



## **CHALLENGES OF BUSINESS STUDIES CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION TOWARDS SKILL ACQUISITION AT UPPER BASIC LEVEL IN PORT HARCOURT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated the constraints to implementing skill acquisition in Business studies curriculum of upper basic level education in Port Harcourt Local Government Area (PHALGA) of Rivers. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study population comprised of 130 Business Studies teachers drawn from public and private junior secondary schools in Port Harcourt local government Area. The entire population was studied due to its manageable size. Instrument for data collection was a 21-item structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Challenges of Implementing Skill Acquisition in Business studies curriculum (QCISABSC)" developed on a 4-point rating scale by the researcher and duly validated by experts in the field. The reliability coefficient of 0.75 was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method. The mean and standard deviation was employed in answering the research questions while z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study revealed allocation of subjects to non-professionals, large class size, inadequate training/re-training for teachers, poor administrative style of principals, use of inappropriate teaching methods, students' lack of interest, inadequate time for practical as administrative challenges. Findings also revealed that the implementation of skill acquisition in business studies curriculum is constrained by economic factors such as inadequate funding, inadequate instructional materials, poor teacher's salary, parents' socio-economic status among others. Based on the findings, it was concluded that skill acquisition in Business Studies at the upper basic level of education is constrained by administrative and economic challenges arising from ineffective curriculum implementation. The study recommended among others that upper basic level education should be well funded, adequate learning facilities should be provided, class sizes should be manageable for effective teaching and learning, and adequate time for practical to reinforce learning should be provided.*

**Keywords:** Business Studies; Challenges; Skill Acquisition; implementation; Upper Basic Level

### **Introduction**

Education is a veritable tool for the transfer of knowledge, skills, values attitudes to enable one function effectively as a productive member of the society. The current 9-3-4 structure of education in Nigeria was established by the Federal Government through the National Policy on Education in 2008.



The system consists of nine years of basic and compulsory education, three years at senior secondary level and four years of higher education. The prescribed 9-years of basic and compulsory Universal Basic Education (UBE) comprise of 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. Basically, the UBE programme is divided into 3 levels of education: the lower basic level (primary 1 to 3), the middle basic level (primary 4 to 6) and the upper basic Level (JSS 1 to 3). The first two levels of education do not have Business Studies as part of the subjects articulated for those periods of education. Business Studies is only found as one of the subjects offered at the upper basic level of education.

This level of education highlights the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies, clearly spelt out through its objectives and purpose by the federal government in the national policy on education. The objectives at the upper basic level (Junior) emphasizes among others, the need to prepare the individual for useful living within the society through the development of appropriate skills and preparing the individual for higher education (Wolugbom & Ben-George, 2019). The introduction of 9-3-4 system of education has made Business Studies at the junior secondary level prominent and recognized (Emeasoba, 2015) as education for self-reliance and a skill-oriented subject.

Business Studies is part of the general education at the lower secondary level that has been designed to prepare and train students for the future. Business Studies provides skill acquisition opportunities through its basic component parts: office practice, book keeping, commerce and keyboarding for students (FRN, 2012). It is an integrated approach to the study of the parts of a business environment; providing numerous doors of opportunities for youths, preparing them for different career paths and equipping them with knowledge needed to become self-employed and earn a living. NERDC (2013) stated that Business Studies as an aspect of vocational education, which equip individuals with necessary skills and knowledge needed for the performance in the business world, either for self-employment or job occupation. Similarly, FRN (2014) defined Business Studies as a pre-vocational education aimed at preparing students for the world of work by helping students acquire different types of business skills, exposing them to various career options. Business Studies refers to the study of the components of business subjects which deals with various business activities that are linked to several industries and trade and commerce aimed at developing the understanding of the learners towards various forms of business and how each function in the market.

Skill can be defined as proficiency in performance that may be enhanced by practice and training (Chell, 2013). Skill acquisition is one of the fundamental aims of Business Education at all levels (Msheila, 2020) and Business studies is Business Education at the upper basic level of education. It is the ability and capability acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to carry out activities or job functions involving ideas, things and or people (Amesi, 2017). It is the ability to be trained on a particular task or function, as such, its importance in Business Education cannot be over-emphasised. It is an antidote for most economic challenges such as unemployment, poverty, insecurity, low standard of living among others. Skill acquisition in Business studies refers to skills students are expected to acquire while taking the subject, at this level students are expected to develop basic office skills, basic book keeping skills, occupational skills, commercial skills and keyboarding skills to enable students' function effectively in the business world after graduation from



the upper level. These skills can be acquired through teaching and learning of Business Studies as prescribed in the curriculum.

Curriculum, in the opinion of Msheila (2020) is the entire body of knowledge offered by a school including selecting and organizing knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and beliefs to be transmitted. It determines what to be taught and it should be taught. Similarly, Okagbare (2010) asserted that curriculum consists of carefully mapped out programme of what to teach and how to teach. The curriculum of business studies as prescribed by the Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Centre (CESAC) in Emeasoba (2015) was structured with the objectives of providing the orientation of basic skills with which to start an occupation for those who cannot continue training; preparing students for further training in business studies; relating knowledge and skill to the national economy; developing basic skills in office occupations and providing basic business skills for personal use and for the future. These objectives are all in tandem with the fundamental and critical target of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Goals (MDGs) and have as their main thrust value orientation, wealth creation, unemployment reduction and poverty eradication (Nwabueze, Okoji, Okon & Briggs, 2014).

Business Studies curriculum was designed and planned with guided learning experience and learning outcomes formulated through systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences engulfed with practical skills for self-reliance under the guidance of the school for learners in line with the reviewed national curriculum which became the New Basic Education Curriculum for lower basic and upper basic levels of education. This new curriculum is said to address issues of poverty reduction, critical thinking, value re-orientation, entrepreneurship and skill acquisition. This curriculum at the upper basic level consist of four major components; Commerce, Book Keeping, Office Practice and Keyboarding with contents providing a strong foundation for students who will want to take up specialize courses in Business Education and other related fields, thereby producing accountants, business administrators, transporters, insurance persons, economists, marketers, secretaries, computer operators, entrepreneurs, salesmen, educators among others who will be relevant in various sectors of the economy.

According to Eze (2011) the objectives and goals of Business Studies curriculum is to enable students gain an understanding of the business concept through the study of its component parts; develop relevant skills in these areas and translate skills acquired to real life situations. Corroborating this view, Amesi (2019) asserted that its primary aim is the preparation of individuals for roles in enterprises as employee, entrepreneurs and self-employed. The authors further stated that the dynamic nature of business studies prepares students for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Ezenwafor and Onokpaunu (2017) these aforementioned objectives can be achieved from effective implementation of its curriculum.

Business Studies teachers are the implementers of the curriculum at the upper basic level. They are responsible for ensuring that students at this level are equipped with appropriate skills, abilities and knowledge necessary for self-reliance. According to Azih and Ikelegbe (2019) to ensure that students at this level acquire the required skills and knowledge, teachers must be committed to impart knowledge and skills to students taking cognizance of performance objectives, teachers and students activities, appropriate evaluation processes as well as availability of teaching and learning materials in order to achieve the objectives of the Business Studies as designed by Nigerian



Educational Development Council. Supporting this view, Amesi (2019) opined that teachers play significant roles in implementing the curriculum. Business teachers are therefore expected to be experts in all the component parts of the subject to be able to affect learning.

The task of skill acquisition as defined by the curriculum cannot be said to be an easy one as it is saddled with numerous problems and issues. Presently, the need to enhance skill acquisition at all levels of education has become a top priority of Nigerian government as a result of high unemployment challenge confronting the nation. However, most students at this level graduate without any skills as efforts to develop relevant skills are been constrained by factors militating against the implementation of the curriculum (Crompton, 2016). These constraining factors may include inadequate funding, lack of teaching/learning facilities, epileptic power supply, unstable policies, use of obsolete teaching methods, teachers' attitude, lack of qualified subject teachers, lack of teachers' training on the job, lack of students' interest in the subject among others. Nwagu and Nwaukwa (2016) stated that challenges such as inadequate funding, insufficient resources, lack of committed teachers hinders students from acquiring relevant skills. Also, Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015) posited that inadequacies in the curriculum content, non-relevance of the subject content, poor implementation of the curriculum, time allocation as some issues in skill acquisition in Business Education. Agbaten (2015) asserted that shortage of qualified teachers in basic education is a global issue that has resulted in high failure of students at the National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB). Other factors identified by Lweyah, and Onuekwa (2020) include non-professional teachers teaching business studies, formulation of policies by non-experts, poor programme and subject structure, inadequate instructional facilities, poor teaching and learning environment, inadequate skilled manpower and poor funding.

According to Osinem and Nwoji (2014), most of the issues of skill acquisition in Business Education can be addressed through well developed and effectively implemented strategies. Strategies are techniques put in place to ensure the quality and effective functionality of the programme. In view of the importance of skill acquisition in Business Education, it is important that the programme, even at the upper basic level of education be effectively delivered in order to enhance the development of relevant skills by students. Nwagwu (2016) asserted that provision of facilities, laboratories, employment of competent teachers, and public-private collaboration are strategies that could enhance skill acquisition in the programme. Supporting this assertion, Ezenwa (2020) opined that refining techniques of skill acquisition in business studies, recruiting qualified teachers, government participation in skill acquisition can help to improve skill acquisition in the programme.

It is based on this premise that this study was carried out to ascertain the opinion of business studies teachers as implementers of the curriculum on the challenges of implementing skill acquisition in the business studies at the upper basic level of education in in Port Harcourt Local Government Area.

### **Statement of Problem**

Business studies is an important skill-oriented subject comprising of four major component office practice, book keeping, commerce and keyboarding thus, an integrated curriculum with well-articulated goal and objectives which include among others the development of basic knowledge and skills for the world of work, especially for students who are unable to their further education. The



relevance of Business studies can become more obvious if students are able to acquire and translate adequate knowledge and skills to work environment. However, observation has revealed that most students at the upper basic education level graduate without any skills as efforts to achieve the objectives of Business studies curriculum has been constrained by challenges faced by the curriculum in its implementation (Crompton, 2016).

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the administrative challenges of Business Studies curriculum implementation towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education in PHALGA.?
2. What economic challenges of Business Studies curriculum implementation towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education in PHALGA.?
3. What strategies will enhance the implementation of skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education in PHALGA?

### **Hypotheses**

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

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private school's Business Studies teachers on administrative challenges of Business Studies curriculum implementation towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education in PHALGA.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private school's Business Studies teachers on economic challenges of Business Studies curriculum implementation towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education in PHALGA.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private school's Business Studies teachers on strategies that will enhance skill acquisition in Business Studies at the upper basic level of education in PHALGA.

### **Method**

The study was carried out in Port Harcourt Local Government Area (PHALGA), Rivers State. The design of the study was descriptive survey research design. This was considered appropriate for this study because it is a valuable tool for assessing opinions. The population of the study consisted of 95 Business studies teachers from public junior secondary schools and 35 Business Studies teachers from private secondary schools, a total of 130 teachers. The census sampling technique was adopted because of the manageable size of the population. A self-structured 21-item questionnaire designed by the researcher from insight gained from literatures reviewed titled "Questionnaire on Challenges of Implementing Skill Acquisition in Business Studies Curriculum (QCISABSC)" was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was drafted on a 4-point rating scale of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was face and content validated by two experts in Business Education. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.75 obtained. 140 copies of the instrument were administered directly by the researcher with the help of 5 research assistants and retrieved after a week. Data for the research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation. Standard deviation to show the homogeneity in the responses of the respondents. The decision rule was that any mean value of 2.50 and above was considered as Agree while mean values below 2.5 were Disagree. Data for the hypotheses were analysed using z-



test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. the decision rule was that the null hypotheses was accepted if z-calculated value is less than z-critical value and rejected if z-calculated value is higher than z-table value.

**Results**

**Research Question 1**

What are the administrative challenges in implementing skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education in PHALGA?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on Administrative challenges**

<b>Administrative Challenges of Implementing Skill Acquisition in Business Studies Curriculum.</b>						
		<b>Public N=95</b>		<b>Private N=35</b>		
S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1.	Allocation of subjects to non-professionals	3.45	0.87	3.24	0.89	Agree
2.	Use of obsolete and inappropriate teaching methods	3.25	0.81	3.11	0.99	Agree
3.	Lack of teachers' training and re-training on the job	3.67	0.91	2.91	1.02	Agree
4.	Insufficient time allocation especially for practical learning	2.67	0.78	2.76	1.06	Agree
5.	Non commitment of teachers towards practical skills	2.64	0.72	2.91	1.02	Agree
6.	Unmanageable class size	3.00	0.80	2.89	1.05	Agree
7.	Integration of several subject areas in the curriculum	2.78	0.89	2.57	1.06	Agree
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.07</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field survey, 2021

The results in Table 1 indicates that all the items were rated as “Agree by the respondents. The grand mean of 3.07 and 2.91 for both public and private school’s business studies teachers shows the respondents agreement on all administrative challenges listed above. The standard deviation which ranged from 0.72-1.06 indicates that closeness of the opinions of both groups.

**Research Question 2**

What are the economic challenges in implementing skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education in PHALGA?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Economic Challenges**

<b>Economic Challenges of Implementing Skill Acquisition in Business Studies Curriculum</b>						
		<b>Public N=95</b>		<b>Private N=35</b>		
S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	DECISION



8.	Inadequate teaching/learning facilities	3.56	0.75	2.91	1.02	Agree
9.	Parents socio economic status	3.00	0.67	2.79	1.06	Agree
10.	Inadequate funding	3.34	0.74	3.90	0.99	Agree
11.	Lack of teacher motivation in terms of salary, promotion and incentives	3.75	0.80	2.88	1.06	Agree
12.	High cost of instructional materials	2.57	0.67	2.99	1.03	Agree
13.	Inadequate physical facilities like classrooms, furniture, laboratories, workshop	2.60	0.69	2.80	1.09	Agree
14.	Unstable government policies	3.23	0.64	2.57	1.06	Agree
	<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field survey, 2021

The results in Table 2 indicates that all the items were rated as “Agree by the respondents. The grand mean of 3.15 and 2.98 for both public and private school’s business studies teachers shows the respondents agreement on all economic challenges listed above. The standard deviation which ranged from 0.64-1.09 indicates that respondents were not far from each other in their responses.

### Research Question 3

What strategies will enhance skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum at the upper basic level of education in PHALGA?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on Strategies for Enhancing Skill Acquisition in Business Studies**

S/N	ITEMS	Business Studies Teachers				DECISION
		Public N=95		Private N=35		
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	
15.	Recruiting qualified teachers with degrees in education	3.42	0.90	3.07	0.92	Agree
16.	Creating adequate time for subject content and practical training	2.89	0.59	2.89	1.05	Agree
17.	Reinforcing learning by exposing students to practical skills through field trips, workshops, seminars	2.76	0.89	2.91	0.98	Agree
18.	Providing adequate funding from government, PTA and other private industries	3.00	0.87	2.82	1.08	Agree
19.	Allocation of subjects to only professionals in the field	3.54	0.97	2.85	0.97	Agree
20.	Providing functional and adequate physical facilities like laboratories, classroom, library, staff rooms etc	2.87	0.89	2.96	1.03	Agree
21.	Creating a manageable size class.	2.63	0.84	3.05	0.92	Agree



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<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>2.94</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>Agree</b>
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Source: Field survey, 2021

The results in Table 3 indicates that all the items were rated as “Agree by the respondents. The grand mean of 3.02 and 2.94 for both public and private school’s business studies teachers shows the respondents agreement on all administrative challenges listed above. The standard deviation which ranged from 0.59-1.08 indicates that closeness of the opinions of both groups.

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private school’s Business Studies teachers on administrative challenges of implementing skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education in PHALGA.

**Table 4: z-test analysis of mean difference on administrative challenges**

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<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>z-cal</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>z-crit</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Public	95	3.07	0.83	0.84	128	1.96	Accepted
Private	35	2.91	1.01				

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at 0.05 level of significance

The analysis in Table 4 shows the z-test of difference between public and private business studies teachers on admirative challenges of implementing skill acquisition in Business studies curriculum in upper basic level of education. The z-calculated value of 0.84 is lower than the z-table value of 1.96. Since the calculated value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is upheld that there is no significant difference in the mean response of public and private business studies teachers on administrative challenges of implementing skill acquisition in business studies curriculum in upper basic level of education.

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private school's Business Studies teachers on economic challenges of implementing skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education in PHALGA.

**Table 5: z-test analysis of mean difference on Economic challenges**

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<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>z-cal</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>z-crit</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Public	95	3.15	0.71	0.89	128	1.96	Accepted
Private	35	2.98	1.04				

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at 0.05 level of significance

The analysis in Table 5 shows the z-test of difference between public and private business studies teachers on economic challenges of implementing skill acquisition in business studies curriculum in upper basic level of education. The z-calculated value of 0.89 is lower than the z-table value of 1.96. Since the calculated value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is upheld that there is no significant difference in the mean response of public and private business studies teachers on economic challenges of implementing skill acquisition in business studies curriculum in upper basic level of education.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private school's Business Studies teachers on strategies that will enhance the implementation of skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education in PHALGA.



**Table 6: z-test analysis of mean difference on strategies that will enhance skill acquisition in Business Studies**

Group	N	Mean	SD	z-cal	Df	z-crit	Decision
Public	95	3.02	0.85	0.15	128	1.96	Accepted
Private	35	2.94	0.99				

*at 0.05 level of significance*

The result in Table 6 shows a z-calculated value of 0.15 as against a table value of 1.96. Since the calculated value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is upheld that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private school business studies teachers on strategies that will enhance the implementation of skill acquisition in Business Studies curriculum in upper basic level of education.

#### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study from research question one affirmed the agreement of public and private business studies teachers that allocation of the subject to non-professionals, use of obsolete and inappropriate teaching methods, lack teachers' training and re-training, inadequate time allocation, students' lack of interest in the subject, integration of several subject areas in the curriculum and non-teacher commitment towards practical skills were the administrative challenges of Business studies curriculum implementation towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education. This finding aligns with the view of Emeasoba (2018) that skill acquisition is hampered by lack of provision of facilities and material for administration and training as a follow-up of poor funding. This is also in agreement with Nedum-Ogbede (2019), Ezenwa (2020) who highlighted lack of infrastructure and teaching facilities, method of instructional delivery, lack of students' interest, quality of teachers, inadequate instructional supervision, corruption during employment process, dearth of instructional materials, inadequacies in the curriculum as challenges of the curriculum towards skill acquisition. This finding indicates skill acquisition in business studies is to a large extent dependent on the implementation of the curriculum as such factors impeding against successful implementation of the business studies curriculum will no doubt constrain students' ability to acquire relevant skills. Findings from hypothesis one as regards administrative challenges revealed that Business studies teachers of public and private schools in Port Harcourt Local Area in Rivers State did not differ in their agreement on all the administrative challenges of curriculum towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education. This finding was in agreement with the study of Raj (2016).

Finding from research question two revealed public and private business studies teachers agreement that inadequate teaching/ learning facilities, parents' socio economic status, inadequate funding, high cost of instructional materials like textbook, lack of teacher motivation like timely promotion, salary increment and allowances, lack of physical facilities and un stable government policies were economic challenges of the implementing business studies curriculum towards skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education in Port Harcourt Local Government area in Rivers State. This finding also aligns with the view of Esene (2012); Nwagu and Nwaukwa (2016); Needum-Ogede (2019) and Ezenwa, (2020) views that factors such as poor funding, inadequate physical facilities like classrooms, laboratories, workshops, furniture, poor socio- economic background of parents, inconducive school environment are some economic challenges. Finding from the test of hypothesis two also revealed no disparity in the opinion of public and private business studies teachers as regards these challenges. This result corroborates the finding of Raj (2016).

These findings are however not surprising as it is obvious that most public schools in the state are poorly funded. A visit to some public and private schools revealed that business studies subjects is taught by non-professionals as subject allocation is based on the available subject and not the qualification of the teacher. There is no doubt that these challenges will definitely hinder acquisition of skills in the subject. Teachers in the state are not well motivated as promotion incentives are yet to be implemented in the last decade. Observation has also revealed that most public and private schools are over-crowded with unmanageable class size at the upper basic level making the teaching and learning process difficult.

Findings on the research question three revealed that business studies teachers agree that recruiting qualified teachers, creating adequate time for content and practical skills, exposing students to practical skills, adequate funding from government, provision of physical facilities and creating manageable class sizes are strategies that will enhance skill acquisition in business studies curriculum at the upper basic level of education. This is in agreement with the view of Osinem and Nwoji (2014) that most of the issues of skill acquisition in



Business Education can be addressed through well developed and effectively implemented strategies and also with that of Tanner and Tanner (2019) that successful implementation of any curriculum is largely dependent on the quality of teachers in the programme. Finding from hypothesis three also revealed no disparity in the opinions of public and private business studies teachers on strategies for enhancing skill acquisition at the upper basic level of education. This aligns with finding from the study of Neddum-Ogbede (2019) and Ezenwa (2020) who opined that strategies such as reforming teaching in skill acquisition, recruiting quality teachers, promoting public-private industry collaboration, provision of facilities provision of ICT hardware and software, providing students with access to textbooks as well as other modern learning facilities, professional development of teachers could improve skill acquisition.

It is very obvious that implementation of the curriculum at the upper basic level seems to be treated with a feeling of inappropriate lack of seriousness. Like any other programme, successful implementation of Business Studies curriculum and consequently skill acquisition as one of its major objectives is dependent on proper funding, provision of relevant facilities and material as well as competent teachers as well as a review of the present business studies curriculum to expunge inadequacies in content. The findings of this study thus, has far-reaching implications for curriculum planners, business studies teachers, government and other educational stakeholders.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that skill acquisition in business studies at upper basic level of education is constrained by administrative and economic challenges arising from the ineffective implementation of the curriculum. This has resulted in most school leavers at this level graduating without relevant skills either for employment or self-employment. However, through well developed and implemented strategies such as recruiting qualified and competent teachers, allocating subjects to professionals only, providing physical facilities, creating manageable class sizes and exposing students to practical skills will help in enhancing skill acquisition in business education at the upper basic level of education. Thus, it has become pertinent to implement these strategies to ensure skill development at this level of education.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Business studies teachers should be more committed in the discharge of their duties as implementers of the curriculum thereby ensuring the objectives of the programme.
2. Education at the upper basic level should be properly funded to enhance the purchase of facilities and material for teaching/learning
3. Business Studies curriculum should be periodically reviewed, re-structured, harmonised and well implemented to incorporate strategies that could enhance skill acquisition.

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