BUSINESS EDUCATION AND RECOVERY OF HUMAN VALUES IN THE ERA OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract
It is not an over statement to say that every aspect of Nigerian environment is filled with bribery, corruption and nepotism. The corrupt, often the wealthy are the winners while the losers are ordinary members of the society and the ethical business, because the principal officers are the partakers and sponsors of the unethical business practices. This is evidently proved because, Nigeria being one of the major oil producers, is today one of the major oil importers. Money laundering is a criminal offence both in international, federal, state and local government levels, yet the major money launderers are the government stakeholders and their fan praisers. The multiplication of these unethical behaviours and activities was as a result of human greed (lost in human values) in the use of information and communication technologies to secure wealth at all cost. This paper tries to identify the best ways of preparing business students for ethical practices through business education in this era of information and communication technologies. The paper discusses the concept of business education, concept of human values, concept of ethical business environment in the era of information and communication technology factors that are confronting ethical business environment and ways of equipping business students to face the challenges of unethical business practices in this era of rapid influx of information and communication technologies. Recommendations and conclusion were also drawn.

Keywords: Business Education, Human Values, Ethical Business Environments, Unethical Behaviour, Information and Communication Technology

Introduction
There is a common saying that states “if abomination reaches a year, it becomes a custom”. Corruption has undermined the fundamental principles of sound education, business, social, technology and economic practices among others. Those in authority who are expected to checkmate the menace are the major culprits (Umezulike, 2009).
Today in Nigeria, hardly will one see people who are maintaining the principle of “good name is better than money”. All these are happening because human beings have lost their values because of evil practices they are copying from the use of information and communication technologies.

To restore the loss of human values in education, social, economic etc, environment, there is need to recall the human subconscious minds to the positive direction so as to develop those who will contribute constructively to the sound development of ethical organization they enter. The question now is, how can the good values in man be restored? Business education has the answer, thus the topic: business education and the recovery of human values in the era of information and communication technologies.

**The Concept of Business Education**

Business education is an indispensable programme without rival. It remodels man’s bad image for better. Umezulike (2011) saw business education as the key agent to economic, social and technological development either as a way in developing human capacity, increasing the shield of work force for modernization/industrialization/environmental development or as a matter of personal freedom and empowerment of the populace. This means that knowledge of business education assists man to reflect on one’s values and degree of courage for self actualization and societal/economic development.

Okoye (2011) defined business education as education that assist in proper documentation, presentation and reporting of financial position of a firm thereby making possible easy and quick evaluation and implementation of the entire economic activities within an organization. This means that business education makes one to develop ethical conscience in safeguarding and protecting the economic resources of an organization.

Ojo and Ogunmola (2010) defined business education as a broad comprehensive discipline whose instructional programme encompasses the acquisition of appropriate skills and competencies needed by all citizens in order to effectively manage their personal business and contribute to the society. This is in agreement with the Nigerian National Philosophy in Education (2004) as to: inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for survival of the individual and Nigerians Society; acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental, physical social abilities and competencies as equipment for individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society. By this definition, it means that business education is a programme that is capable of creating right type of values to human beings (as to adequate record keeping, establishment of personal business, etc) for all that is valuable in human society depends upon the right opportunity for development accorded to the individual.
Umezulike and Okoye (2012) also maintained that business education is the master key for good governance, good governance a clear road map to economic stability and sustainability, stability and sustainability a sure answer and solution to national development. Utoware and Edionwe (2012) on their own part saw business education as education that equips the youths with economic and business concept as a vehicle for understanding and analyzing the world in which they live. To Utoware and Edionwe business education makes youths to be innovative and resourceful in thinking and reasoning fast, thus gathering and making judicious use of wasteful resources which others could not discover for value creation.

If the masses will observe and implement in their daily living, the afore designated business education conceptual framework, definitely human behaviour will be reflecting on a positive direction.

**Concept of Human Values**

Human values according to Graines (2008) are those virtues that shape us and differentiate us from beasts. It could also be principles, standards, convictions and beliefs that people adopt as their guidelines in daily activities. Human values involve what we expect others to do to us and what we aim to do others (Graines, 2008).

Einstein (2014) called human values sacred sanctuary of knowledge. Human values are man’s inner eye that sees far beyond, what the physical eyes do. Einstein concluded by saying that a person who lacks human values is a decomposed being and therefore a lifeless animal. The writers in their own views maintained that human values bring about human co-existence and peace inspite of traits in ones religion, nationality, culture, historical background. This is true because according Graines (2008) human values build space for drive and as well create free movement towards one another.

Graines (2008) and Einstein (2014) identified the attributes of human values to include love, respect for human dignity, honesty, fairness, peace, justices, care for one another, selflessness, loyalty, sharing, solidarity, openness, listening, welcoming, acceptance, recognition, appreciation, brotherhood, friendship, empathy, compassion and placing public interest first before individual interest.

This therefore shows that one with excellent human values is held in high esteem and admired by all.

**Concept of Ethical Business Environment**

Ethical business values vary by company, and are defined largely by the behaviours and values that govern a business environment. Mc Querry (2012) defined ethical business values as a set of guiding principles that encourage individuals in an organization to make decisions based on the company’s stated beliefs and attitudes towards business practices within its industry. Ethical business environment is therefore a business environment where all the business codes of conduct are observed. That is,
environment where rules and regulations guiding business activities take precedence no matter one's position or rank.

To maintain these principles, managers must define ethical business behaviour in their workplace by explaining to their employees how behaviour and action affects the business overall mission. Likewise business students while in school need to learn the rules including the relevant laws, codes of professional conduct and the mission statement of various organizational set up. This implies that truly defining business ethical values in a workplace environment involves following examples of ethical behaviour and fair treatment, starting from management and tricking down. Thus a company that defines business ethical values as a core element of corporate culture encourages employees to perform their jobs and responsibilities accordingly. Ethical business should therefore be free from any form of intimidation, corruption, faking, abuse and fraudulent acts. It is a transparent environment where no illegal dealings can be carried out.

Duncan (2008) suggested for serious sanctions for unethical or fraudulent behaviour whether on behalf of the individual or the organization and recommended for appropriate rewards for responding to ethical dilemmas.

ETHICAL BUSINESS AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The recording and documentations of business activities have moved from manual to automation due to creeping manner of expansion and enlargement of business transactions. This shows that transactions are mainly done on-line and almost every economy has gone cashless. This has lessened the burden of carrying huge amount of money about. Instead of Nigerians to observe the rules and regulations guiding the cashless state, shareholders in the government used their position in abusing the ethnical practices thereby making unethical behaviour costly which invariable brings about injustice to the reputation of the business and education community.

Fukukawa (2014) maintained that the introduction of technological innovations has brought about quick, fast and efficient delivery of financial activities. But Duncan (2008) saw it as illusion, and maintained that modern technologies used in the business are the major source those in authority employ in duping and drilling the country’s economy. That instead of those in authority to use information and communication technology in checkmating anomalies in education and business activities, they (stakeholders) are the abusers because the position they secured have cost them to lose the human values in them. Thus, ICT has assisted them in quick diversion of economic resources to foreign countries where they will be effectively used in developing their economies. All these illegal dealings have resulted in the collapse of Nigerian economy which in turn has resulted in high rate of crimes which are offspring of unemployment.
Factors Confronting Ethical Business Environment

Human beings have lost their values due to their greed in the pursuit of money and wealth. Bribery and corruption have eaten deep in every fabrics of the economy thus undermining the fundamental principles of ethical education and business practices. Duncan (2008) in his work on developing values in business education identified the following as factors that are confronting ethical business environments:

a. **Nature and Nurture**: Inherited behaviour from parents atimes tends to inhibit ones positive virtue (brings about competitive approach which is inimical to moral behaviour) if it does not provide maximum advantage. In another direction, ones training from a particular environment tend to override hereditary positive human values from the parents thereby resulting to unethical behaviour within the environment.

b. **Power**: Power is another serious factor that is confronting ethical business environment. An adage says that power intoxicates and makes people to loss control of values. When such happens, the person will lose control of his mind and start to abuse his office and position especially if the position is in the public establishment.

c. **Greed**: Greed to get rich quick is another serious factor confronting the ethical business environment. Man is always anxious to build mansions or ride expensive cars without much human efforts. This might lead to loss of one’s human values and abuse of office position.

d. **Corruption**: Lots of anomalies are going on round the globe within the private and public establishment as a result of corruption. Corruption has undermined fundamental principles of sound business practices. Duncan (2008) maintained that nepotism and bribery had led to liquidation of many establishments. That the corrupt, often the wealthy, are the winners while the losers are ordinary members of the society and ethical businesses.

e. **Disrespect**: Some people do see position as opportunity to insult and avenge old offences. They often insult and abuse people working under them. By so doing, those workers they are maltreating on their own part will be planning evil against them which invariable will bring about unethical business environment.

f. **Dishonesty**: Business organizations that are managed by dishonest personnel can never stand.

g. **Other factors that are confronting ethical business environment include**: Injustice, selfishness, anarchy, unfairness, disloyalty, lack of empathy, ingratitude, self centeredness, poor listening, lack of openness etc.
Ways of Equipping Business Education Students to Face The Challenges of Unethical Business Environment.

Our business environments are filled with lots of unethical practices. Fukukama (2014) maintained that it is quite a difficult task to develop standard ethical business environment. This therefore requires that the graduating business education students should be well equipped to face the challenges. By so doing one has to reflect on his/her own values the degree of courage he/she will build within him/herself to face the challenges. Below are some of the ethical disciplines-required of business education students to succeed in an unethical business environment:

a. **Self Discipline:** Business students should develop self control in character, manner and behaviour. Their lives should be an exemplary to others. They should not allow or exhibit any hidden or questionable behaviour or action before co-workers or customers. This will go a long way in developing the sound image as well as creating goodwill of the organization.

b. **Contentment:** Business students should be contented with what they are and what they have. They should not envy or show ingratitude to position or reward they are yet to be qualified for.

c. **Developing human, ethical moral values:** This is all about business students feeling down inside themselves (developing consciousness what should be good to coworkers and the organization in general). They should have respect for integrity (both physical and psychological) of every human being and as well promote positive and concrete practices as the basis for human relationships in a spirit of reciprocity and mutual respect of those values.

d. **Reward of Ethical Standard:** Business education students should prioritize their professional identify over actions for purely individual goals or to achieve organization goals through means not acceptable to organizational norms. That is to say that organizational code must be supported by: effective sanctions for unethical or fraudulent behaviour, whether on behalf of the individual or the organization and appropriate rewards for responding to dilemmas ethically.

e. **Developing high sophisticated communication skills:** This is one of the key features of action business education students should develop within an unethical environment. They should gain great advantages by initial co-operation within the family group, then with wider groups when opportunities to further mutual interests are perceived. This is true because business education is an integrated course programme made up of accounting, marketing, office technology and management etc. All these options have common boundaries of achieving common goals. This is in agreement with Duncan (2012) assertion that the island inhabited by people who learn to co-operate is likely to develop more successful than the island where people only compete on an individual basis.
f. **Empathy:** Empathy enables employees to co-operate with whom they do not share a close boundary. Olson and Ramachandraw (2012) suggested that large scale co-operation within human species including with genetically unrelated individuals within a group was favoured by selection. This means that inspite of differences in goals by different organizations there is reason to believe that people should have genetic equipment to develop empathic responses to others.

g. **Developing student’s capability in response to stressful demand:** Students challenges may be conscious or unconscious. To exercise moral courage business students need to ensure that a conscious response is engaged. This according Konlberg’s theory of moral development means that human value is best explained by understanding the limbic system of the brain which is capable of mediating our responses to external data through its ability to read and act upon our emotional responses as well as overriding rational thought.

h. **Trustworthy:** Trustworthy has link with self discipline. That is business student’s should not be linked with life with questionable/suspicious character either by the management coworkers and customers. Thus when management are to take hard decision or keep top secrecy, they should be people to be called upon.

**Conclusion**

The stakeholders’ abuse in the use of information and communication technologies have brought lots of unethical activities, abnormal behaviour and lost of human values within the education, social and business environment.

The way things are moving on now show that the ordinary members of the society and the ethical education, social and business environment will continue to suffer if nothing is done urgently to revert the human sub conscious mind in a positive direction.

Adequate and quick implementation of the identified designated strategies for equipping business education students to face the challenges of unethical business practices by the writers will go a long way in bringing sanity in human actions and behaviours.

**Recommendations**

Based on the writer’s submission and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

a. Those in authority should have change of heart in their greed and corrupt practices to enrich themselves using the organization or public resources entrusted on them, so that their subordinates can learn from them positive ethical services for the growth of the organization and the society at large.
b. The organization itself needs to operate a system which identifies models and rewards high ethical standards so as to inculcate in their employees the spirit of truthfulness and sincerity in service.

c. Organization codes must also be supported by effective sanctions for unethical or fraudulent behaviour, whether on behalf of the individual or the organization, so as to checkmate and control dubious behaviour and illegal practices.

d. Organizational management should encourage members to work for the collective interest of the organization and reward those who do so effectively as a verge of encouraging ethical practices in our business organizations.
References


