

ENHANCING QUALITY IN BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM DELIVERY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT REDUCTION IN EKITI STATE NIGERIA

Ehis V. Elemure
Lagos State Teaching Service Commission
and
Clement Boluwaji Elemure
Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti, Nigeria

Abstract: *The role of quality education in nation building cannot be overemphasized as no nation can grow beyond the level of education it offers its citizenry. In the same vein, no country can develop meaningfully without a well-developed vocational education programme. Business Education is geared towards the attainment of skills, values, and abilities that prepare its beneficiaries to enter into a specific job or occupation. This paper reports on how the quality of business education in Ekiti State, Nigeria could be enhanced to achieve this objective. Eighty business education lecturers and their students completed questionnaires on the 'Funding of Business Education in Nigeria; Issues and Challenges' (FBENIC) and the Key Informant Interview (KII) schedule. Three research questions were answered. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used in the analyzed data. Any item with a weighted mean value of 3.00 and above was regarded as agreed or adequate. A mean value below 3.00 was assumed as disagree or inadequate. Results indicated the need for better funding, effective management of suitable curriculum, recruitment of qualified teachers, provision of necessary facilities and educational research. Major obstacles include: Poor funding of business education, inadequate technological orientation, government as the sole financier, diversion and misappropriation of funds, inadequate records of materials and facilities allocated for the business education programme. Business education offers a possible solution to the perennial problem of insecurity and insurgency, unemployment and poverty if its potentials are carefully harnessed through an enhanced curriculum delivery system.*

Key words: business education in Nigeria, unemployment, skills and technological orientation, funding of business education

Introduction

The success of any system of education according to Bolarinwa (as cited in Ogunribido, 2005) hinges on proper planning, efficient administration, and adequate financing. According to Bolarinwa, the provision of adequate and balanced financial support for all educational services is central to the achievement of the nation's educational goals.

Curriculum refers to the means and materials with which students will interact for the purpose of achieving identified educational outcomes. To determine what

constitutes those means and materials, educators must decide what we want the curriculum to yield. We must also ask what will constitute the "educated" individual in our society (Corwin, 2011). The body of a curriculum is principally meant to enable students to meet the needs of the society and encourage positive change and growth.

As Corwin (2011) observed, the curriculum categories employed by most educational institutions include: explicit, implicit, null, and extra/co-curricular. Business education aptly employs the explicit curriculum because its subjects promote the skills and knowledge that students are expected to acquire. Because this is the core purpose of

running the programme, it is expected that sufficient attention and resources will be devoted to the programme.

Ayeni (2006) viewed funding as the art of providing or making money available for a purpose or in order to run a programme. It involves all the inputs that make a programme efficient in terms of capital, materials, and human resources. It therefore refers to physical appropriation of funds for business education. Funding of business education is no doubt capital intensive. Given that this aspect of education can help to create more jobs and revitalize the economy of the country, the Nigerian government has been able to make some concerted effort in the area of funding. For example, in an attempt to tackle the problem of financing education in the country, the federal government established several funding bodies including: Education Tax Fund, Petroleum Tax Fund, Industrial Training Fund, and Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND).

Government funding of the educational sector has, however, faced pressures from other sectors of the economy that require large capital investments to ensure development. Adesina (as cited in Fasae & Elemure, 2008) suggested that for any nation to be economically vibrant its constituents must be fully equipped with the relevant skills, knowledge, and aptitudes that will help them effectively function and contribute to the development and growth of the nation. This knowledge contributes to the production of manpower and harnesses other resources by bringing them into cooperative relationship. It also helps yield the necessary goods and services that the society wants and needs. Business education plays a vital role in equipping its recipients with the ability to become economically efficient and effective.

Ajayi (as cited in Adeosun & Ogunribido, 2014) argued that it behooves stakeholders in the area of education to provide funds that will help procure required materials, equipment, and facilities. The provision of adequate funds for business education programmes to ensure the production of technology-based business educators is a fundamental issue that demands urgent attention. Funds are needed to provide qualified lecturers, computers, classrooms, laboratories, and other modern gadgets that can contribute to quality delivery of the programme. Ayeni (2006) further posited that the funding of vocational (business) education cannot be left in the hands of the government alone as the government has sought to share public and private collaboration and joint responsibility for the costs of program design.

Business education has not been adequately funded to produce competent manpower for the nation's industries. According to Enijuni and Aina (2008), this inadequacy has adversely affected the overall output of the nation's industrial sector as half-baked business education graduates of tertiary institutions ultimately end up manning the business activities in the country. Aduwa-Ogiegbaen and Imogie (as cited in Enijuni & Aina, 2008) found that the funding of the educational system and the financing of high technology to support the system have been serious problems in Nigeria. In many African countries including Nigeria, personal and sectional interests have overwhelmingly influenced the disbursement of funds to various sectors of the economy, such that sometimes funds allocated for educational development purposes are embezzled or diverted by government officials.

Igwe (as cited in Eze, 2013), with reference to the *National Summit on Higher Education*, posited that the level of funding in the educational system has resulted in a lack of well-equipped libraries, laboratories, and workshops as well as

obsolete and outdated equipment, which is not quickly updated. In recognition of the peculiar nature of business education stemming from funding problems and the economic situation of the country, Oke (as cited in Eze, 2013) opined that education is an expensive social service that requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government if successful implementation of the education programmes is to occur. Consequently, this study examines the need for funding and the problems that militate against adequate funding which would enhance the quality of business education in Nigeria.

Government financial allocation to the educational sector in Nigeria has been abysmally low in comparison with other countries. This explains why many vital areas of development in key sectors of the economy are underdeveloped. For instance, in 2013, the educational sector earned a paltry 8% of the national budget. This is disbursed (if wholly appropriated) among the 3 tiers of education, research centres, and other ancillary institutions. Table 1 compares Nigeria's budgetary allocation to education with 19 other countries.

Table 1
Comparison of Budget Allocation to Education Across 19 Countries

Country	% Budget Allocation to Education	Position
Ghana	31.0	1 st
Cote d'Ivoire	30.0	2 nd
Uganda	27.0	3 rd
Morocco	26.4	4 th
South Africa	25.8	5 th
Swaziland	24.6	6 th
Mexico	24.3	7 th
Kenya	23.0	8 th
United Arab Emirates	22.5	9 th
Botswana	19.0	10 th
Iran	17.7	11 th
USA	17.1	12 th
Tunisia	17.0	13 th
Lesotho	17.0	14 th
Burkina Faso	16.8	15 th
Norway	16.2	16 th
Columbia	15.6	17 th
Nicaragua	15.0	18 th
India	12.7	19 th
Nigeria	8.4	20 th

Source: World Bank, 2012

As of 2013, Nigeria had 114 approved universities which each shared N426.53bn with other research institutions. This challenge may make it difficult to adequately provide for the equipment and facilities that will guarantee the effective education of Nigerian youth.

The Problem

For a nation to be economically vibrant, the key drivers of the economy must be

adequately equipped with the requisite skills, knowledge, and aptitudes that will enable them to both contribute to, and synergistically harness, resources that satisfy the society's needs for goods and services. Business education plays a vital role in equipping its recipients with these necessary skills and know-how. It also prepares students for economic independence. However, the real state of the economy is at variance with these expectations. Production companies are

folding up despite huge investments and it is becoming increasingly difficult to start small scale businesses that can thrive. The immediate and remote cause appears to be lack of requisite management dynamics and feeble accounting and entrepreneurial skills. This study, therefore, investigates how quality business education curriculum can be enhanced to redress these perceived anomalies.

The following research questions served as the bedrock of this study:

1. What are the justifications for funding of business education in Nigeria?
2. What are the constraints to effective funding of the business education programme in Nigeria?
3. Are the funds provided by different sources to run the business education programme in Nigeria inadequate?

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the responses of business education lecturers and their students in Ekiti State.

Table 2

Comparison of the Responses of Business Education Lecturers and their Students in Ekiti State.

Respondents	N	X	SD	df	t	sig
Lecturers	80	60.99	3.556	480	0.375	0.708
Students	402	61.09	3.626			

Table 2 indicates that the t-value of 0.375 is not significant at 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the responses of the lecturers and students of business education. These findings support Eze's (2013) argument that, in reference to the *National Summit on Higher Education*, the level of funding in the educational system has resulted in a lack of well-equipped libraries, laboratories and workshops as well as obsolete and outdated equipment that has not been replaced.

Methodology

The study was carried out among lecturers, business educators, and students in the various tertiary institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria. A total of eighty lecturers, business educators, and students were randomly sampled for the study. The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire titled: *Funding of Business Education in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges* (FBENIC), which included 30-items (see Appendix A). In the first two parts of the questionnaire,

respondents were asked to rate each of the items on a four-point Likert scale of strongly agree (SA) = 4; agree (A) = 3; disagree (D) = 2; and strongly disagree (SD) = 1. In the last part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate each of the items on a four-point scale of very adequate (VA) = 4; adequate (A) = 3; not adequate (NA) = 2; and grossly inadequate (GI) = 1. The instrument was assessed for both face and content validity by business education experts. Key informant interview sessions were also held with ten lecturers, ten business educators, and ten students.

Data Analysis and Decision Rule

Weighted mean, t-test and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. A cut-off point (arithmetic mean) of 3.00 was used to determine the items that were in agreement or in disagreement. Any item with a weighted mean value of 3.00 and above was regarded as agree or adequate while any item with a mean value below 3.00 was regarded as

disagree or inadequate. Responses from the key informant interviews were embedded in the discussions following transcription and content analysis.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the justifications for funding of business education in Nigeria?

Table 3

Mean Responses on Justifications for Funding of Business Education in Nigeria

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Development of suitable curriculum	4.40	0.12	Agree
2	Planning, monitoring and effective management of the programme	4.36	0.79	Agree
3	Recruitment of qual. business education teachers and supporting staff	4.35	0.89	Agree
4	Maintenance of workshop, equipment and machines	4.30	1.22	Agree
5	Provision of education facilities	4.25	1.13	Agree
6	Budgeting and infrastructure planning	4.24	0.95	Agree
7	Funding of business education research	4.20	0.91	Agree
8	Training and re-training of staff	4.20	0.94	Agree
9	Procurement of season books and business education journals	4.10	0.94	Agree
10	Provision for running cost	3.79	1.07	Agree

The data in Table 3 shows that a large number of the respondents agreed on the need for the funding of business education. This is evident because all items have a mean rating of more than 3.00.

Research Question 2: What are the constraints to effective funding of the business education programme in Nigeria?

Table 4

Mean Responses on Constraints to Effective Funding of Business Education Programme in Nigeria

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Lack of government commitment to business education programme	4.01	1.04	Agree
2	Poor orientation and students' attitudes toward practical works	4.01	0.96	Agree
3	Total dependence on government for funding	3.99	1.05	Agree
4	Lack of maintenance of business education facilities	3.94	1.05	Agree
5	Corruption	3.94	1.03	Agree
6	Diversion and misappropriation of funds	3.93	1.14	Agree
7	Poor supervision and lack of proper records	3.88	1.13	Agree
8	Lack of vision and commitment from teachers	3.64	1.10	Agree
9	Wastages	3.64	1.09	Agree
10	Lack of internal control	3.71	1.05	Agree

The data presented in Table 4 show that all items could stand as constraints to effective funding of the business education programme in Nigeria. This can be inferred from respondents' responses which indicate a mean of more than 3.00 on all the items.

Research Question 3: Are the funds provided by different sources to run the business education programme in Nigeria inadequate?

Table 5
Mean Responses on Inadequacy of Funds Provided for the Business Education Programme in Nigeria

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Internal generated revenues (IGR)	4.25	1.13	Agree
2	Government agencies such as ETF, ITF, etc.	4.10	0.93	Agree
3	Grants from the government	4.06	0.83	Agree
4	Alumni association	3.95	0.99	Agree
5	Loan and advances from financial institutions	3.94	1.03	Agree
6	Industries and firms	3.93	1.05	Agree
7	External aids such as World Bank, UNDP, etc.	3.88	1.02	Agree
8	Special levies on students	3.84	1.13	Agree
9	Community resources as a source of funds	3.80	0.87	Agree
10	Philanthropists and other contributors	3.70	0.97	Agree

The data presented in Table 5 shows that a large number of the respondents believe that the funds provided by different sources to run the business education programme in Nigeria is inadequate. This is clear from the response of the respondents which indicate a mean of more than 3.00 in all the items.

Discussion

This study considered the various issues and challenges involved in the funding of business education in Nigeria. The results of the study revealed that to plan and effectively manage the business education programme in Nigeria, funding is required to develop suitable curriculum, recruit qualified teachers, provide necessary education facilities and fund education research. Akinola (as cited in Ogunribido, 2005) similarly lamented the funding situation of education in Nigeria, asserting that higher education institutions in the country are in dire need of money if they are to cater to both their capital and recurrent needs. Further, capital projects that began a few years ago cannot be completed due to lack of funds. Moreover, institutions of learning cannot produce self-reliant graduates when there is dearth of funds (Ogunribido, 2005). As Eze (2013) explained, education is an expensive social service that requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for successful implementation of the education programmes.

The result of the study also revealed that there are constraints to effective funding of business education in Nigeria. Ayeni (2006) found that among the factors hindering the effective funding of business education is the lack of proper technological orientation in our educational programme. He further suggests that funding left in the hands of the government, as well as the diversion and misappropriation of funds, inadequate records for materials and facilities allocated to the business education programme have been major obstacles. Enijuni and Aina (2008) further submitted that the funding of business education has been highly stringent and indeed topical. It is on this note that business education continues to be underfunded when considered in relation to the needed equipment and materials for effective planning. According to Akintonde (2008) the diversion of funds by the authorities, non-release of the total amount budgeted by the institution, and the lack of probity and accountability of the authorities affect funding of the business education programme.

Finally, the study revealed that the funds provided for the business education programme in Nigeria were not adequate. This finding supports Olaitan's findings (as cited in Ogunribido, 2005) who, commenting on the problems of funding business education, argued that business organizations should be lured into subsidizing vocational education – business

education inclusive. Further, the potential sources of funds for business education, such as private organizations and individuals, are not being explored and exploited. Enijuni and Aina (2008) proffered that it is no exaggeration that business education has not been adequately funded to produce competent manpower for the nation's companies and industries. According to these authors' research, this inadequacy has adversely affected the overall output of the nation's industrial sector as underprepared business education students graduate from our tertiary institutions and man business activities in the country. Ayeni (2006) further asserted that there are needs for adequate financing of the business education programme in Nigeria. These needs could include planning, monitoring, and effective management of the programme for the purpose of achieving the ultimate goals of business education. As Ayeni suggested, funds are needed for setting up committees who will develop curriculum to suit the programme, plan budgeting and infrastructure, provide equipment and facilities, and purchase tools and consumable goods.

Conclusion

Business education is no doubt expensive and capital intensive. The government alone constitutes a major source of finance but these funds are grossly inadequate. The dearth of funds for the programme is a major barrier to ensuring the programme produces various opportunities, including self-reliance and economic development. It is therefore expedient that the various tiers

of government and other relevant stakeholders assist business education with adequate facilities and needed funds for the proper implementation of the business education programme if the potentials of the programme are to be properly harnessed.

The major obstacles of inadequate record-keeping of materials and poor facilities allocation for business education further hinder the provision of equipment needed for the development and growth of manpower, skills and attitudes that can synergistically harness resources that will yield the satisfaction of the society.

Recommendations

In order to reduce the problems associated with the inadequacy of funds for the running of the business education programme as shown in this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Accountability and probity should be entrenched in the funds disbursed for the business education programme.
- Other sources outside government should be explored as potential sources for funds.
- The government should make adequate provisions to finance business education.
- Private financing of business education should be encouraged.
- Students' enrolment for business education programmes should be commensurate with facilities so as not to overstretch available resources.

References

- Adeosun O. A., & Ogunribido O. R. (2014). Funding and adoption of ICT for effective teaching of business education: Colleges of education in South Western Nigeria experience. 3rd AFTRA Teaching and Learning in Africa Conference.

- Akintonde O. G. (2008). Funding of business education for economic empowerment. *Journal of Business Educators of Nigeria*, (2)1.
- Ayeni M. F. (2006). Financing vocational education in Nigeria. *Journal of Research in Vocational and Technical Education*, (2)2.
- Enijuni A. T., & Aina M. A. (2008). Funding of business education for economic empowerment. *Journal of Business Educators of Nigeria*, (2)1.
- Eze, O. (2013). Funding business education programme for qualitative business education in Nigeria. *ABEN Book of Readings*, (3)1.
- Fasae, F. B. K., & Elemure C. B. (2008). Business education and promotion of private enterprises. *Journal of Business Educators of Nigeria*, (2)1.
- Ogunribido O.R. (2005). Financing accounting education programmes: A case for making its products self-reliant. *Journal of Research in Vocational and Technical Education*, (2)1.

Appendix A

Questionnaire on Funding of Business (Office) Education in Nigeria: Opportunities and Implication

Dear Sir/Madame:

This questionnaire is meant to elicit information on ‘Funding of Business (Office) Education in Nigeria: Opportunities and Implication.’ This study is strictly for research purposes and your genuine response to each of the items will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Elemure C.B.

Name of Institution: _____

Department: _____

Sex: Male Female

Instructions: In responding to the questionnaire items, please tick any of the options provided that correctly matches your opinion.

Justifications for Funding of Business Education in Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Planning, monitoring and effective management of the programme				
2	Development of suitable curriculum				
3	Budgeting and infrastructure planning				
4	Recruitment of qualified business education teachers and supporting staff				
5	Provision of education facilities				
6	Procurement of season books and business education journals				
7	Provision for running cost				
8	Funding of business education research				
9	Training and re-training of staff				
10	Maintenance of workshop, equipment and machines				

Constraints to Effective Funding of Business Education Programme in Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Diversion and misappropriation of funds				
2	Poor supervision and lack of proper records				
3	Lack of vision and commitment from teachers				
4	Total dependence on government for funding				

5	Wastages				
6	Corruption				
7	Lack of internal control				
8	Lack of maintenance of business education facilities				
9	Lack of government commitment to business education programme				
10	Poor orientation and students' attitudes toward practical works				

Adequacy of Funds Provided for Business Education Programme in Nigeria

S/N	Items	VA	A	NA	GI
1	Grants from the government				
2	Community resources as a source of funds				
3	Philanthropists and other contributors				
4	Government agencies such as ETF,ITF etc.				
5	External aids such as World Bank, UNDP etc.				
6	Industries and firms				
7	Alumni Association				
8	Special levies on students				
9	Loan and advances from Financial Institutions				

Authors

Elemure V. Ehis, Ph.D., majored in Educational Evaluation at University of Ibadan. She is an Assistant Director of Education with Lagos State Teaching Service Commission, Education District II Maryland Complex, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Elemure Clement Boluwaji is a Doctoral student at Leadcity University, Ibadan Nigeria. He is currently a lecturer in Office Management at the Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.