



## HISTORICAL- PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*Historical and philosophical issues, amidst modern approaches continue to play-out fundamentally and at the same time pose serious challenge to the development of business education in Nigeria. This study determined: the extent of relationship between historical issues and philosophical issues and how modern approaches to business education predicts the development of the programme. The study answered three research questions and tested three null hypotheses. This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in Nigeria. The population of the study was 540 comprising 400 professional business educators and 140 other professionals in the larger society. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 299 comprising 196 business educators and 103 professionals from the larger society. The researcher-made questionnaire duly validated and reliability-tested, tagged, “Historical-Philosophical Issues and the Development of Business Education Questionnaire (HPIDBEQ)” generated data for the study. Data was analysed using Linear Regression Analysis (LRA). Findings are that: Historical and philosophical issues significantly relate to the development of business education in Nigeria; and modern approaches significantly predict the development of business education with a high predictive value. It was concluded that historical and philosophical issues are relevant to the development of business education based on the reality of the time. It was further concluded that modern approaches in business education delivery are vital to its development. It is recommended that business educators should develop convincing history of business education to reconcile the poor public perception that the programme was developed for school drop-outs; business educators should constantly review the philosophy of business education to reflect the reality of the time; business educators should ensure that more researches are conducted to develop more practical and modern approaches for business education delivery.*

**Keywords:** Business Education; Historical Issues; Philosophical Issues; Modern Approach; Development

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## **Introduction**

Historical issues continue to play-out fundamentally and at the same time pose serious challenge to the development of business education in Nigeria. No wonder John F. Kennedy, a former American president remarked, “it is the profound tendencies of history and not the passing excitements, which will shape our future” (Daughtrey, 1965). Historical issues here imply the background and foundations on which business education in Nigeria evolved. It is observed that business education has its roots in the apprenticeship system of ancient times. More so, is the fact that America is the cradle of business education, where Nigeria modelled her business education programme? Association of Business Educators of Nigeria ABEN (2017) explained that business education has its earliest origins from the United States of America. Its evolution shows how single business subjects expanded into what became business education programme; from casting accounts to book-keeping as far back as 1709 and presently, accounting; shorthand offered as far back as 1862 in public high school; typewriting following its invention in 1868 to the present form known as keyboarding and word processing as parts of business education subjects. Interestingly business education in its present state and structure developed and is still developing as a process of revolution. First, as individual demand under self-sufficient economy; seconded by a demand from the business sector (business demand); following, as a demand in public office (workforce demand) in addition to the continued demand from the business sector, later as a demand from the teeming population of the society (societal demand) and presently, in a competitively global demand enabled by information superhighway (where information moves in Nano-seconds) and knowledge economy. Daughtrey explained that business education began with a vocational objective, which has prevailed from ancient times when copiers and account casters learned through apprenticeship until after the first quarters of the twentieth century when business workers were trained. Today, business education programme is still designed with vocational objective but this has to be re-defined to include professional objective, at least to eliminate the poor public perception that continue to discourage many from enrolment into business education programme. Therefore, it is not in the interest of business educators to ignore historical trends in the development of business education. Meanwhile, Okon, Ukpong, Udoh and Thomas (2012) trace the origin of business education to vocational training given to younger ones at home, relevant to the needs of the family.

The historical challenge posed by the poor curriculum borrowed from the American business education system is generating further challenge of poor public perception



(PPP) and low recognition of business education programme. Ekpenyong (2011) remarked that in Nigeria business education seems to have lost the chance of attracting sufficient public recognition, and government attention by way of favourable and appropriate legislations and material provisions. However, Nwosu and Okoro (2018) hold a contrary view noting that in Nigeria, business education enjoys public recognition as a profession that holds the key to poverty alleviation. Interestingly, Nigeria has adopted education as a veritable tool for national development as entrenched in the National Policy on Education, hence, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014: xii) succinctly states: "In Nigeria, education is regarded as 'an instrument per excellence for social and economic reconstruction of the nation'; government regard education as key to the realisation of Nigeria's collective aspiration of being among the top 20 developed nations of the world by the year 2020 under the Vision 20: 2020. In line with this vision, Okon (2018) acknowledged that business education processes enhance workforce developments, raise productivity, and create wealth for national economic development as well as individual, organisational and societal wellbeing. Judging from where business education was adapted and the demand of the Nigerian society of the time and its demand in the contemporary Nigerian society, there is need to raise and address certain posers. The framework of this study therefore begs for answers to the following historical issues:

1. What is the philosophical base of business education?
2. What constitute business education curriculum?
3. Who should enrol for business education programme?
4. Who should fund business education?
5. Who should absorb business education graduates?

The philosophical foundation of business education was and is still a cardinal issue in business education. Many Nigerians still carry the notion that the knowledge acquired in business education in schools can be obtained in training centres and business establishment. Consequently, these categories of Nigerians do not see business education as a prestigious, attractive or professional course for them or their relatives to enrol for. It is serious that most university undergraduates in business education only heard of business education as alternate programme suggested by administrators of their hitherto cognate programme when it was apparent that such cognate department cannot absorb them due to deficiency in one thing or the other or have been competitively screened out. This implies that admission into business education programme in Nigeria is not yet competitive; otherwise, before such people who are dropped from their preferred cognate department could cross over to business education, opportunities would have been very limited if not unavailable. The curriculum of business education is still debateable regarding the inclusion or



exclusion of certain component. For instance, the inclusion or exclusion of shorthand, typewriting, economics, among others seem to be an unresolved issue. For instance, almost all the universities in Nigeria do not have shorthand in their curriculum.

The challenge of enrolment must have been as a result of historical and philosophical issues that reflected in the curriculum structure as well as who should absorb business education graduates. First the vocational objective of business education is a philosophy that tends to exclude people from business education enrolment. However, the vocational objective of business education cannot be taken out considering the core mandate of the programme in providing skill competencies for self-reliance. Be as it may, enrolment has been and is still an issue in business education and has its root from historical issues.

Another current issue emanating from historical issues in business education in Nigeria is funding of business education, especially at the university level. Funding and finance are an important aspect in business education yet, it is often ignored by some governments and university administrators, a good number which apportion a negligible part of the (national) budget for schools' administration. In funding business education, the funds accruable to the education sector must meet the following recommendations: A minimum of 26% of the annual budget of the State and Federal Government be allocated to education in compliance with UNESCO benchmark, among others.

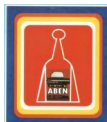
The absorption of business education graduates should ordinarily not be a serious challenge as business educators ought to be self-reliant. However, there are other cardinal philosophies such as meeting the workforce demand. Okon (2015b) opined that market value of graduates from universities could be measured in terms of the acceptability of these graduates by employers of labour. A study conducted by Pitan and Adedeji (2012) on skills mismatch among university graduates in the Nigerian labour market indicate that university graduates in Nigeria are not adequately prepared for work with respect to skills demand of the labour market. Market value of graduates could be measured based on the level of skills they acquired in school and the ability of these graduates to utilize the skills for high productivity at work place.

Historical issues such as poor public perception in business education seem unresolved. Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015: 208) cited Popham (1975) who



reported the perception and reaction of a group of people on what business education is? The reply was as follows: A business executive replied, “Business Education is education to produce goods and services”. A radical retorted: It is the avenue to make enormous profit. One teacher responded: Economic concepts necessary for living in a business economy. Another teacher answered: Learning skills to enter a business or distributive job. Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015) also cited renowned authors with their definitions of business education thus: Business education include those business programmes and courses taught ordinarily at the secondary school level (Nolan, Hayden & Malsbary, 1967); Business education is an essential part of the preparation of youths for live and living (Osuala, 1989; 2009); Business education is a programme of instruction which consists of two parts (1) Office education - a vocational programme of office careers through initial, refresher and upgrading education and (2) General business education - a programme to provide students with information and competences which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business (Osuala, 2004); business education is that facet of educational training that helps the individual to acquire relevant skills needed for living (Njoku, 1997); Business education is an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable him/her operates in the environment he/she finds himself/herself (Njoku, 2006). It can be deduced that the definitions given by these authors including that of the lay man on the street are not far from what business education truly implies, except that these definitions are profound and follow historical trends.

The researcher observes that the curriculum structure of business education in America was poorly developed and was restricted to a certain group of people. Thus, when Nigeria introduced business education, similar curriculum structure was modelled. This is observed by ABEN (2017) thus: “Nigeria copiously borrowed from the United States of America in incorporating business education into her school system”. Again, Akpan (2018) reported that there has been a misconception in the past that business education was only required for school dropouts, unintelligent and under-achievers thus, making business education very unpopular in Nigeria tertiary institutions. The researcher observes a general poor public perception of business education. First, this has adversely affected the admission of quality inputs in business education. Second, it eludes business education the support it deserves from stakeholders in terms of funding. Again, and arising from the foregoing, the output of graduates tends to be threatened. The study determined the relationship between:



1. Historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria
2. Philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria
3. The study also determined how modern approaches to business education predict the development of the programme

### **Research Questions**

The study answered the following questions:

1. What is the extent of relationship between historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of relationship between philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria?
3. How do modern approaches to business education predict the development of the programme?

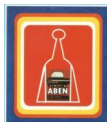
### **Statement of Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 Levels of significance:

- H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant relationship between historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria.
- H<sub>02</sub> There is no significant relationship between philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria
- H<sub>03</sub> Modern approaches to business education do not significantly predict the Development of Business Education

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey research design was suitable for the study as it encouraged the use of survey instrument. The study was carried out in Nigeria since the variables examined, historical and philosophical issues as they affect the development of business education are of national interest and affect the entire programme irrespective of the institution or area of the country it is being offered. A population of 540 business educators and other professionals was used. A sample size of 299 comprising 196 business educators and 103 professionals from the larger society was used as sample size. The researcher-made questionnaire duly validated and reliability-tested, tagged, “Historical-Philosophical Issues and the Development of Business Education Questionnaire (HPIDBEQ)” generated data for the study. Data was analysed using Linear Regression Analysis (LRA). The Questionnaire, a four-point scale is rated as follows:



Very Great Extent (VGE)	=	4 Points (= 3.5 - 4.0);
Great Extent	=	3 Points (= 2.5 = 3.4);
Low Extent	=	2 Points (= 1.5 = 2.4);
Very Low Extent	=	a Point (= 0.1 = 1.4)

## Results

### Question One

What is the extent of relationship between historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria?

Data for answering this research question was generated from HPIDBEQ items 1 - 10. Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is used to answer the research question and summary data shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Descriptive statistics of the extent of relationship between Historical Issues and the development of business education

S/N	Item	Score	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Relationship
1.	Enrolment of students for business education is still linked to its roots in the apprenticeship system of ancient times	432	2.20	Low Extent
2.	Business education in Nigeria is still based on the American system as the cradle of business education	373	1.90	Low Extent
3.	Business education in Nigeria is still based on original subjects offered during its evolution in the ancient time	445	2.27	Low Extent
4.	Business education in its present state and structure developed and is still developing as a process of revolution.	464	2.37	Low Extent
5.	Nigeria as an emerging economy has much Tasks in addressing the lingering poverty	437	2.23	Low Extent
6.	Business education began with a vocational Objective	382	1.95	Low Extent
7.	Another current issue emanating from historical issues in business education in Nigeria is funding of business education	473	2.41	Low Extent
8.	Historical issues in business education seem unresolved.	453	2.31	Low Extent
9.	Nigeria's business education curriculum is still modelled after the American system.	391	1.99	Low Extent
10.	Misconception that business education is for dropouts are still prevailing	586	2.99	Great Extent
<b>Average Mean</b>			<b>2.26</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>

The findings presented in Table 1 indicate **the** extent of relationship between historical issues and the development of business education. The average mean value of 2.26 indicates that historical issues are to a low extent related with the



development of business education. Again, out of the ten historical issues measured, only an item had a weighted mean of 2.99 indicating a rating of 'great extent'. Other nine items indicate low extent.

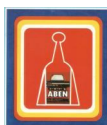
### Question Two

What is the extent of relationship between philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria?

Data for answering this research question were generated from questionnaire items 11-21. Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is used to answer the research question and summary data shown in Table 2.

Table 2: *Descriptive statistics of the extent of relationship between Philosophical Issues and the Development of Business Education*

S/N	Item	Score	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Relationship
11.	Business education programme is still being designed with vocational objective	288	1.47	Low Extent
12.	Business education is designed with professional objective	564	2.88	Great Extent
13.	The general education objective of business education promotes its enrolment	500	2.55	Great Extent
14.	Business education in Nigeria is poorly developed and restricted to a certain group of people.	564	2.88	Great Extent
15.	Unintelligent and under-achievers enrol for business education, thus making it unpopular in Nigeria tertiary institutions	452	2.31	Low Extent
16.	The historical challenge posed by the poor curriculum causes low recognition of business education programme in Nigeria	254	1.30	Very Low Extent
17.	Business education provides training and impart the necessary skills to individual for self-reliance economically	365	1.87	Low Extent
18.	There is need for individuals, organisations and the larger society to further redefine business education at the next level	260	1.33	Very Low Extent
19.	Business education can re-inject innovations for the improvement of business education thus, giving the next generation of those who enrol for business education a platform to adapt to emerging work and societal environment through better learning and training environment.	321	1.64	Low Extent
20.	The philosophical foundation of business education was and is still a cardinal issue in business education.	293	1.50	Low Extent
21.	The increasingly complex society emphasised the need for the education of every person to handle his personal business affairs more competently	379	1.94	Low Extent
<b>Average Mean</b>			<b>2.26</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>



Findings presented in Table 2 indicate the extent of relationship between philosophical issues and the development of business education. The average mean value of 1.97 indicates philosophical issues are to a low extent related with the development of business education. However, three, six and two of the eleven philosophical issues indicate great, low and very low extent of relationship with the development of business education respectively.

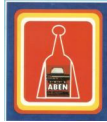
### Question Three

How do modern approaches to business education predict the development of the programme?

Data for answering this research question were generated from questionnaire items 22-31. Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is used to answer the research question and summary data shown in Table 3.

Table 3: **Descriptive statistics** of how modern approaches predict the development of business education in Nigeria

S/N	Item	Score	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Relationship
22.	Some Nigerians do not see business education as a prestigious, attractive or professional course for them or their relatives to enrol for	378	1.93	Low Extent
23.	Most university undergraduates in business education only heard of business education as alternate programme suggested by administrators of their hitherto cognate programme when it was apparent that such cognate department cannot absorb them	349	1.78	Low Extent
24.	Admission into business education programme in Nigeria is not yet competitive	427	2.18	Low Extent
25.	Business education are those business programmes and courses taught ordinarily at the secondary school levels	295	1.51	Low Extent
26.	The structure of business education encompasses 'School and Out-of-school education	426	2.17	Low Extent
27.	Business education can be offered from Basic to Higher Education levels	470	2.4	Low Extent
28.	Nigerian government is making appropriate legislations and material provisions for the development of business education	334	1.70	Low Extent
29.	Nigeria's business education enjoys public recognition as a profession	335	1.71	Low Extent
30.	Business education is not stagnated when in comparison with its past	355	1.81	Low Extent
31.	There are enormous tasks before business education stakeholders desirous of its development in a pace in tandem with the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century demand	406	2.07	Low Extent
<b>Average Mean</b>			<b>1.97</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>



The findings presented in Table 3 indicate the extent of relationship between modern approaches and the development of business education. The average mean value of 1.93 indicates that modern approaches are to a low extent related with the development of business education.

H0<sub>1</sub> There is no significant relationship between historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria.

**Table 4:** Result of Linear regression analysis of no significant relationship between historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria

Variable	SE	R	R <sup>2</sup>		
Historical Issues	2.32439	.924	.854		
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant Level
Regression (X)	9358.577	1	9358.577	1732.177	.05
Residual (Y)	1604.627	297	5.403		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10963.204</b>	<b>298</b>			

N = 299; Critical F = 3.84

Result from the Linear Regression Analysis presented in Table 4 reveals that the calculated F-ratio of 1732.177 is by far greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.84at .05 levels of significance with degrees of freedom being 1 and 297. Thus, the null hypothesis, “there is no significant relationship between historical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria” is rejected. This implies that historical issues have significant relationship with the development of business education.

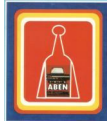
H0<sub>2</sub> There is no significant relationship between philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria

**Table 5:** Result of Linear regression analysis of no significant relationship between philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria

Variable	SE	R	R <sup>2</sup>		
Philosophical Issues	2.6415	.889	0.791		
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant Level
Regression (X)	7843.707	1	7843.707	1124.116	.05
Residual (Y)	2072.367	297	6.978		
<b>Total</b>	<b>9916.074</b>	<b>298</b>			

N = 299; Critical F = 3.84

Result from the Linear Regression Analysis presented in Table 5 reveals that the calculated F-ratio of 1124.116 is by far greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.84at .05 levels of significance with degrees of freedom being 1 and 197. Thus, the null hypothesis, “there is no significant relationship between philosophical issues and the



development of business education in Nigeria” is rejected. This implies that philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria are significantly related.

H0<sub>3</sub> Modern approaches to business education do not significantly predicts the Development of Business Education

**Table 6:** Result of Linear regression analysis, “modern approaches do not significantly predict the development of business education in Nigeria”

Variable	SE	R	R <sup>2</sup>		
Modern Approaches	4.67839	.651	.423		
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant Level
Regression (X)	4770.719	1	4770.719	217.967	.05
Residual (Y)	6500.545	297	21.887		
<b>Total</b>	<b>11271.264</b>	<b>298</b>			

N = 299; Critical F = 3.84

Results from the Linear Regression Analysis presented in Table 6 reveal that the calculated F-ratio of 217.967 is by far greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.84at .05 levels of significance with degrees of freedom being 1 and 197. Thus, the null hypothesis, “modern approaches do not significantly predict the development of business education in Nigeria” is rejected. This implies that modern approaches significantly predict the development of business education. Also, the test of significance shows a positive and high predictive value.

### Summary of Findings

1. Historical issues are to a low extent related with the development of business education.
2. Philosophical issues are to a low extent related with the development of business education.
3. Modern approaches are to a low extent related with the development of business education.
4. Historical issues have significant relationship with the development of business education.
5. Philosophical issues and the development of business education in Nigeria are significantly related.
6. Modern approaches significantly predict the development of business education with a high predictive value.

### Discussion of Findings

Historical and philosophical issues cannot be undermined in the development of business education as they help to address fundamental issues that provide a



background and direction for business educators on the journey in the development of business education and at what pace and the speed needed to move business education to the required destination in addressing Nigeria's development challenges. The findings summarised above indicate that historical and philosophical issues significantly relate with the development of business education and that modern approaches can predict the development of business education with high predictive value. ABEN (2017: 3) had taken cognizance of this and averred: "As we all know; business education has its earliest origins from the United States of America. Business education advent showed a history of how single business subjects expanded into what became business education programme. First, it was casting accounts, the predecessor of accounting that was taught in school as book keeping as far back as 1709. Low public perception of business education has been reported by Ekpenyong (2011), who remarked that in Nigeria business education seems to have lost the chance of attracting sufficient public recognition, and government attention by way of favourable and appropriate legislations and material provisions. This seems to have negative effect on the development of business education

However, to Nwosu and Okoro (2018), business education enjoys public recognition as a profession that holds the key to poverty alleviation. It is however, apparent that business has developed from the historical account casting, shorthand and typewriting and sometimes as a single subject to a discipline with many components; from the apprenticeship system with no organisation of content to organised contents with the use of modern approaches in its delivery.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study have prompted the following conclusions: Historical issues continue to play significant role in the development of business education in Nigeria, hence, business educators should redefine business education based on the reality of its pragmatic approach from the origin rather than the category of people who enrolled for the programme on its inception. It is also concluded that philosophical issues are relevant to the development of business education based on the reality of the time. It is further concluded that modern approaches in business education delivery are vital to its development.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions drawn, it is recommended that:

1. Business educators should develop convincing history of business education to reconcile the poor public perception that the programme was developed for school drop-outs.



2. Business educators should constantly review the philosophy of business education to reflect the reality of the time.
3. Business educators should ensure that more researches are conducted to develop more practical and modern approaches for business education delivery.

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