



HARNESSING RESOURCES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION TO CURBS POVERTY AND CRIMES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The rising level of poverty has been blamed for securities challenges confronting Nigeria today. As such, this paper emphasizes the potentials benefits of harnessing resources in Business Education. To achieve this, the paper looks at the related concepts as the context permits. The paper affirms the capability of Business Education in curbing poverty and crimes by rolling out how such is possible or achievable. In order to strengthen the capacity of Business Education in curbing poverty /crimes, the paper profiles ways or approaches to reposition it towards attaining the targeted potentials. The paper concludes that harnessing the potentials in Business Education as well as encourages allocation of adequate resources and administration of all-inclusive reform to equip people with skills to be self reliant, will in turn reduce poverty and crimes and engender sustainable development of Nigeria economy. Recommendations were made that the government should through its agencies sufficiently empower graduates of Business Education at all levels and also diligently mentor and monitor their activities to ensure their sustenance and active contribution to nation building as well as poverty/crimes reduction.

Keywords: *Harnessing, Resources, Poverty and Crime*

Introduction

Harnessing the potentials in business education to meeting the needs of the society, will definitely nib poverty and crime in the bud. Thus, from global perspective, arguments, claims and counter-claims over the capability of vocational and technical education (VTE) in fostering brighter future and sustainable economy has been laid to rest (Ogbuanyha & Izuoba, 2015). However, studies had it that many technologically advanced nations of the world realized their potentials and maintained firm footings through adaptation and practice of Technology and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (UNESCO, 2006). This enhances the income/revenue disposition of the citizens by making themselves reliant and responsible and invariably reduces poverty (Ogbuanyha & Izuoba, 2015).



Human resources can be harnessed through business education to provide solution to poverty and the security challenges that is ravaging Nigeria. Therefore, Business skills are important influences among students with entrepreneurial intentions in learning institutions. It contributes to the nation's human capital and is seen as essential for preparing one for employment. A skilled man is expected to manifest worthwhile in the society. Hence, it is a wakeup call for both the government and the trainers in the trades' schools to ensure that available resources are well harnessed to address the problem of unemployment as well as the underutilization of human resources which gave birth to poverty and insecurity in Nigeria (Insurgency and banditry).

According to Adagba, & Eme.(2012). Unemployment/poverty among Nigerians, especially the youths is a major cause of insecurity and violent crimes in Nigeria. Similarly, Elumelu (2004) espouses that business enterprises can contribute towards security and safety development in Nigeria through long-term strategy of creating and providing jobs for the unemployed and cooperating with regulatory authorities and security agencies to fight crime.

Concept of Business Education

Business education like many other subjects in the school system has been defined in several ways by several scholars, to suit different situations and purposes. Some scholars define it from the way it is practiced in their field of study, while others define it from the angle it is taught in schools and colleges (Adamu, 2014). Business education is a wide array of courses that are meant to teach students of various ages about the fundamental principles of business; these includes business management, business law, entrepreneurship, economics as well as computer courses, and many others. Jubril (2010) defines business education as a specialized area of vocational education that provides education training, skills development, attitudes adjustment towards business orientation and academic challenges.

Bilyaminu (2011) views business education as an aspect of total education programme that provides the knowledge, skills attitudes and understanding needed to perform in the business world as a producer and/or consumer of goods and services. Professionally, business education can be defined as a programme designed to provide students with the basic process of training: decision making, the philosophy, theory, and psychology of management; practical applications; business start-up and operational procedures.



According to Akinola (2006) the following are the objectives of business education.

1. Prepare the students for employment after graduation.
2. Meet the manpower needs of the society
3. Increase the options available to each student and serving as motivation in order to enhance all types of learning.
4. To give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.
5. To stimulate creativity.
6. To expose recipients to career awareness by exploring useable options in the world of work.

Business Education as a Skill

The aim of business skill is to inculcate in the young people the need to see business opportunities, ideas and act on them promptly in order to take advantages over others. However, this should not stop at imparting knowledge alone, but ability to teach skills acquisition in various disciplines of study that a potential businessman might require such as managerial skills, financial competencies, accounting skills, marketing and business competencies. Business Education is one that embraces skill building programme, creative thinking, productive development, marketing negotiation, leadership training and health generation (Kurato, 2003).

According to Nwaigburu & Eneogwe (2013), business skill occurs when an individual develops a new venture or new approach to an old idea or a unique way of giving the market place a product or service by using resources in a new concept or opportunities with an existing firm. It is also the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth (Hasty & Readon, 2007). Business skill is also the creation of an innovative economic organization for the purpose of growth under conditions of risks and uncertainties (Dollinger, 2005). However, business education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all types of education delivery systems elementary secondary and tertiary institutions. It includes education for office occupation, distribution, marketing occupations, accounting, business teaching, business administration, business typewriting, stenography and secretarial education or studies (Nwaogburu & Eneogwe 2013).

A skill denotes expertise, or ability, develop in the course of training and experience as well as a manual dexterity through repetitive performance of an operation, notably trade acquired through apprenticeship. Therefore, training in Business Education includes such experiences which enable the individual to be sound intellectually, acquire various types of skills that will help them participate actively and efficiently in provision of goods and services, and equally balanced in desirable attitudes.



Poverty and Crime

Poverty is the state of being poor or existing in amounts that are too small. Similarly, Wikipedia (2014) views poverty as a general scarcity or the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possession or money. Moreso, Okonjo-Iwuala, (2013) defines poverty as the failure to achieve basic capacities such as being adequately nourished, living a healthy life, possession of skills to participate in economic and social life, permission to take part in community activities interalia. Crime is an illegal act for which someone can be punished by the government, especially, a gross violation of law.

Harnessing Resources

Harnessing is to collect and control something so that it can be used effectively. While a resource is a source or supply from which a benefit is produced and it has some utility (Wikipedia, 2014).

The future of jobs will not look like the present situation: increasingly, workers will have to adapt to fast technological change, accept more mobility during their career, and regularly upgrade their skills to remain employable (Strasky, 2017).

However, some middle-skilled routine jobs especially back office, custodian and financial sector-may disappear as a result of automation. However, Workers with strong and adaptable skills will be prepared to thrive in this new environment. Further improvement in the education system is needed to address this challenge, provide the young with learning to learn as well as technical capacities. As skill sets will need to be updated during working careers, the system of initial education must be complemented by a flexible system of lifelong learning, tailored to the special needs of individuals with limited education attainment and older workers.

How Poverty and Crime are Curbed by Harnessing Resources in Business Education

Business education if well harnessed will play vital roles in poverty/ crime reduction which will give rise to national development. Thus, where resources in Business Education are harnessed they will curb poverty/ crime the following ways:

1. **Generation of Employment/Creation of Job Opportunities.** This field of study helps to reduce the rate of drop-outs or unemployment in the society. Business education as a vocation could be used to develop marketable skills in students, so that they can become easily employable. It makes an individual to become an asset to himself and the nation in general.



2. **Poverty Alleviation:** Many who are fortunate to graduate in a regular school system and excel in various fields of learning fall back to the skills acquired in technical and vocational institutions in time of employment crisis. Such persons who possessed skills are better off financially.
3. **Crime Reduction:** Skill acquisition reduces crime rate in many nations of the world. People only begin to think of dirty activities when they are jobless in most cases (an idle hand is a devil workshop). The rising level of poverty has been blamed for security challenges confronting Nigeria. Crimes like insurgency, banditry, kidnapping are all products of poverty.
4. **Wealth Creation:** Potentials in business education skills encourages wealth creation which could lead to higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
5. **Establishment of Printing Press/Business Centre:** The establishments of such businesses in the rural areas will helps to boost the economy of those areas, also check rural-urban migration.
6. **Promotion of Nigeria Economy:** It promotes national economy through foreign exchange by exporting our products. The knowledge of entrepreneur skills helps to reduce the importation of foreign goods which lessen our import dependency and encourages export of our local products.
7. **Diverse Job Opportunities:** Those who have many skills stand the chance to gain job easily. People who have many skills are being searched for because they can do many functions due to the series of skills possessed.
8. **Increase Standard of Living:** Business education, if well harnessed helps to raise the standard of living of business beneficiaries and like most industrialized nations, may survive in a complex society.
9. **Entrepreneurship Strategy:** Business education offers the beneficiary the ability to be self-reliant, to be job creators and employers of labour.
10. **Potentials in Business Skills will curbs Rural/Urban Drift:** The migration of jobless youths from rural to urban centers also causes insecurity in Nigeria major cities. Okah, (2014), avers that Nigeria is one of the countries in the world with very high rural/urban drift. Most urban areas in Nigeria have grown beyond their environmental carrying capacities and existing infrastructure and this has resulted to increase poor quality of the living conditions. Out of frustration due to over population, these youth are drawn into crime. However, with a good business skill, young graduates can establish business in the rural areas, to target the rural populace.



- 11 **Quickteller Access to Bank Services:** A skilled business educator could set up quickteller access bank services whereby cash can be deposited or transferred. The owner of such business charges small fees as commission. This is a thriving business in town today.

Aja, (2018) espouses that recipients of business education have the potentials to possess the following skills:

- 1 **Secretarial Skill:** The trainees are exposed to specific experience such as taking down shorthand dictation, typing, filling, keeping of organizational patty cash book, operating various kinds of office machines. A skilled business educator can start a computer school with other secretarial services to train teeming population of youths who want to be computer literate.
- 2 **Accounting Skills:** These skills include skills for preparing accounting information such as ledge accounts from vouchers, cash book, wages and salaries administration, collecting and recording of all accounting information skills and skills for making monthly/daily statement of account. A good business educator could engage in thrift business by collecting daily contributions from individuals and earn commission at the end of the day.
- 3 **Distributive/Marketing Skills:** The trainee of business education is taught to develop marketing skills such as selling, sales promotion, buying, operate marketing research and management skills for product or service technology. A skilled business educator could earn a living by canvassing for goods, marketing products, run their own businesses.
- 4 **Management Skills:** The trainee of business education is exposed to management functions such as planning, organizing, staffing controlling, directions and decision making and self-management skills such as perseverance humour, punctuality, dependability and resourcefulness.
- 5 **Business Data Processing Skills:** The trainees are esposed to specific experiences such as acquisition of word processing skills and skills for business data processing systems and operations.
- 6 **Thrift Loan Service:** A skilled business educator could engage in collects daily contributions from individuals and earn commission at the end of the day.
- 7 **Wholesaling and Trading:** A skilled business educator could earn a living by canvassing for goods, engage in produces hoarding and marketing.



- 8 **Human Relation Skills:** This includes the ability to set along with others and the ability to project a favorable image to visitors and also the skills to contribute positively to the growth and development of business.
- 9 **Setting up of Phone Call Services:** A business educator could set up GSM business by selling recharge cards and engage in the sales and repair of handsets.
- 10 **Internet Services:** With computer and its accessories as well as internet service provider, a skilled business educator will be able to charge small fees for browsing and surfing the internet.

Reposition Business Education to Attain its Potentials

Business Education is a transformational instrument and a formidable tool for socio-economic transformation. It has the responsibility for producing and supplying the personnel required to propel the nation's economy and reduce poverty/crime. Business education skills are needed to help the students from the starting stage of life to advance stage. Business education should provide not only skills required for operating machines or doing any specific jobs, but also to provide such knowledge and skills required for self-reliant and sustainable development.

A functional business skill is not only the backbone but also the secret of sustainable economy and crime-less country. Rugayyah (2013) asserts that vocational and technical education (VTE) should be an important component of the nation's education initiative to realize an increase manpower and industrial growth to address the challenges of unemployment and poverty.

One of the biggest challenges facing the country today is the growing number of job seekers with unemployable majority among its young people (Okonjo-Iwuala 2013). Reports also indicate that there is a huge mismatch between young people graduating from higher education institutions and what the labour market needs (Pamdoff 2013). Unfortunately, this situation has resulted in high rate of unemployment with its attendant variances which informed the need for the nation to invest copiously in education with particular attention given to Vocational and Technical Education (VTE). Since no nation would make any meaningful socio-economic stride without viable education institutions (Ogbuanya & Izuoba 2015).

Therefore, the only way to harness resources in business education is to reposition it as skills acquisition oriented through the following ways/approaches:



1. **Public-private Partnership:** Training in the private sector by private employers and in private training institutions can be the most effective and efficient way to develop the skills of the workforce. This arrangement not only provides direct links between institutions and the industries but also enable the learners acquire requisite skills as well as having the confidence that employers reposed in them.
2. **Independence of Vocational Institutions:** According to Eke (2014) adequate attention would be paid to technology and vocational schools if they exist independently and run vocationally. Thus, vocational education institutions should be isolated from general education, so that its curriculum is tailored to meet the employed ability skill demands of relevant specialties and industries.
3. **Innovation:** It is important that the objectives embedded in business education as a skill acquisition should evolve in consonance with the dynamism of socio-economic trends and global market paradigm shift in order to be relevant.
4. **Availability of state of Art Tools/Equipment:** It is a well known fact that our studio, laboratories, computers studio among others do not only suffer inadequacy of facilities but fraught with obsolete and dysfunctional equipment. Sometimes due to corruption, even when fund is released for the purchase of these facilities, substandard and even moribund equipment are purchased with the aim of enriching their pockets at the expense of the future of the entire country. Therefore, provision and training of students with modern equipment would enrich the quality of business education programmes.
5. **Training and Re-training of Business Educators:** Training and retraining of business education teachers is quite imperative in re-building this field of study (business education), in order to realize its goals and objectives. According to UNESCO (2006) the increasing changes in socio-economic and technological advances demand an urgent repose which makes it imperative that vocational education teachers be encouraged to undertake some in-service training in the areas of technologies and entrepreneurship. More importantly, training and retraining of teachers will enhance their propensity in content mastery.
6. Organize business plan competitions



7. Introduce networking events through workshops, Seminars, symposia, lectures and stakeholders where cross fertilization of ideas could occur
8. Industrial visits and excursion for onsite field trip

Conclusion

This paper affirms the capability of business education in curbing poverty and crime, since the rising level of poverty has been blamed for security challenges confronting Nigeria. Hence, the urgent need for total overhauling of the vocational educational system. The paper posits that repositioning business education should ensure that the courses were innovated to embrace private training institutions, to build and train workforce needed for today's intellectual battles of life that use creativity in utilizing its local contents for export gains. Conclusively, harnessing the potentials in business education as well as encourage allocation of adequate resources and administration of all-inclusive reform to equip people with skills to be self reliant, will in turn reduce poverty/crime and engender sustainable development of Nigeria economy.

Recommendations

The paper however recommends the following:

- i. The government should as a matter of urgency through its agencies like Bank of Industry (BOI) Small and medium Enterprises Scheme (SMES), Industrial training Fund (ITF) among others sufficiently empower graduates of business education at all levels through provision of credits facilities and also diligently mentor and monitor their activities to ensure sustenance and active contribution to nation building as well as poverty/crime reduction.
- ii. The federal government relevant authorities in education should redesign and operate an environment-friendly public private partnership in business education to promote functional education capable of harnessing the resources of the country for societal wellbeing.
- iii. The government should separate vocational education institutions from general studies to enhance proper supervision, monitoring and effective implementation of programmes without compromise.
- iv. The government should provide business educators with an effective retraining programme in the use of modern technique and make sure equipment are sufficiently available in the schools to enhance the quality of teaching. This will guarantee job creation and the best practices for poverty/crime reduction.



- v. The government should make business education attractive as well as a functional instrument for optimization of our local resources to cater for the needs of our society and also create avenue for exportation of our manufactured products.

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