

ENHANCING RESEARCH IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of any educational program is to ensure the achievement of educational objective and it could better be achieved through researches. This paper titled "Enhancing research in business education program for sustainable development in Nigeria". Discussed the Concept of research, Concept of Business Education, Sustainable development as well as how validly conducted research in business education can help in achieving the goals of sustainable development in Nigeria. Conclusion was drawn as to the best way to attain sustainable development is to enhance researches in business education which will eventually actualize the objective of provision of employment for all and unless which, it may not be possible to actualize it. On the basis of the conclusion, some recommendation were offered one of which was researches should be encouraged by scholars on the educational program that would help youths to acquire skills for self-reliance and eventually actualize sustainable development in Nigeria.

Key words: Business education, Sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

The need for frequenting researches in addressing academic and other social problems is paramount. Most of educational problems, policies, programs and theories born out of reliable and validly conducted researches. For Instance, it was as a result of research that different teaching methods were came about, it was the research that brought about ideas like national policy on education, millennium Development Goal (MDG), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), Poverty Alleviation Programme to mention but a few. In such a case research which is about discoveries, searching for better ideas is indispensable in human life. let a alone in the field of academic pursuit. This is obvious because the easiest way to redirect the behaviours and attitudes of a society is through education and academically based activities, it is on this note that Adepoju (1999) In Osuorji et'al (2017) upheld that people and nations are what they are because of the nature and types of education they have been exposed. He further said this being the case, equipping people with business education needed for self-employment is a yard stick for sustainable national development.

Business education on the other hand is that aspect of educational pursuit which is about preparing individuals for career in business and also to be intelligent

consumers of economic goods and services. It is that aspect of general education which is about skills acquisition for self-reliance. It is in line with this that Aliyu (2006) noted that Business education is education for the acquisition and development of skills and competences, attitudes and attributes which are necessary for efficiency of the economic system. Business education like any other field of academic pursuit is meant to achieve some reserved objectives like National Objective as well as the peculiar objective which are more to do with institution or programme. For example the N.C.E business education program has its objectives, degree program or undergraduate programme in Business Education has its objective or philosophy which is geared towards achieving the overall National education objectives and ultimately the National goals.

Sustainable development as an element of development is such a development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs Osuorji & David (2017). In essence sustainable development is such a development attained which in the course of its attainment no damage has been done to the development of the yet to come generation. Hence, this kind of development should be the target of any society. How such a development and when should it be attained could best be determined through a rigorous and validly academically conducted research. This kind of research could be done by business educators for the singular purpose of achieving the objectives of sustainable development. These among other things are the objectives of this paper.

Concept of Research

Knowledge and education since one, more often than not leads to the other and they are outcome of researches, it is research that gives out theories, ideas and ways forward which serve as plat form of knowledge. Research is indispensable in any academic setting because new discoveries are realized. Then what is research? It is the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions (Oxford Dictionary). The Cambridge dictionary looked at research as a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover new information or reach a new understanding. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined research as what comprises creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications. Crowell (2008) defined research as a process of steps used to collect and analyse information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue. He further said it consists of three steps: pose a question, collect data to answer the question and present an answer to the question. It is investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications etc. Research is a systematic enquiry that investigates hypothesis, suggests new interpretations of data or texts and poses new questions for future research to explore (Real Portal). Considering all the given definitions, it could be seen that the watch word of all the

definitions was enquiry or investigation in trying uncovering what is covered. Hence, research is important in that it enables researchers to have clearer understanding of concepts of knowledge. Research can be different types i.e can be qualitative which is about describing details specific situations using research tools like interviews; quantitative which requires quantifiable data involving numerical explanation; Correlational/Regression Analysis which involves determining the strength of the relationship between two or more variables. While the other one is experimental which relies on controlled experiments that compare the outcome for an experimental and a control group that differ in a defined way.

Concept of Business Education

Nanacy in Bala (2015) described Business Education "as that aspect of the total Education programmes that provide that knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform in business world as a producer and as a consumer of goods and services that business offers".

The National Policy on Education (1998) revised edition described business education as a technical education and so defined it as "that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge". Akanbi and Ogunleye (1996) in Bala (2015) from the policies commission for business and economic education of 1975 said:

"Business Education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all types of education delivery system, elementary, secondary or post-secondary..... Business Education can begin at level it can be continued throughout the life span of an individual. Business Education includes education for office occupations, business teaching, business administration and economic understanding.

It can be summarized that the Mission of business education includes: -

- a) Educating individuals for and about business
- b) Providing a continuous programme of planned experiences designed to equip individuals to make judicious socio-economic decisions as citizens.

Business Education according to Akimbo (2015) encompasses a number of specialist areas like stenographic/secretarial studies, accountancy, business management/Computer Studies marketing or distributive education. Vocational business education on the other hand is business majors and emphasizes job competency, career preparation and work adjustments. Subject such as accounting secretarial advanced typewriting data processing etc. business education is designed for all students and its emphasizes economic competency, career exploration and social adjustment.

Anno in Akimbo (2015) said that Business Education simply mean an educational process or content which has its primary aim as the preparation of people for roles in business enterprises i.e employer, entrepreneur as simply self-employed. Hence narrowed it to mean the sum total of the knowledge skill and attitude that are required for successfully promoted and administering business enterprise. Ulinfun in Akimbo (2015) also notes that business education means education for and about Business, or training in business skill and competence required for use in business office, clerical occupation and business policy analysis. It is training that gives an occupational identity.

Objectives of Business Education:

The general objectives of business education have been summarized by Popham (1975), in Bala (2015) irrespective of whatever levels it is studied as follows:

Personal Competence; initially when Business Education was first introduced in school and it was strictly vocational in aims. But later many non-business educators soon discovered some of the courses like Book-keeping, Type-writing, Salesmanship could be useful to them, hence it is not surprising seeing a physician studying Book-keeping or a journalist studying short-hand or a lawyer learning how to type documents.

For consumer Business Competence; Traditionally Business Education meant education for the producer, for the distributors and not for consumers. However, recognition has been given to the fact that everyone is a consumer, and that business education plays an important role in our daily life. Consequently, courses have been developed and curricular have been revised in an attempt to develop students in the method of buying goods and services, and also efficient use of these goods and services.

For vocational competency; this is simply to prepare the recipients for office occupation in such areas in Book-keeping, Stenography etc. it is pertinent to note that Business Education provides greater responsibility in the area of occupational education for future employees of business to gain a higher level of education and more completely developed skills to meet the new demands of jobs entry.

For Socio-economic Competence; Business is an exchange of Value between people and it is both economic and social in nature. Business Education as a part of general education, therefore, is in a position to make a major contribution to the development of socio-economic competence by

helping the recipients to develop a clear understanding of the nation's economy. This means that exchange of values among people of various culture leads to interactions or friendliness.

Obi and Otamiri (2010) summarized the objectives of Business Education to include:

1. To produce efficient and effective management, secretarial accounting and marketing managers
2. To produce lecturers who will handle business and related courses in our Universities and Colleges
3. To propagate the development of business thought and philosophy in business and management
4. To prepare people for self-employment in situations where there is no available paid employment.
5. To expose the students via the available courses to the limitless horizon of the business world and prepare them for roles as qualified administrators and managers in business organisation.

Concept of Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development can be interpreted in many different ways, but at its core is an approach to development that looks to balance different, and often competing, needs against an awareness of the environmental, social and economic limitations we face as a society. All too often, development is driven by one particular need, without fully considering the wider or future impacts. We are already seeing the damage this kind of approach can cause, from large-scale financial crises caused by irresponsible banking, to changes in global climate resulting from our dependence on fossil fuel-based energy sources. The longer we pursue unsustainable development, the more frequent and severe its consequences are likely to become, which is why we need to take action now. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Research in Business Education Vs Sustainable Development

The understanding of the actual concept of any discipline in educational system may not be easy if no thorough search and research are conducted, to understand the philosophy of any educational program one needs to study it critically and thoroughly so as to have a holistic view of its content. For example it is only when scholar understand the objectives of a program that can realize the benefit to be tapped from it. The best instrument of understanding and clarifying content of curriculum is a research. Research has the general aim of systematically improving an academic body of knowledge, it determines success or failure of change in any process or work flow, in other words, the success of any project/endeavour greatly lies on a good or extensive research conducted.

As earlier mentioned, in various definitions, given research enhances understanding of the concept or philosophy of educational program. Business education being an area of academic pursuit which is about acquisition of skills for self-reliance and self-employability, its major objective is to empower its graduates to be self-reliant. It is the self-reliance that will save societies from different social threats like the issue of insecurity, insurgency, unemployment, inter tribal and inter religious disagreements and uprising and other kinds of social decadences as well as economic challenges like issue of economic recession and depression. These turn societies to what it is not support to be if not properly handled. In Nigeria there are so many problems. Albeit, it is so alarming these days, there are problems of clashes between tribes, religious believes, abduction of young and old men, armed robbery, stealing, politically instigated uprising and many other communal conflicts. These crises generally occur as a result of unemployment from all the quarters of the country. Most of the youths in the country even many graduate cannot be properly

placed in terms of employment. These among other reasons make them to engage in different aspects of social immorality. Hence, considering the enormosity of this problem and its tendency to jeopardize the future of each respective society there is need for Scholars to engage into researches on which educational programme will prepare our teeming youths in acquisition of skills that will make them to be self and gainfully employed. Business education undoubtedly, will be their answer. It will be the solution to the problem Nigeria as a country is facing. But how could this be done through researches is one; the concept and philosophy of the programme and two, the putting of theory of the concept into practice. One other important issue is delimiting or expanding scopes of researches undertaken in academia to go beyond academic problems but rather societal problems in its entirety.

It is imperative at this juncture therefore, to notice and affirm that educational research should not end at finding solution to only educational problems but other societal challenges, Scholars should pains takingly look into social problems and apply the in-depth experiences and expertise particularly business educators to broaden the outlook and understanding of general public on the concept of business education and its purpose so as curtail the clamoring issue of unemployment and by extension all other problems which occur as a result of joblessness redundancy and overall unemployment. Andreas, Samuel and Joachin (2017) asserted that in order to solve complex problem, people usually have to acquire and apply knowledge about complex system..... . Going by this assertion, it means even the business educators need to engage into researches i.e apply their knowledge about the complex problem faced by societies.

The objective of Sustainable National Development as posted by Adebulu (2015) in Osuorji and David (2017):

1. End poverty in all its form everywhere
2. End Hunger and achieve food security
3. Ensure well being for all at all stages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient infrastructure
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. Conserve and sustainably use resources for sustainable development
15. Protect restore and promote use of ecosystem
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies.
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

It is apparent and could be inferred from the above stated objectives of sustainable national development that the achievement of the objectives could only be possible when the overwhelming number of our youths are employed. This is so because issues like poverty, food security, sound education, portable water, economic growth, a peaceful society and so on and so forth are all output of productive society i.e society that its members are busy into one economic

activity or another. Economic growth can be determined by gross domestic product (GDP) which is absolutely a sign of productivity, similarly, for instance parents cannot give their children sound education unless they can afford, their affordability is heavily on whether they employed or not.

Having notice foregoing, it suffices to say that the focal point for achieving sustainable development is provision of employment for all in any country. A release by United Nation on sustainable development emphasized that focus on education, knowledge and skills is what would help achieve its goals. Hence Business education being knowledge and skills oriented programme means it is the appropriate instrument to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria. Rufia (2013) in Osuorji and David (2017) asserted that Business education identified as a critical success factor in the actualization of sustainable development in Nigeria. He further said Business education holds the prospects of contributing, through its job creation and

self-employment packages, for the attainment of sustainable development. A gainful employed individual contributes to GDP, per capita, reduces poverty and unemployment which are some of the indices of development. The foregoing, therefore attested that the best instrument to attain sustainable development is business education programme all it need therefore, is for scholars to enhance researches on the ways for proper application of the program to enable achievement of sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

The fact that education is the appropriate instrument for actualizing policies and programs, this paper that is about enhancing research in business education for sustainable development in Nigeria. Concluded that, all it needs for sustainable development to be actualized is indepth research into the program of business education being knowledge and skills oriented programme. Because it is the research that will give Scholars an insight into the benefit and usefulness of the program in making its graduates to be self-employed and self-depended and even enlighten the general public on the advantage of becoming business educator and unless otherwise the achievement of sustainable development may not be easy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the conclusion drawn the following recommendations were offered:

1. Researches should be emphasized by Scholars on the educational programme that would help youths to acquire skills for self-reliance and eventually actualize sustainable development in Nigeria.
2. Government should emphasize on vibrant framework for evaluation and monitoring the entire business education program.
3. Government should adequately be funding researches particularly those that will assist implementation of its policies and programs
4. Government should redirects its educational policies towards skilful education in order to achieve sustainable development goal.

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