

APPRAISAL OF CURRICULUM CONTENT AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN NIGERIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

The study focused on appraisal of curriculum content and career opportunities of Business Education graduate programmes in Nigeria a case study of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Two research objectives, two research questions and two research Hypotheses were developed for the study. Survey research design was adopted and a questionnaire instrument tagged “Business Education Curriculum Content and Career opportunities Questionnaire Instrument (BECCCOI)” with the use of four Linkert scale was used to collect data. The data collected was validated by 2 experts and the reliability co-efficient is 0.71 was realized. The data was analyzed and tested using Regression analysis. The Hypotheses were tested at alfa equals to 0.05 level. The first Null Hypothesis was retained while the later was rejected and the finding is that Business Education Curriculum has no relevance with Career opportunities in Nigeria. Therefore, it was concluded that there is no significant relevance of business education curriculum content on career opportunities among business education graduate in Nigeria. It was recommended that Business educators and curriculum planners should as a matter of urgency review the curriculum or implement the recent CCMAAS if it meets the demand of the time.

Keywords: Appraisal, Curriculum, Content, Career, Business, Education

Introduction

It is a generalized fact that the bedrock of any nation that wants to develop needs educated people through formal education and only quality education can lead to such sustainable growth and development. The aim of every education is to equip individuals with all the Skills needed to excel after school. However, the high rate of unemployment is alarming and one begins to wonder if graduates are well equipped in order to compete favorably with their counterparts in the labor market. Students need to be well trained and equip with those skills that will make them self-sufficient, self-reliant and stand out from others.

The evolution of Business Education programme and its implementation can be traced back to more than three decades now, but the graduates of the programmes are yet bedeviled with the problem of unemployment in the country despite the promising prospects of the course of study and universities in Nigeria keep producing thousands of theoretical and liberal arts business education graduates with little or no entrepreneurial skills and their potentials for being gainfully employed is uncertain (David and Fabian, 2019). Graduates are produced yearly by universities in different field of study but those that are gainfully employed do not commensurate with those that are unemployed due to inadequate entrepreneurship skills and incompetency that will make them entrepreneurs and self-sufficient (Atsu, Ateband Atah 2021).

The problems of sustainable economic development and unemployment are constantly on the high side in the nation; economy has continued to be fluctuating without any positive strategies to revitalize it. Emphasis must be placed on a curriculum that will help to reform the Business Education programme in general, and develop individuals that will contribute meaningfully to economic growth and development of the nation. With the uncontrolled rate of unemployment and poverty, there is a dire need to carry out some modifications in the curriculum of Business Education programme in Nigerian universities so that the students will not only be exposed to skills but also, be creative thinkers that can establish and manage business enterprise. Curriculum is a vehicle through which the schools strive to achieve educational objectives. It is the track that prepares students for future life in schools and Colleges. Cattington (2010) defines curriculum as standard benchmark, and outcome that delineate the content to be taught and science of adoption in the classroom. Curriculum is not static, but remains fluid, dynamic, and ever changing. With learning being interpreted and experienced differently by diverse participants, making it important that we develop awareness of our curriculum as constructed everyday by participants in our educational programme. Curriculum review is a critical evidence based examination of academic programme for the purpose of optimizing students' learning and students' experiences led collaboratively by experts who teach the programme. Agim, Ochui, and Atah (2020) agreed that technology keeps on advancing and it is becoming very essential in our lives, everyday people use technology to improve the way they accomplish specific tasks and business education curriculum content should be in such a way that new technologies are captured to enable the students to be exposed the nascent technology. Isineyi (2009) equally opined that Business Education curriculum content will enhance job creation mentality among universities business education students for global relevance. Atah (2019) opined that the management should adopt the right leadership styles

especially the ones that are contingent on the time that will help the students of business education to acquire the needed skills.

The Business Education programme was originally designed to offer students the opportunity to develop the desire abilities, skills, and understanding of the vocational opportunities available in the world of works. However, with the increasing complexity of the contemporary Nigeria economic and business environment today. It is observed that the nation is experiencing economic problems, which have resulted in the rise in unemployment and poverty in the society. The objectives of Business Education are to enable graduates of the programme to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of business and to professionally acquire additional skills, resources, and methodologies for Business Education graduates to transform their ideas into the visible and viable business enterprise after graduating from the university. To understand the concept of Business Education, it would be necessary to look at the definitions of Business Education in the past and present time. This is because technology has helped to change definitions of certain things. It, therefore, implies that Business Education, as a course of study has to move with time.

Business Education is a course that prepares students for entry into and advancement on jobs in business and it is equally important because it prepares students to handle their business affairs to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy (Ementa and Alonta 2021). According to Osuala in Ugwogwo (2013), Business Education is an essential part of the preparation of youths for life and living. In 2004, Osual in ugwogwo (2013), re-modified Business Education to be a programme of instruction that consists of two parts:

Office Education – a vocational programme of office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education and;

General Business Education – a programme to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business. It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by; the definitions of Business Education continue to change. Business Education is a term that encompasses several methods used to teach students the fundamentals of business operations and practices for self-reliance. According to Okoro (2013), Business Education is refer to as a broad and comprehensive field of study whose instructional programme is endowed with the capacity of providing required vocational skills, aptitude and knowledge to effectively and efficiently manage and run personal businesses and function in the economy as a whole. A remarkable attribute of Business Education is that it graduates can be able to function and perform independently as employers of labour and entrepreneur.

Job Positions Awaiting Business Educator: According to Ohiwerei (2009) Business Educator (Teaching/Lecturing), Secretary (of different grades e.g. personal secretary, or confidential secretary), Office Assistant, Administrative Officer, Supervisor, File Achieve Manager, Liaison officer, Agency Executive, Accountant, Accounts Supervisor, Travel Officer, Director (Self-Employed), Military (Army Officer, Police Officer, Navy Officer, Custom Officer etc), Private

SchoolProprietor (or Principal), Sales Representative, Marketing Officer, Clearing and forwarding Officer e.t.c.

Multinational companies, Banks, Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Secondary Schools, Local Government, State and Federal Governments, Politic, Production companies, Commercial, Self-Employed, Hospitals/Clinics, Hotels, Embassies, Air-ways, High Commissions and Consults, Oil companies–Shell, NNPC, Chevron, NITEL, NIPOST, Breweries, Clearing and forwarding Agencies. It is pertinent to note that experience has showed that some of the business educators are wallowing in unemployment and poverty because of their inability to search for jobs outside the teaching filed while some because of inferiority complex felt they are not meant for jobs in lucrative areas of their choices.

Business Education Course Contents and Description As Contained in Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (For Nigerian Universities)

100 Level Courses

VTE 112 Introductions to Vocational Education(2 units) (LH: 30)

The conceptual issues and historical development of vocational education in Nigeria. These include meaning, purpose, goals, values, image and objectives of vocational education as well as the historical trends in the development of vocational education in Nigeria.

BED 111 Fundamentals of Business Education(2 units) (LH: 30)

Background and development of occupational education programme. Business Education: an overview, historical development of business education. The apprenticeship system of training the office workers. The development of private proprietary, business school, independent business academy. The three subjects curriculum, industrials revolution and the expansion of business and office occupations.

ECN: 111 Principles of Economics(2 units) (LH: 30)

The nature of economic science, the methodology of economics, major areas of socialization in economics and historical development of ideas. Elementary principles of microeconomics – The concept of utility marginal utility and indifference approaches to consumer equilibrium, Demand, supply and elasticity concepts, production and cost analyses. Firm and market types. Elements of distribution theory

ACC III Elements of Accounting I(2 units) (LH: 30)

Nature and scope of accounting, the purpose of accounting information system and it relations to the physical and financial activities of the organization. The accounting concepts, assumptions and conventions and their effects on the financial data of an enterprise. Books of accounts, commercial and other documents used as sources of information. Capital and revenue expenditure. Adjustment to accounting records including provision and reserves, accruals and pre-payments etc.

BED 112 Administrative Office Management (2 units) (LH: 30)

This course is designed to give the student – teacher a broad knowledge of the principles of office management types and methods of office organization, advantages and disadvantages of each method of office organization and procedures of effective office management. Theories of motivation, job specification; enlargement and time keeping records.

BED 113 Business Mathematics I(2 units) (LH: 30)

This course introduces students to mathematics and symbolic logic, inductive and deductive system; concepts of sets; mapping and transformation; introduction to complex numbers, introduction to vectors, matrixes determinants.

BED 114 Word processing(2 units) (LH: 30)

General competency in keyboarding and the use of computer software like Corel Draw, Microsoft word, excel etc.

MKT 111 Principle of Marketing(2 units) (LH: 30)

Marketing definition, concept, evolution, role and importance, the marketing system and marketing Environment. Product classification and marketing

200 Level Courses

ACC 212 Introduction to Financial Accounting(2 units) (LH:30)

An outline of the historical development of accountancy keeping of records of financial transactions. The role of the accountant in recording, checking, interpreting, and presentation of information to management. The place of accountant in the management functions of planning and forecasting. Relationship of double entry book-keeping to mechanized book-keeping methods, including the use of computers. Principles of double entry book-keeping. Books of original entry, ledgers, control account, trial balance. Distinction between capital and revenue expenditure and income. Records and problems associated with current and fixed assets including capital expenditure recording, control and element of depreciation. Accruals and prepayments (Advance payments).

BED 211 Principle of Business Finance(2 units) (LH: 30)

Financial management, management of cash, receivables, inventories, plant assets, short term debt, long term debt, intermediate-term debt, owner's equity etc.

BED 212 Business Statistics(2 units) (LH: 30)

Meaning, scope and original of statistics. Native of statistics, statistical inquires, forms and design. The role of statistics basic concepts in statistics, discrete and continuous variables, functional relationships, sources of data, methods of collecting primary data, presentation of statistical data, measure of central tendency, measure of dispersion, moments, skew ness and kurtosis elements of probability, distribution, normal, binominal, poison and hyper geometric.

BED 213 Economics of Production(2 units) (LH: 30)

Meaning and types of production. Factors of production : Land-meaning, characteristics and importance; labor-meaning, characteristics, importance, supply of labor and efficiency of labor; capital-meaning, types of capital, characteristics and importance of capital, Entrepreneur rewards to factors of production. Types of rent, division of labor and Specialization-Advantages and disadvantages, factors affecting specialization and division of labor. Scales of production – firm and industry, characteristics of small and large firms, internal and external economics.

ACC 212 Elements Of Accounting(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course should expose students to the basic elements of accounting

BED 214 Organizational Behavior(2 units) (LH: 30)

A survey of the theoretical constructs and research findings on human behavior in work organizations such as businesses and government enterprises, especially individual behavior and motivation, dyadic relations and small group behavior.

BED 215 Office Information Technology(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course handles various office services and automation, information and communication handling procedures, office functions, types of office machines as they apply to different departments in the office. Mammal and electronic gadgets. The future and trends of office information technology.

BED 216: Business Communication(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course is designed to develop in the prospective business teachers relevant business communication skills. The role of effective communication in business, business correspondence, report, telegram, memos, means of communication in an office, business documents, NIPOST, NITEL and courier services, sources of official information.

300 Level Courses

EPS 301 - Entrepreneurship II(2 units) (LH: 30)

Education core courses – as described in the BMAS. Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standard.

BED 311 Fundamentals of Data Processing

Problem identification, types, design, data gathering, processing, analyzing, interpreting and reporting in educational context. The use of statistics and computer as tools in educational research should be emphasized.

ECN 311 Micro-economic Theory(2 units) (LH: 30)

Analytical tools and models of microeconomics. Methodology of economic Science, Theory of consumer Behavior and Demand. Theory of Production and Cost Theories of the Firm under Perfect, Imperfect, Monopolistic and Oligopolistic competition etc.

BED 311 Small Scale Business Management(2 units) (LH: 30)

The small business, its definition, types of small businesses, importance and relationship to the Nigerian economy and the opportunities and requirements, unique to operation and management.

ACC 311 Introductions to Cost Accounting I(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course deals with the principles underlying the preparation and presentation of cost accounting for various types of business, nature and uses of accounting ratio's

BED 321 Information Management System(2 units) (LH: 30)

Introduction to and fundamentals of data processing-brief history and conventional data processing methods. Manual and mechanized methods closed and open coop systems. Effect on time lag; the total system approach and objectives. Data processing & MIS.

ACC 312 Managerial Accounting(2 units) (LH: 30)

Accounting for management control purposes; objectives and methods of management accounting. Cost Accounting Systems; general Principles of costing, Budgetary control etc.

MKT 301 - Nigerian Marketing System and Commercial Policy

ACC 321 Fundamentals of Government Accounting(2 units) (LH: 30)

400 Level Courses

BED 412 Human Resource Management(2 units) (LH: 30)

Job requirements, selection techniques, testing programmes, facilitation of employee adjustment, wage and salary administration, legal aspects of labor relations, financial inserters etc.

ACC 411 Taxation 1(2 units) (LH: 30)

The fiscal system; Tax Principles and concepts; Tax incidence; Income Taxation, Taxable Income, Tax relief's, Tax loopholes, personal Income Taxation, Partnership; Corporate Taxation; Capital gains Tax; Capital transfer Tax. Petroleum Profits and excise tax.

ACC 412 Auditing and Investigation(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course should expose students to the basic concepts of financial investigation and auditing

BED 421 Business Organizations(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course should expose students to the basic concepts of business organizations

BED 422 Vocational Guidance(2 units) (LH: 30)

The course should expose students to the basic concepts of vocational guidance

BED 423 Seminar in Business Education(2 units) (LH: 30)

Identification and examination of some of the issue confronting business education in Nigeria. The major issues include funding, methodology, curriculum, facilities, vocational guidance, Distribution, marketing education, teacher education, measurement, evaluation and administration.

BED 411 Business Law II(2 units) (LH: 30)

Common Law and its development, counts and remedies. Law of contracts, sales and Rights of parties; Partnership and Relations of Parents to persons dealing with partnership.

BED 412 Consumer Education(2 units) (LH: 30)

In market places examines the processes the consumer use to pick secure, use, and dispose of products and services, internal forces such as personality and external forces Cultured beliefs that its capable of effecting the decision making process are reviewed.

Justification of the study

There are considerable concerns by Business Education students, their lecturers, employers of Business Education graduates, and curriculum experts that the objectives of an undergraduate Business Education degree programme are not being implemented (Ubulom&Dambo, 2016). This condition has grossly been argued by those concerned that the outlined objectives of the programme do not commensurate with the quality of its product turned out, making one to believe that undergraduate Business Education degree programme is elusive and might not be meeting the expectations and needs of the contemporary society and career progression due to technological advancement in education globally. However, there is no current empirical evidence to show that the program is adequately or effectively being implemented in line with the National Universities commission minimum academic standard to conform to the above assertions. These divisive views prompted the need to appraise the content of curriculum of the Business Education programme and career opportunities. Specifically, to assess the programme whether it has served the needs of contemporary society and also, whether it has brought about desirable changes in the behavior, character, skill level, and social life of students that have passed through the programme.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To critically appraise if the curriculum content of Business Education graduate programme is relevant with career opportunities.
- ii. To examine the extent to which Business Education curriculum content in Nigeria along with gender factor consideration have relevance with career opportunities.

Research Questions

- i. Is the curriculum content of business education graduate program of Nigeria program relevant with career opportunities?
- ii. In what extent does Business Education curriculum content in Nigeria along with gender factor consideration relevant with career opportunities

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁:** Business Education curriculum content in Nigeria has no significant relevance with career opportunities
- Ho₂:** Business education curriculum content in Nigeria along with gender factor consideration have no significant relevance with career opportunities

Methodology

Survey research design was employed in carrying out the study. The population of the study consists of 473 business education undergraduates, Postgraduates and lecturers. Purposive sampling was used to delimit to post-graduates and lecturers in Ahmadu Bello University. Data were collected using the instrument tagged; "Business Education Curriculum Content and Career opportunities Questionnaire (BECCCO)". The instrument was validated by two Business Educators and an expert in Measurement and Evaluation. A reliability estimate of .63 was achieved for the research variables using Cronbach Alpha Statistical Analysis after a trial test was conducted using 25 four year hundred level Business Education students (Ahmadu Bello University Zaria) who did not form part of the main study sample. The questionnaire was administered using Google form App through class whatsapp to post graduate students as well as lecturers and one hundred and sixty five (165) responses were collected. Data collected were analyzed using regression, the Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance and the result is presented below.

Results

Table 1: Analysis of Demographic Variables of Respondents

S/No	Variable	Variable Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	130	78.8
		Female	35	21.2
		Total	165	100.0
2	Department	Business education	160	97.0
		Agricultural education	5	3.0
		Total	165	100.0
3	Academic level	Postgraduate	160	97.0
		Lecturer	5	3.0
		Total	165	100.0

Table 2: Business education curriculum content

S/No	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Business Education curriculum content is structured in accordance to BMAS.	3.05	0.705	Agree

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2	Business Education program train the mind of the people to understand the world around them	3.30	0.629	Agree
3	Business Education curriculum inculcate the right kind of value and attitude for the survival of the recipient	3.42	0.554	Agree
4	Business Education students acquire the appropriate skills, abilities as well as competences to be self-reliant	3.30	0.760	Agree
5	Business Education provide graduate teacher for the purpose of teaching Business education courses in Nigerian's schools	3.58	0.554	Agree
6	Business Education provide opportunities for recipient to update their professional competencies	3.36	0.483	Agree
7	Business Education teacher are trained to improve on their skills, innovation and creativity	3.48	0.559	Agree
8	Business education students are trained using modern facilities that guaranty them to be competent in our digital era	2.79	0.810	Agree
9	Business Education program is fully implemented according to BMAS standard	2.76	0.655	Agree
Average mean = 3.23, SD = 0.278				
N = 165				

Table 3: Employment opportunities for business education graduates

S/No	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Business Education graduates are faced with serious unemployment because of lack of skills competencies	2.48	0.76	Disagree
2	Business Education graduate cannot function in other lucrative office jobs as compared with counterpart	2.12	0.810	Disagree
3	It is very hard to see Business Education graduates as business owners	2.21	0.642	Disagree
4	From your observation most Business Education graduates usually start a business but couldn't sustain the business because they lack entrepreneurship skills	2.39	0.738	Disagree
5	The reason why business education graduates are few in other aspect of the economy apart from teaching is because of inferiority complex	2.55	0.784	Agree
6	Most teachers of financial Accounting Commerce and Economics in secondary schools are not from Business Education but those who studied pure accountancy, Economic, from faculty of Management/social science	2.76	0.856	Agree
7	Most Business Education graduates lacks critical thinking and as such cannot discharge their responsibility effectively	2.12	0.593	Disagree
8	Most Business Education do not have the ability to search for Job in their favorite places due to inferiority complex	2.40	0.739	Disagree
9	Most employers of labor don't believe in the competency and capacity of Business Education graduate because they know what the program has to offer	2.55	0.784	Agree
Average mean = 2.40, SD = 0.204				
N = 165				

Hypothesis One: Business education curriculum content in Nigeria has no significant relevance with career opportunities

Table 4: Bivariate regression analysis of Business education curriculum content and career opportunities

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Model	Df	SS	MS	F	Sig
Regression	1	0.700	0.700	3.75	0.055
Residual	163	30.438	0.187		
Total	164	31.138			
P > 0.05					

Table 4 shows that F-calculated value, is 3.75, The P-value of 0.055 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus the null hypothesis which says that business education curriculum content in Nigeria has no significant relevance with career opportunities is retained.

Hypothesis Two: Business education curriculum content in Nigeria along with gender factor consideration have no significant relevance with career opportunities

Table 5: Multiple regression analysis of Business education curriculum content, gender of respondents and career opportunities

Model	Df	SS	MS	F	Sig
Regression	2	2.084	1.042	5.811	0.04
Residual	162	29.053	0.179		
Total	164	31.138			
P < 0.05					

Table 5 shows that F-calculated value, is 5.811, The P-value of 0.04 is less than 0.05 level of significance, thus the null hypothesis which says that business education curriculum content in Nigeria along with gender factor consideration have no significant relevance with career opportunities is rejected.

Discussion of the Findings

From table 4 Hypotheses which says that business education curriculum content in Nigeria has no significant relevance with career opportunities is retained. This is corroborating with the findings of Edokpolor and Egbri, (2017) that Business Education has been viewed with levity or disdain by the general public, it naturally follows that majority of Nigerian youths would lack the requisite abilities for unemployment eradication and poverty alleviation. The finding is also in accordance with Oladunjoye (2016). Oladunjoye (2016) argued that the inadequate provision of funds, qualified manpower, modern facilities, vocational centre and quality curriculum, coupled with low public interest, are some of the possible challenges facing the delivery of business education in Nigeria. Edokpolor et al. (2017) also argued that this situation would consequently affect the production of competent graduates that are useful for poverty alleviation and unemployment eradication.

From table 5, Hypothesis which says business education curriculum contents in Nigeria along with gender factor consideration have no significant relevance with career opportunities is rejected. This is in line with wilberg and Lynn (1999) in Dima & Mbekomize (2013). The current thinking is that both male and female performance is not solely attributed to innate differences. But there are other numerous factors influencing educational ability, including but not limited to, economic, cultural and differences in educational system and techniques.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is no significant relevance of business education curriculum content on career opportunities among business education graduates in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study it is therefore recommended among others things that:

- i. National University Commission should not relent in its responsibility of constantly engaging the service of Business Educators and curriculum experts to review the Benchmark in Minimum Academic standard of Business Education program in compliance with the demand of career opportunities in our dynamic society.
- ii. The newly reviewed in 2023 Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standard (CCMAS) should be fully accepted and implemented if it meets the need for Integrating emerging technologies as well as current business innovations.

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