



BUSINESS STUDIES AT PRIMARY EDUCATION LEVEL: A CATALYST FOR PREPARING YOUNG CHILDREN FOR THE WORLD OF WORK AND FURTHER STUDIES IN LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

Primary education was designed to prepare young people for the world of work and higher studies. However, this objective has not been given adequate attention, which has consequently led to rise in unemployment among people who could not further after primary education. This study examined Business Studies at Primary School Level of Education as a catalyst for preparing young children for the world of work and further studies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Descriptive research survey was employed for the study. The population of the study consisted all of 138 and 97 business studies teachers in Epe and Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area of Lagos State respectively while judgmental sampling technique was used to select 94 respondents representing 40% of the entire population. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, validated by experts in measurement and evaluation. Cronbach, alpha measure of Internal Consistency was used to determine reliability of the instrument, which yielded the coefficient alpha value of 0.82, which was high enough to be reliable. The data collected were analyzed using mean to answer the research questions while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the null hypotheses of the study at 0.05 level of significant. The findings of the study revealed that Business studies would prepare primary school pupils for the world of work and higher studies. Based on the finding. It was recommended among all that professional bodies like ABEN and BUSTAN should propose the introduction of Business Studies into the Primary School Curriculum to the Government. Also the Government should make primary and secondary education totally free, accessible, efficient and effective, so as to accommodate all young children.

Keywords: Business Studies, Primary Education level, Young children, World of Work, Further Studies



Introduction

The world is currently undergoing socio-economic transformations and the strategic role of education in this regard cannot be overemphasized. Education is the only means through which the elimination of illiteracy, ignorance, unemployment, poverty and diseases can be facilitated among people (Ajuluchukwu, 2015). Education could be formal (well structured, organized and coordinated) or informal (not well structured, organized and coordinated). There are three levels of formal education in Nigeria, viz: primary education, secondary education and tertiary education.

According to the National Policy on Education (FRN 2012), primary education is the education given in institutions for children aged 6 -11 years, plus. The primary education is the first six years of the nine years of basic education using the Universal Basic Education (UBE) standard. This stage of education is often addressed as elementary education and it relates to the development of children's cognitive at early age. As noted by Suryaman & Hari, (2017), primary education is the most basic formal education level. Primary education was seen as the strong unit of education on which all other systems are built upon and ascribed the key to success or failure of the whole system (FRN, 2012). The objectives of primary education according to the National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2012) were to:

- i. Inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively;
- ii. Lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- iii. Give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- iv. Mold the character and develop sound attitude and morals in children;
- v. Develop in the child, the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment;
- vi. Giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity;
- vii. Provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and the craft of the locality (FRN, 2012).

For several decades, the aspects of the goals of primary education which recognized the training that gives the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills and provide him/her with basic tools for preparation for the world of work (business studies, inclusive) has not been implemented at the primary school level, Adebisi, (2016). According to National Education Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2013), the core compulsory subjects in the primary school curriculum includes; English Studies, one major Nigerian Language (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba), Mathematics, basic science and technology, social studies, civic education, cultural and creative arts (CCA), religion studies, physical and health education as well as computer. The curriculum partly recognizes those subjects needed to expose the children to some vocations and prepare them for the world of business, even as elective subjects. However, business studies which is traditionally the



vocational subject that prepares its recipients for the world of work was not given its right place in the primary school curriculum. It does not stand out as a programme of its own like other vocational subjects (Agriculture, home economics as well as cultural and creative arts). Rather, it was partly incorporated in other subjects like mathematics and social studies. This has subsequently deprived the young children the right to be provided with basic tools for further educational advancement as well as preparation for the world of work. As a result, most students find it difficult to cope with the subjects of business studies when getting to secondary school seemingly because of lack of background of the subject right from primary schools. Over the years, it has consequently affected students' academic performance in business studies at junior secondary school and even at post junior secondary school levels, Adebisi, (2016).

Also, those who could not continue their education after primary school (primary school leavers) in the labour market today seems disappointing, as many of them fail to gain employment or end up with menial jobs in poor conditions as cleaners, gatemen and house maids. This is evident in the rate of unemployment among primary school leavers in Nigeria as revealed by the National Bureau of Statistics in table 1.

Table1: Rate of Unemployment among Primary School Leavers in Nigeria

Year	Population	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2010	15,682,209	811,673	5.2
2011	16,775,319	898,278	5.4
2012	11,205,635	848,396	7.6
2013	14,181,832	959,978	6.8
2014	14,545,984	661,889	4.6
2015	15,379,174	1,116,116	7.3
2016	15,754,773	1,594,173	10.1
2017	15,082,963	2,453,515	16.3
2018	15,788,588	3,083,537	19.5

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2018)

From the table above, it is clear that the rate of unemployment among primary school leavers in Nigeria is not only on the rise over the years but also at alarming rate. The poor implementation of Business Education worsens the dwindling situation of myriads of problems experienced in Nigeria today; (Adebisi, 2016). In order to be economically literate and an informed citizen, wise consumers and competent workers, each person irrespective of level of educational attainment must have some understanding of the world of business and how it functions. It is important that everyone possesses at least minimum knowledge, skills and understanding with which to make judgment needed in our free enterprise society and to make contributions to the world of work, (Adebisi, 2016).



Since learners in elementary schools are at formative stage, the idea of introducing business studies at this level needs to be appreciated as a concrete step to prepare learners for entrepreneurship from an early age (Suryaman&Hari, 2017). Business studies aids in providing pupils / students at all levels with the ability to function effectively in the business world (Yahaya, Nana &Abdulrahman, 2014). As noted by Abderrahman, (2016) childhood, along with adolescence, is the preferred period to plant business idea seeds and to nurture positive attitudes toward business enterprise as well as to acquire basic knowledge on the topic. Through business studies, primary school pupils would be afforded the opportunity to develop interest and abilities; skills and understanding of the vocational opportunities available in the broad field of business that enables one assume his civic responsibilities through enlightened participation in the business system, proper self-management and better consumer awareness. Therefore, primary education in Nigeria needs urgent attention in terms of overhauling its curriculum to accommodate the learning experiences that would not only focus on mathematics, science and technology but also lay solid foundation for preparing the young children for the world of business, Adebisi, K. I. (2016).

Statement of the Problem

Primary education was designed to prepare young people for the world of work and higher studies, Abderrahman, (2016). However, despite how laudable these goals are, the role of preparing the young children for the world of work and higher studies have not been given adequate attention in the primary school curriculum in Nigeria, Ajuluchukwu, (2015). The curriculum is not imbued with the right learning experiences that could lay solid foundation for the preparation of the young children for trade the world of work, of which business studies is one. This situation has consequently led to increasing rise in unemployment among primary school leavers, who could not continue their formal education after primary education. Also those who eventually proceeded to secondary school found it difficult to embrace subjects which they do not have background while in primary school. Therefore, the study was carried out to examine how the teaching of business studies at primary education level will help in the preparation of the young children for the world of work in, as well as lay solid foundation for them to perform better academically in the subject when getting to junior secondary school.

Purpose of the Study

The study intends to:

- i. Examine how teaching of business studies in primary schools would aid preparation of the young children for the world of work in Lagos State.
- ii. Investigate how teaching of business studies in primary schools would influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State



Research Questions

- i. How will teaching of business studies at primary schools prepare the young children for the world of work in Lagos State?
- ii. Would teaching of business studies at primary schools influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State?

Research Hypotheses

- H0₁ There is no significant difference in the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies at primary schools would aid the preparation of the young children for the world of work in Lagos State.
- H0₂ There is no significant difference in the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies at primary schools would influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State?

Methodology

The non-experimental design involving the descriptive research survey type was employed for the purpose of this study. The population of this study consisted of 138 business studies teachers (public and private) in Epe Local Government Areas and 97 business studies teachers (public and private) in Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Areas of Lagos State respectively. Due to the high intellectual abilities of the individuals involved in the population of the study, judgmental sampling technique was used to select ninety four (94) respondents representing 40% of the entire population. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was developed by the researchers, titled 'Questionnaire on Introduction of Business Studies at the Primary Education Level as a Catalyst for preparing Young Children for the World of Work and further Studies' (IBSPSLCPYCWFS). The questionnaire was validated by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering 10 sets of questionnaire to 10 business studies teachers, who were not part of the research study. Their responses were analyzed using the Cronbach alpha, measure of internal consistency, which yielded a coefficient alpha value of 0.82, which was high enough to be reliable. The instrument for data collection was administered to the respondents by the researchers, with the help of one trained research assistant. A total number of 91 business studies teachers, representing 97% of the sample size responded to the questionnaire. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while t-test statistical technique was used to test the null hypotheses of the study, at 0.05 level of significant. The decision rules for answering the research questions were based on the fact, that any calculated mean scores equal to, or greater than 2.50 was regarded as agreed, while any calculated mean scores less than 2.50 was regarded as disagreed. Furthermore, the value (t) was used in taking the decisions on the hypotheses. If the t-value was less than or equal to t-calculated t, the null hypotheses was not retained, but if the t-value was equal to or greater than t-calculated, the null hypotheses was retained.



Results

Research Question 1: How will teaching of business studies at primary schools prepare the young children for the world of work in Lagos State?

Table 2: Mean Response of Respondents on how the Teaching of Business Studies in Primary Schools will Prepare the Young Children for the World of Work in Lagos State

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
1.	Introducing business studies into the primary school curriculum would prepare the young children for the world of work in case they do not go further academically	3.52	Agreed
2.	Teaching business studies at primary school level will lay a solid foundation for the young children on business ideas and concepts.	3.62	Agreed
3.	In order to be economically literate primary school pupils must have some understanding of the world of business and how it functions.	3.78	Agreed
4.	Introducing business studies at primary school level is a concrete step to prepare the young pupils for all types of entrepreneurship.	3.60	Agreed
5.	Primary school level is the preferred period to plant business idea seeds and to nurture positive attitudes toward business enterprise in the young children.	3.89	Agreed
6.	Through business studies, primary school pupils would be afforded the opportunity to have understanding of the vocational opportunities available in the broad field of business	3.74	Agreed

The table 2 reveals that the mean response of the respondents is far above the acceptable mean of 2.50 for all the items. This is an indication that teaching of business studies in primary schools would prepare primary school pupils for the world of work in Lagos State.

Research Question 2: How will teaching of business studies in primary schools influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State?



Table 3: Mean Responses of Respondents on how teaching of Business Studies in Primary Schools will influence academic achievement of Junior Secondary School Students in Business Studies in Lagos State

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
1.	Having background knowledge of business studies right from primary school would aid junior secondary school students' achievement in business studies.	3.88	Agreed
2.	It helps the children not to come across business studies for the first time at junior secondary school level, thereby helping them to perform better	3.77	Agreed
3.	Business studies would be easier to teach in secondary schools when the students have earlier background of the subject right from primary school.	3.61	Agreed
4.	Students' interest in business studies needed to be aroused right from primary school for better performance in secondary schools.	3.51	Agreed
5.	Junior secondary school students would perform more in business studies than any other subject if they have idea of the subject like other subjects while in primary schools.	3.82	Agreed

The table 3 reveals that the mean response of the respondents is above the acceptable mean of 2.50 for all the items. This is an indication that teaching of business studies in primary schools would influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State.

Test of Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies in primary schools would aid the preparation of the young children for the world of work in Lagos State.

Table 4: T-test Analysis of the Mean Response of Public and Private Business Studies Teachers as Regards how Teaching of Business Studies in Primary Schools Would aid the Preparation of the Young Children for the World of Work in Lagos State

Variables	Mean	SD	N	F	t cal	t table	Decision
Public business studies teachers	2.55	0.15	56	89	1.09	1.99	Retain HO ₁
Private business studies teachers	2.63	0.26	35				

Table 4 indicated that the table value of 1.99 at 0.05 level with degree of freedom of 89 is greater than the calculated value of 1.09. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies in primary schools would aid preparation of



the young children for the world of work in Lagos State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies in primary schools would influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State?

Table 5: T-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Public and Private Business Studies Teachers as Regards how Teaching of Business Studies in Primary Schools Influences Academic Achievement of Junior Secondary School Students in Business Studies in Lagos State

Variables	Mean	SD	N	F	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Public business studies teachers	2.51	0.21	56	89	1.09	1.99	Retain H ₀ ₂
Private business studies teachers	2.54	0.22	35				

Table 5 indicated that the table value of 1.99 at 0.05 level with degree of freedom of 89 is greater than the calculated value of 1.09. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies in primary schools would influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study revealed that teaching of business studies at primary school level will prepare primary school pupils for the world of work in Lagos State. This finding supports the view of Adebisi, (2016) who observed that the poor implementation of Business Education, starting from the primary level, worsens the dwindling situation of myriads of problems experienced in Nigerian schools today. It is important that everyone possesses at least minimum knowledge, skills and understanding with which to make judgment needed in our free enterprise society and to make contributions to the world of work Adebisi, 2016 and Suryaman & Hari, (2017) also in line with this finding posited that since learners at the Primary schools are at formative stage, the idea of introducing business studies at that level needs to be appreciated as a concrete step to prepare learners for entrepreneurship from an early stage in life.

The finding also revealed that teaching of business studies in primary schools would influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State. This finding also corroborates Abderrahman, (2016) who revealed that childhood, along with adolescence, is the preferred period to plant business idea seeds and to nurture positive attitudes toward business enterprise as well as to acquire basic knowledge on the topic as the child goes further academically.



Finally, the study revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of public and private business studies teachers as regards how teaching of business studies in primary schools would aid preparation of the young children for the world of work, as well as influence academic achievement of junior secondary school students in business studies in Lagos State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the rate of increase in people with primary school certificate is worrisome especially between 2015 and 2018. Business studies is a subject that would prepare primary school pupils for the world of work and higher studies. Teaching the subjects at early stage of primary schools would provide the pupils with an insight to the business world, and how it functions, thereby instilling the entrepreneurial spirit in them and preparing them too for studying business studies at junior secondary school level. Therefore, all hands must be on deck to introduce business studies into the primary school curriculum to serve as catalyst for preparing young children for the world of work and further studies in Lagos State in particular and Nigeria at large.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Government should make primary and secondary education totally free, accessible, efficient and effective to reduce the rate at which people remain with primary school certificate alone in Nigeria.
- ii. Government and stake holders in Primary Education should urgently organize education summit to review the curriculum of primary education to determine the right learning experience that will make young children develop self-reliant skills and attitude at early age.
- iii. Professional bodies like ABEN and BUSTAN should propose the introduction of business studies into the primary school curriculum to the Government.
- iv. Business educators should beam their searchlights on the right learning experience needed to prepare the young children at the primary school for the world of work.
- v. When business studies are eventually included into the primary school curriculum, it should be handled by experts in the field of business education for optimal results.
- vi. Business educators should be well prepared for their new role of instilling business idea and functions into the young children at primary school level.
- vii. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) that developed and introduced the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) in schools should re-align all extant Primary and Junior Secondary School Curricula to meet the key targets of the UBE programme



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