

CHALLENGES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR PREPARING STUDENTS FOR GLOBAL COMPETITION IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

Okoye, Anthonia Chinyere (Ph.D)

Department of Vocational Education
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu
University, Igbariam Campus.
e-mail: toniachyokoye@yahoo.com

Udegbumam, Emmanuel Obidi

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
e-mail: uemmanuelobidi@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study was aimed to determine the challenges of business education in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The theory of learning by Dekeyser was used. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. A total of 186 business educators in 15 tertiary institutions in South-East, Nigerian made up the population of the study. No sample was taken, as the population size was manageable. A structured 16-item validated questionnaire was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was ensured using pilot test, which was analyzed using Cronbach alpha and its yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.86. A total of 186 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents, 183 copies were returned by the respondents, and were used for data analysis. Data related to the research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that respondents agreed with all the mentioned challenges of business education for preparing students and the possibilities of overcoming the challenges for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions as it will help in promoting national development. The study revealed that business educators in universities did not differ significantly from business educators in colleges of education on the challenges and possibilities of overcoming the challenges for preparing students for global competition in Nigeria tertiary institutions in South-East. It was concluded that business education are face with a lot of challenges for preparing students, and the possibilities of overcoming these challenges were also treated which would help in preparing students for global competition and promoting national development. It was recommended, among others, that government and other major stakeholders should focus their attention and invest their resources on business education so as to help address the challenges of business education for preparing students for global competition particularly at the tertiary level.

Key words: Challenges, business education, business education students and global competition in Nigeria, tertiary institutions

Introduction

The world has become a global village just as the global economy has become the center of every nation's marketing interest and activities. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Umoru (2015) aims at ensuring that all countries, both developed and developing, have access to the best educational facilities necessary to prepare young people to play full roles in modern society and to contribute to a knowledge nation. As a result, nations are positioning their educational system to be part of the global economy and compete very favourably. Global economy has become so sophisticated and as a result of business and marketing practices is undergoing unprecedented transformation and no nation would want to be left behind. In realization of this fact, the federal government of Nigeria has put in place a robust transformation



agenda in education intended to put Nigeria in a better position to be a competitive player and in the process transform all sectors of its economy through tertiary education.

Tertiary education in Nigeria recognize the fact that mastering the basic skills and concepts of new technologies as the core of education must be the major plank through which transformation agenda in education could be realized. This is because education is a catalyst for any meaningful change in the society. Education, according to Adesina in Umoru (2015) is the tool for integration of individual effectively into a competitive society so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity, and strive for social, economic, political, scientific, cultural and technological process. In the opinion of Alufohal and Ezeani (2012), education is vital instrument that liberates the people from ignorance and stimulates development. From the forgoing, this can be achieved through business education programme.

Business education is one vital programme in Nigeria tertiary institutions that has the capacity to bring about the required liberation and stimulation of the citizens for global competition and national development. It is believed that for any nation to help in promoting sustainable economic growth or development, effort shall be made to invest sufficient amount of financial resources on education particularly business education programme.

Sadly, business education is faced with the challenges of improving the capacity of their workforce to respond to the national development needs and the demands of a rapidly changing and globally competitive world. Suffice to mention that the future success of nations, individuals, enterprises and communities increasingly depends on existence and possession of transferrable and renewable skills and knowledge. Interestingly, both developed and developing countries across the world have come to recognize the importance of education particular business education towards equipping individuals with relevant skills and knowledge, hence enabling people to effectively participate in socio-economic and technological innovation processes. The globalization process, knowledge economy, advances in technology and increased competition due to liberalization are major forces driving change in the world of work. These have important implication for the demand of skills, human resource development and training (UNESCO, 2008).

Generally, inadequate provision of financial resources has been identified as greatest challenge facing education in Nigeria (Edokpolor & Owenbiugie, 2017), especially technical and vocational education sector because of its capital-intensive nature (Adeyanju, Adekunle & Osifila in Edokpolor & Owenbiugie, 2017) of which business education programme is a major component. By virtue of this nature, every item within the business education instructional environment is subjected to adequate optimization of financial resources. However, in view of the contending demands for financial resources by various sectors of the Nigerian economy, business education have been finding it difficult to employ manpower in terms of quality and quantity, develop or renew curriculum, and offer a wide-range of modern infrastructure and facilities, such as the state-of-the-art lecture halls, workshops, studios, libraries, entrepreneurial research centres and Information Technology (IT) services.

Another challenges facing the effective delivery of business education is inadequate supply of qualified manpower or shortage of qualified manpower in business education both at all levels of education. This situation is more pronounced at the tertiary level. This is to be expected since there are no enough funds to employ qualified manpower. Ilusanya in Idris and Mbudai (2016) had observed that the state of vocational education generally in Nigeria is becoming embarrassing. Idris and Mbudai (2016) further lamented on the inadequacy of personnel as well as their lackadaisical attitude towards the teaching of the subject.



In a nutshell, business education is an academic programme intended to inculcate into the students understanding, values, knowledge, business skills, and technical skills required in the world of work and for teaching other business students. The skills to be learned by business education students are technical, manipulative and thinking habits applied to global competition, machines, tasks, procedures and operations. These skills are necessary to operate new technologies that global competition platforms depend in the real world of work and are required globally by businesses, employees, and individuals.

Salome in Ikpesu (2016), agreed with this position that business education inculcates in its recipients attitudes, knowledge, skills, values that are required in the world of work. Amoor and Udoh (2008) further emphasized that business education improves personal qualities and builds the attitude of the individual that are necessary for adjustment to personal and employment situations and also provides knowledge, skills and competence for individuals to function well in office occupations and also create jobs for themselves and others. One can therefore, conclude that a well-trained business educator upon graduation would be able to produce healthy, literate, skilled and self-reliant citizens, as well as teachers or effective and efficient producers of goods and services, which businesses require as workers for businesses and employees or employers of labor as self-employed or entrepreneurs.

The influencing factor on the challenges of business education for preparing business education students for global competition in Nigeria tertiary institutions could be type of institutions. Type of institutions in this research study refers to tertiary institutions that offer business education programmes such as colleges of education and universities. Okoye (2011) pointed out that the types of institutions do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the challenges facing business education for effective teaching entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions.

Considering that the success or failure of business education programme in producing graduates who would become self-reliant upon graduation and be able to compete effectively in the global market is dependent on the ability of relevant stakeholders to be able to identify and tackle some of the challenges of the programme in recent times. It is essential to focused to determine the challenges of business education for preparing students for global competition in Nigeria tertiary institutions with business and technical skills so as to proffer objective remedial actions.

Statement of the Problem

Business education is a programme of instruction that equips recipients with the requisite attributes for job creation and further education. Despite these dual missions, available evidence has shown that Nigeria is handling this sector with levity (Obunadike, 2015; Oladunjoye, 2016). This situation has consequently deprived business education of proper funding, qualified staff, modern facilities, quality curriculum and proper attention. This has devalued the image and reputation of business education both in the education sectors and labour market, and has also contributed to the high rate of unemployment and poverty among business education graduates. This issue of unemployment and poverty is unconnected to spate of terrorist attacks, kidnappings, suicide bombing, high crime rate, vandalism, thurgery and break down of law and order. The high rate of insecurity has further contributed to the under-development of Nigerian economy. The problem of this study, therefore, is that the product of business education seen to lack the requisite skills required in the global business world.



Research Question

The following research questions guided the study:

What are the challenges of business education in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

What are the possibilities of overcoming the challenges of business education in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Business educators in colleges of education do not differ significantly from business educators in universities in their mean ratings on the challenges for preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions based on type of institutions in South-East.

Business educators in colleges of education do not differ significantly from business educators in universities in their mean ratings on the possibilities of overcoming the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions based on type of institutions in South-East.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The researchers considered this design appropriate for this study since it intended to collect data from practicing business educators regarding the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigeria tertiary institutions in South-East. The population for the study consisted of 186 business educators from seven colleges of education and eight universities that offer business education in South-East Nigeria. No sample was taken for the study because the population size was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Challenges in Preparing Students for Global Competition in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions (CPSGCNU). The instrument was validated by three experts, from the Department of Technology and Vocational Education and the Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

To ascertain the internal consistency of the data instruments, the researcher conducted a pilot test whereby copies of the instrument were administered to 20 business educators from Delta State University, Abraka who were not part of the population of the study. Data were analyzed using Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency of the test instruments. The analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.86 indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. The administration of the instrument was carried out personally by the researcher with the aid of five research assistants who are business educators. A total of 186 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents, 183 copies were returned by the respondents, and were used for data analysis. Data collected regarding the research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). The decision rule regarding the research questions were based on the real limit of numbers. With reference to the research questions, the decision was that items with mean ratings of 4.50-5.00 were regarded as "strongly agree". Mean ratings from 3.50-4.49 were considered as "agree". Mean ratings that range from 2.50-3.49 were regarded as "undecided". Mean ratings from 1.50-2.49 were regarded as "disagree", while mean ratings between 1.00-1.49 were regarded as "strongly disagree". The t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Where the calculated p-value was



less than the 0.05, it means that there was significant difference and the hypothesis was rejected. Conversely, where the calculated p-value was equal to or greater than the table value at level of significance (0.05), it means that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was not rejected.

Results

Research Question 1:

What are the challenges of business education in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Table 1: Business educators' mean rating on the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. $N=18$

| S/N | Challenges | \bar{X} | SD | Remarks |
|-----|--|-----------|------|----------|
| 1. | Inadequate optimization of qualified manpower | 3.51 | 1.29 | Agree |
| 2. | Inconsistent development of staff skills and resources | 3.45 | 1.33 | Agree |
| 3. | Low provision of befitting infrastructures | 3.55 | 1.21 | Agree |
| 4. | Inadequate supply of modern facilities and equipment | 3.49 | 1.35 | Agree |
| 5. | Utilization of outdated curriculum | 3.49 | 1.49 | Agree |
| 6. | Successive government and other major stakeholders have been handling business education with levity | 3.56 | 1.35 | Agree |
| 7. | Inadequate provision of resources has not devalued the image of business education in education living | 1.98 | 1.29 | Disagree |
| 8. | Inadequate provision of budgetary allocation | 3.66 | 1.47 | Agree |
| 9. | Inadequate utilization of budgetary allocation | 3.59 | 1.42 | Agree |

Data in Table 1 show the mean responses of business educators' in universities and colleges of education on challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions in South-East. Item by item analysis revealed that out of nine items, only eight items had the mean scores that ranged from 3.45 to 3.66. The mean scores are indications that there are lots of challenges facing business education programme, which include Inadequate optimization of qualified manpower, inconsistent development of staff skills and resources, low provision of befitting infrastructures, inadequate supply of modern facilities and equipment, utilization of outdated curriculum, successive government and other major stakeholders, inadequate provision of budgetary allocation and Inadequate utilization of budgetary allocation while, item 7 inadequate provision of resources has not devalued had the mean score of 1.98. The mean score is an indication that business education programme is faced with some challenges, which include poor image of the programme in education.

Research Question 2:

What are the possibilities of overcoming the challenges of business education in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Table 2: Business educators' mean rating on the possibilities of overcoming the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *N=183*

| S/N | Possibilities of Overcoming the Challenges | \bar{X} | SD | Remarks |
|-----|--|-----------|------|---------|
| 10. | Adequate optimization of resources would help to equip students with requisite skills for gainful employment and decent work | 3.55 | 1.44 | Agree |
| 11. | Adequate optimization of resources would help to equip students with requisite skills to generate income and eradicate poverty | 3.67 | 1.24 | Agree |
| 12. | Adequate provision of resources would help to equip students with requisite skills of redeeming the youths from a bleak future | 3.51 | 1.35 | Agree |
| 13. | Adequate optimization of resources would help to equip students with skills to improve the standard of living among graduates | 3.50 | 1.34 | Agree |
| 14. | Adequate optimization of resources would help to equip students with the requisite attributes for personal dignity and self-esteem | 3.51 | 1.35 | Agree |
| 15. | Adequate optimization of resources would help to equip students with the requisite skills that free them from serving others | 3.55 | 1.44 | Agree |

Data in Table 2 show the mean responses of business educators' in universities and colleges of education on possibilities of overcoming challenges for preparing business education students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The results revealed that all the items had the mean scores that ranged from 3.50 to 3.67. The mean scores are indications that possibilities of overcoming challenges facing business education would help students for global competition. The study specifically revealed that adequate optimization of resources, development of employability skills, alleviation of poverty, improvement of standard of living among graduates, development of self esteem and personal dignity will contribute effectively to business education programme delivery.

Testing of Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 1:

Business educators in colleges of education do not differ significantly from business educators in universities in their mean ratings on the challenges for preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions based on type of institutions in South-East.

Table 3: Summary of t-test result analysis of colleges of education and universities business educators on challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *N=183*

| Type of Institution | N | O | SD | α | Df | t-val | p-val | Remarks |
|-----------------------|-----|------|------|----------|-----|-------|-------|----------|
| Universities | 52 | 3.80 | 1.38 | 0.05 | 181 | 0.884 | 0.373 | Not Sig. |
| Colleges of Education | 131 | 3.62 | 1.22 | | | | | |

Source: Field Study, 2018.

Data in Table 3, indicate that the aggregate mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education on the challenges in preparing students for global competition is 3.80 and 3.62, while the corresponding standard deviation is 1.38 and 1.22. The Table indicated that the t-value is .884 at degree of freedom of 181, while the p-value is 0.373. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant, since the p-value is greater than the alpha value (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected; hence, the mean responses of business educators in universities do not significantly differ from business educators in colleges of education on the challenges in preparing business education students for global competition.

Null Hypothesis 2:

Business educators in colleges of education do not differ significantly from business educators in universities in their mean ratings on the possibilities of overcoming the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions based on type of institutions in South-East.

Table 4: Summary of t-test result analysis of colleges of education and universities business educators on the possibilities of overcoming challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. N = 183

| Type of Institution | N | O | SD | α | Df | t-val | p-val | Remarks |
|-----------------------|-----|------|------|----------|-----|-------|-------|---------|
| Universities | 52 | 3.73 | 1.21 | 0.05 | 181 | 0.604 | 0.354 | Not Sig |
| Colleges of Education | 131 | 3.47 | 1.17 | | | | | |

Source: Field Study, 2018.

Data in Table 4, indicate that the aggregate mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education on the possibilities of overcoming challenges in preparing business education students for global competition is 3.73 and 3.47, while the corresponding standard deviation is 1.21 and 1.17. The Table 4 indicated that the t-value is .604 at degree of freedom of 181, while the p-value is 0.354. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant, since the p-value is greater than the alpha value (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected; hence, the mean responses of business educators in universities do not significantly differ from business educators in colleges of education on the possibilities of overcoming challenges in preparing business education students for global competition.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study in the first research question agreed that there are challenges facing business education for preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions with mean ratings ranged from 3.50 to 3.67 will help in promoting national development. This agreed with the views of Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017); Obunadike (2015) that inadequate provision of funds, qualified manpower, modern facilities, and quality curriculum, coupled with low public interest, are some of the possible challenges facing the delivery of business education in Nigeria tertiary institutions. Similarly, Ikpesu (2016) also argued that this situation would consequently affect the production of competent graduates that are useful for unemployment eradication and national development.



The result in Table 3 revealed that business educators in universities did not differ significantly from business educators in colleges of education on the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This means that the institution type does not affect the challenges for preparing business education students for global competition Nigeria tertiary institutions in South-East, Nigeria.

The findings of the study on the second research question also agreed that they are need for the possibilities of overcoming the challenges of business education in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions mostly mean scores ranged from 3.50 to 3.67 would help in promoting national. This is in line with this findings of Idris and Mbudai (2016) who asserted that the optimization of resources (both financially and otherwise) for the effective delivery of business education would help in promoting national development.

Results in Table 4, revealed that business educators in universities did not differ significantly from business educators in colleges of education on the possibilities of overcoming the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This invariably implies that business education skills can grant students the opportunities to access basic life-sustaining essentials, such as food, education, protection, healthcare, clothing and shelter, as well as access quality living, self-esteem, and freedom from servitude.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that business education are face with a lot of challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions in South-East and the possibilities of overcoming these challenges was treated which would help in preparing students for global competition and promoting national development. The outcome of the study also revealed that type of institutions did not affect the challenges and possibilities of overcoming the challenges in preparing students for global competition in Nigerian tertiary institutions in South-East.

Recommendations

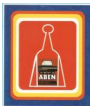
Based on the findings of the study, the researchers proffer the following recommendations:

Government and other major stakeholders should focus their attention and invest their resources on business education so as to help address the challenges facing business education particularly at the tertiary level. This is to enable business education programme produced competent graduates who can compete globally in the world of work.

Government and other major stakeholders should endeavour to invest their resources in order to help equip recipients with the requisite attributes for entrepreneurial development, poverty alleviation and national development.

References

- Alufohal, A. E. & Ezeani, C. P. (2012). The relevance of education for social change and good governance in Nigeria. *Journal of Sociology of Education*, 4(1), 149-156.
- Amoor, S. S. & Udoh, A. A. (2008). The role of secretarial education in Nigeria economic development. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 3(1), 294-298.
- Edokpolor, E. J. & Owenvbiugie, O. R. (2017). Business education in Nigeria: Issues, challenges and way forward for national development. *Journal of Collaborative Research and Development (JCRD)*, 5(1), 1-25.



- Idris, A. I. & Mbudai, Y. (2016). Technical and vocational education: Challenges towards youths empowerment in Kano State-Nigeria. *Journal of Technical Education and Training (JTET)*, 9(1), 1-12.
- Ikpesu, O. C. (2017). Globalizing business education curriculum experiences in Nigeria higher education for enhanced students' employability. *European Journal of Business and Innovation Research*, 5(5), 47-57. Retrieved from www.eajournals.org.
- Obunadike, J. C. (2015). Vocational and technical education: A tool for national development in Nigeria. In R. Okoye, J. E. O. Otuka & S. Iheonunekwu (Eds.). *Vocational and technical education in Nigeria: Trends and prospects*. Onitsha: Global Academic Group Online Academic Resources.
- Oladunjoye, G. T. (2016). Optimizing business education for national development. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 3(1), 1-16.
- Umoru, A. T. (2015). Challenges and opportunities of utilization of social media by business education students in Nigeria universities. *International Journal of Educational and Pedagogical Sciences*, 9(11), 69-73.
- UNESCO (2008). *Education for all global monitoring report: Education for all by 2015 will we make it?* Oxford University Press UK.
- Vanpatten, B. & Benati, A. G. (2010). *Key terms in second language acquisition*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.