425	4.26	HE
13.	Advanced Financial Accounting	1.672	3.59	HE
14.	Auditing and investigation	.897	4.05	HE

HE = High Extent while Low Extent

On research question one, respondents agreed that Business Education curriculum contain Entrepreneurship in Business Education, Principles of Management, Business Communication, Office Technology and Management Education, Information Technology and Computer Application, Principles of Accounting, Business Mathematics, Cost and Management Accounting, Public Sector Economics, Advanced Financial Accounting, Auditing and investigation, through IBECoSABESQ,

but disagreed on the curriculum containing Shorthand theory and practice, Typewriting and Keyboarding, Introduction to International economics, and Introduction to Monetary Economics, Research Question 2: Does business education curriculum content equips learners with 21st century basic employability skills in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market in Universities in Calabar, Cross River State??

Table 2: Responses to the question, does business education curriculum content equips learners with 21st century basic employability skills in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market in Universities in Calabar, Cross River State?

S/N	Statements	SD	X	Decision
Business Education Curriculum Equips				
1.	Business Training for better appreciation of the learners’ culture and traditional education	.498	1.45	LE
2.	Develop creative abilities in all aspects of the course	1.334	3.30	HE
3.	Development of employability skills	1.293	3.61	HE
4.	Equipping the learners with the ability to absorb new ideas.	1.103	3.80	HE
5.	Develop data to resolve the constantly changing world	.908	4.05	HE
6.	Good relationship with other individuals	1.615	3.17	HE
7.	Interacts with other individuals in the immediate society	.969	4.16	HE
8.	Relates with global society through ICT	.864	4.24	HE
9.	Inculcate and foster values such as hard work.	1.015	3.97	HE
10.	Inculcates personal integrity, tolerance and selflessness	.474	1.34	LE

11. Attributes of good citizenship	1.561	2.87	LE
12. Promotes productivity and maintenance culture	1.425	4.26	HE
13. Creates awareness and consciousness	1.672	3.59	HE
14. Create relevance of emerging issues in everyday living	.897	4.05	HE

Respondents from the IBECoSABESQ questionnaire agreed that Development of creative abilities of good citizenship, Equipping the learners with the ability to absorb new ideas, data for resolving constantly changing issues of life, Good relationship with other individuals, Interacts with other individuals in the immediate society, Relates with global society through ICT, Inculcate and foster values such as hard work, Promotes productivity and maintenance culture, Creates awareness and consciousness and Create relevance of emerging issues in everyday living. They

disagreed with the fact that business education curriculum equips students with Business Training for better appreciation of the learners’ culture and tradition, develop creative abilities in all aspects of life, Inculcates personal integrity, tolerance and selflessness, Attributes of good citizenship, Research Question 3: What is the influence of business education curriculum on students’ skill acquisition of requisite job skills for the promotion of inclusive development of students for the labour market?

Table 3: Responses to the question, what is the influence of business education curriculum content on student acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills for self-reliance in the labour market?

S/N	Statements	SD	X	Decision
Acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills				
1.	Business management skills	.498	3.17	HE
2.	Teamwork and leadership skills	1.334	3.30	HE
3.	Communication and Listening skills	1.293	3.61	HE
4.	Customer service skills	1.103	3.80	HE
5.	Financial management skills	.908	4.05	HE
6.	Analytical and problem-solving skills	1.615	1.45	LE
7.	Critical thinking skills	.969	4.16	HE
8.	Strategic thinking	.864	4.24	HE
9.	planning skills	1.015	3.97	HE
10.	Time management	.474	4.05	HE
11.	Organizational skills	1.561	3.87	HE
12.	Branding skills	1.425	2.26	LE
13.	Marketing skills	1.672	3.59	HE
14.	Networking skills	.897	1.34	LE

The students (respondents), on Acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills agreed that business management, teamwork and leadership skills, communication and listening skills, customer service, financial management, critical thinking, strategic thinking, planning, time management, organizational marketing and networking skills are contained in the course curriculum

while analytical and problem solving, branding and networking are lacking.

Hypothesis 1. Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students’ acquisition of requisite job skills for teaching business courses to promote inclusive development of the labour market.

Table 4. The t-test analysis of responses on hypothesis one

Variable	N	X	Sd	Df	T	P	Decision
Male	130	2.8627	.44640	216	-2890	.003	Rejected
Female	89	3.0243	.36631		-3.093	.002	

The t-test analysis in table 4 reveals that the calculated t-value (-2.89) is greater than the critical t-value (1.96), therefore the null hypothesis, H_{0i} was rejected.

Hypothesis 2. Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on student acquisition of requisite job skills for administrative work to promote inclusive development of the labour market.

Table 5. The t-test analysis of responses on hypothesis two

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	T	P	Decision
Male	130	3.9943	.44655	217	-2.714	0.006	Rejected
Female	89	4.1698	.36621		-2.683	0.008	

The t-test analysis in table 5 above reveal that the calculated t-value (-2.71) is greater than the critical t-value (1.96), therefore the null hypothesis (H_{0^2}) was hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 3. Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students' acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills for self-reliance to promote inclusive development of the labour market.

Table 6. The t-test analysis of responses on hypothesis Three

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	T	P
Decision						
Male	130	2.8248	.44655	217	-2.256	.025
Rejected						
Female	89	3.0079	.36621		-2.523	.014

For hypothesis three (H_{0^3}), the t-test analysis in table 5 above showed that the calculated t-value (-2.26) is greater than the critical t-value (1.96), therefore the null hypothesis (H_{0^3}) was rejected.

Discussion

The findings in Table 1 revealed that the contents of business education curriculum in terms of enabling the students acquire new skills, Entrepreneurship in Business Education, Principles of Management, Business Communication, Office Technology and Management Education, Information Technology and Computer Application, Principles of Accounting, Business Mathematics, Introduction to Monetary Economics, Cost and Management Accounting, Public Sector Economics, Advanced Financial Accounting, Auditing and investigation had positive responses. Whereas the items, Typewriting and

Keyboarding, Shorthand Theory and Practice and Introduction to International economics had negative responses as the students disagreed on these items.

This is in line with the opinion of Anioke, (2019) who argue that the extent to which business education -curriculum assists business education students to competently enter and succeed in the world of work by acquiring the necessary job skills spells out success. Supporting this findings, Esong and Whyte, (2021) opined that business education curriculum is that which endows the students with the appropriate skills and attitudes which enables them to improve the quality of life and the environment they find themselves

after graduation. In addition, the associated null hypothesis showed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business education students regarding how great business education curriculum influences their job skill acquisition in public universities in Cross Rivers State.

Result in Table 2 showed that business education curriculum content equips learners with 21st century basic employability skills in promoting inclusive development of students for labour market in the following area Business Training for better appreciation of the learners' culture and tradition, Develop creative abilities in all aspects of life, Development of creative abilities of good citizenship, Equipping the learners with the ability to absorb new ideas, data for resolving constantly changing issues of life, Good relationship with other individuals, Interacts with other individuals in the immediate society, Relates with global society through ICT, Inculcate and foster values such as hard work, Inculcates personal integrity, tolerance and selflessness, Attributes of good citizenship, Promotes productivity and maintenance culture, Creates awareness and consciousness, Create relevance of emerging issues in everyday living. This finding is sync with that of Onuoha (2017) who affirmed that a quality business educator (teacher) help students develop to their maximum capacity to work or fit in the business world.

Also Osuala, (2009) contended that poor teachers of business education hinder students from developing their intellectual skills that would equip them to contribute significantly to the society.

Furthermore, the results in table 3 shows the students (respondents) on acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills agreed that, business management, teamwork and leadership skills, communication and listening skills, customer service, financial management, critical thinking, strategic thinking, planning, time management, organisational marketing and networking skills are contained in the course

curriculum while analytical and problem solving, branding and networking are lacking.

Finally, the associated null hypotheses indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business education students regarding Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students' acquisition of requisite job skills for teaching business courses, business education curriculum content has no significant influence on student acquisition of requisite job skills for administrative work and business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students' acquisition of entrepreneurial and vocational skills for self-reliance to promote inclusive development of the labour market in universities in Cross Rivers State. The finding is supported by Agwu, (2018) who recommended a curriculum that integrates all aspects of technical, vocational and business studies subjects, project teams, peer exchange, individual counseling and workshops for a holistic education. This is connected to the fact that with the rapid technological change in the society, exposing the students to these learning constitutes a way of preparing them to obtain the best practices needed to compete globally. This is why the findings by Chinedu and Olabiyi, (2015) revealed the matching theory with practice and improved instructional technology in the delivery of business education courses as some of the strategies for empowering youths through vocational technical education. The effective use of these technologies may not have been unconnected with the fact that the teaching of business related courses, are still done with outdated instructional materials that do not stand the test of time.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it could be deduced that content of business education curriculum and quality of business education teachers goes a long way to influence students acquisition of skills in this technological age. It is then imperative that business education students who intend to be self-reliant be endowed and equipped with the

needed skills for successful business or enterprise. Business education curriculum planners in general should collaborate with their employers of Labour in the designing of curriculum that will meet the skill needed in the labour market.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Business education curriculum should be reviewed for inclusion of requisite skills required by business education students to be self-reliant after graduation.
2. Government and business education institutions should ensure the implementation of the curriculum developed for business education for adequate equipment of the students.
3. Government through the business education practitioners should ensure adequate facilities are provided for the teaching of needed skills.

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