

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM BY UNIVERSITY LECTURERS FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigates strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by universities lecturers for self-reliance in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two specific purposes and research questions guided the study, while two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit responses from 89 business education lecturers from five universities in South-East Nigeria. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Business Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach Alpha statistic which yielded an overall cluster reliability coefficient of 0.89. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test and ANOVA. The study found that the lecturers were in agreement that all the strategies identified in the study are strategies for the effective implementation of business education curriculum in universities. Such strategies include: training of lecturers in regard to technologies, conducting seminars and workshops to help lecturers keep abreast of technological changes among others. The findings also reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by university lecturers for self-reliance in South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the university authorities should seek assistance from non-governmental organization, alumni, parents and philanthropies in order to adequately fund business education programmes to enable them have some required facilities for effective teaching and learning. Also, there should be a well-established communication link between the universities and industries.

KEYWORDS: *Business education, Self-reliant, Curriculum, Business education Curriculum, Curriculum implementation. strategies.*

Introduction

Business Education plays a significant role in Nigeria's economic growth and development. It improves personal qualities and builds the attitudes of individuals that are necessary for adjustment to personal and employment situations, and also provides knowledge and, skills for



individuals to function well in office occupation and also create jobs for themselves and others (Amoor & Udoh, 2008). According to Ola (2019) the uncontrolled rate of unemployment and poverty has brought about the dire need to carry out some modifications in the curriculum of business education programme in Nigeria so that the students will not only be exposed to a particular skill but also to bring about creative thinking sufficient enough to establish and run a business at least at the small-scale level. In order to be able 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 the concept of things. It, therefore, implies that business education, as a course of study should move with the trends of the time.

The earliest form of Business Education according to Osuala, Popham (1975), and Njoku (1990) as well as most authors was the apprenticeship training. At that time an individual had to learn a trade under another person who had the skill for the trade, or who was experienced in a particular area. These were craft, bookkeeping, farming, and sales. In 2004, Osuala, gave another definition as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts (1) Office education - a vocational programme of office careers through initial, refresher and upgrading education and (2) General business education - a programme to provide students with information and competences which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business. Business education as a branch of vocational education provides students with requisite skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical that equip the learner with knowledge and skills to teach effectively, work in an office or be self-reliant (Okoro, 2020) According to Osuala (2009) Business Education is an academic programme offered in tertiary institution which is designed to provide learning situations for skill acquisition among students who could apply such skills in their occupation, managing personal business, for personal living in the society and for nation building. It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by; the definitions of business education continue to change. This means that business education is not static. Osuala also maintained that business education components are therefore a union of general education and business components. The growing need for business knowledge has continued to expand and increase from the era of industrial revolution in western world and indigenization policy.

Technology as applied to Business Education according to Igberaharha (2009) is known as electronic commerce (e-commerce) or electronic business, which involves the use of networks, expert systems, and artificial intelligence (e-communication business). E-commerce enables Companies and their customers to trade information, commodities, and services more easily. Furthermore, Ololube (2006); Teo (2014), stated that business education teachers' competence is Connected with how they integrate technology in their classroom activities. Therefore, the need for Identification of value calls for adequate training of lecturers in line with the modern business education curriculum so as to enable them improves their instructions to students (Ibelegbu, 2013). Having looked at different definition from authors, it can be said that business education is a component of vocational technical education that prepares students for careers in business by providing them with the necessary competencies, skills, knowledge, learning the use of technology (electronic commerce), understanding of becoming self-reliant and attitudes to perform as workers in industries as well as to be informed consumers of goods and services.



Self-reliance is a viable development strategy adopted by contemporary Africans in their attempt to save themselves from the firm grips of poverty (Mahammad, 2012). According to Salau (2014) economic stability of most developed countries of the world has been attributed to entrepreneurship minded self-starters who perceive opportunities and risk their resources in creating and managing their own business. In this work self-reliance is defined in line with Rama and Goldenberg (2017) who stated that self-reliance is all about depending on oneself for economic wellbeing. Moreso, Okafor (2012) stated that teacher's instructional methods can serve as a means for improving the development of entrepreneurship among the students. According to Blessing and Promise (2017) entrepreneurship is best promoted by school administrators that have interest. This indicates that school administrators have a huge role to play in the implementation of business education curriculum in order to ascertain entrepreneurship which in turn promotes self-reliance. Attaining self-reliant is in consonance on how the curriculum of a school is well prepared in order to serve as a guide in building the learner's mind. The society is dynamic and the changes are integrated into the curricula of schools for effective dissemination of the required knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

The word "curriculum" was derived from a latin language "currus", which means a race course. This implies that the child has been exposed to an informal curriculum before arriving at school; it suggests that the child is beginning to run intellectually and educationally. This is why curriculum is explained as the experiences of the child which the school uses in the process of educating the child (Atah, 2019). In any field of education curriculum is seen as the reconstruction of knowledge and experience, systematically developed with the guidance of the school or relevant agencies, which will enhance the learners and the society's well-being (Moronkola, Akinsola& Abe 2003). According to Ogwo and Oranu (2006), curriculum is the planned guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience under the auspices of a school, for the learners' continuous and willful growth in personal, social competence. Curriculum refers to all of the planned experiences that the school provides as part of its instructional responsibilities, as well as the tools and content with which students will interact for the goal of accomplishing designated educational outcomes (Indiana Department of Education, 2010). These definitions show that for a curriculum of any course to be meaningful, it must take into cognizance, the learners and the environment. This means that curriculum should not be rigid; it should be adaptive to changes and flexible (Odesanya & Bwala, 2004), Therefore, for business education to attain its' goals and objectives, curriculum need to be flexible in order to accommodate the necessary changes that may arise as a result of changes in technology.

The term business education curriculum refers to course content that prepares students for employment and vocational business careers (Osuala, 2009). Worthwhile business education curriculum should be dynamic and relevant, possessing the following characteristics as outlined by Isyaku in Okoro (2013) such as: business education courses should provide for students' development of knowledge, manipulation competencies, attitudes and values which should be applied in real work setting, business education courses should be based on societal needs. Thus, business education curriculum must be responsive to technological changes in the society; new



developments in the area should be incorporated into the curriculum so that graduates can be better equipped to compete for jobs, become self-reliant. Therefore, the equipment, facilities, supplies and instructional resources must be obtained for effective implementation of the curriculum. Implementation is the process of putting into action a previously agreed-upon plan, decision, proposal, idea, or policy. Curriculum implementation process involves helping the learner acquire knowledge or experience. It is important to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place without the learner. The learner is therefore the central figure in the curriculum implementation. Process. Ivowi (2009) noted that curriculum implementation entails the interaction of the learner and the curriculum contents under the guidance of the teacher in order to acquire desired knowledge, attitudes, abilities and skills. Curriculum implementation according to Ivowi (2009) in Obilo and Saugoleye (2015) involves the dissemination of the structured set of learning experiences, the provision of resources to effectively execute the plan, and the actual execution of the plan in the classroom setting, where the teacher-learner interactions take place. Curriculum implementation refers to how teachers deliver instruction and assess learning through the use of specified resources provided in a curriculum. The major purpose of curriculum implementation in business education is to improve the quality of the services rendered by schools in order to make them more proficient in furnishing students with knowledge, right attitude and varied skills that will help them to become self-reliant in the society. In order to attain this proficiency, some strategies must be applied.

Strategy according to Bryson (2015) is a pattern of purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions, or resource allocations that define what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. Okoye, and Ashibogwu, (2018). saw strategies as techniques or mechanisms put in place to maintain degree of quality of excellence of a product or service. To them strategies are the same as methods and procedures of attaining a goal. According to Ikelegbe, (2020), strategy is viewed as the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term, which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment and fulfils stakeholders' exceptions. To them, it is a set of goals and objectives of an organization including major programmes of action chosen to reach those goals and objectives. In the context of this work, strategies are mechanisms or techniques set aside to maintain degree of excellence in business education programme. Therefore, this article will focus on instructional and institutional strategies.

Instructional strategies are the techniques or methods that a teacher adopts to meet various learning objectives. These instructional strategies help students to walk on the path of independent learning and become strategic learners. Some researchers like Emesoba and Mmuo (2018) revealed in their study that some innovative instructional strategies for enhancing quality business education programme in tertiary institutions through school industry collaboration for economic development are as follows: formulation of government policies that will encourage school-industry collaboration in business education programme, involving business educators in planning school curriculum for business education programme and government establishing special grant scheme for school-industry collaboration in business education programme. Furthermore, Okoro (2020) also listed some possible institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum as follows: employing qualified lecturers to teach in business education programme, lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theories and practical, the curriculum should be updated based



on the market needs; students should be exposed to industrial Practice, adequate funding of business education programmes, review of business education curriculum by school authorities, collaboration with employers of labor to employ business education graduates, collaboration with National Universities Commission for accreditation of courses, collaboration with association of business educators for their input in curriculum, provision of Modern Equipment in business education programme, public enlightenments programmes on business education and formulation of government policies that will encourage school-industry collaboration in business education programme.

The findings of this study shall be of immense benefit to lecturers of business education, students of business education, National Universities Commission (NUC), curriculum reviewers and future researchers.

The findings of the study will benefit lecturers of business education, if published through conference papers, journals and books, would help them to acquire information on the best strategies to adopt in the implementation of the curriculum that can make the students self-reliance. The findings of the study, when published and adopted would be of benefit to the students by providing them with a qualitative and a skilled oriented curriculum that is capable of producing self-reliant graduates. The findings of the study, when published, would also be beneficial to the National University for commission (NUC) to use the empirical data of the study in business education curriculum reforms and design. Curriculum planners will also benefit from the findings of this study because, it will provide relevant information for curriculum review and update to meet societal needs for improved teaching and learning. Finally, the findings will help to provide useful research information to fellow researchers with keen research interest into identifying strategies for improving curriculum development and implementation.

Statement of Problem

Over the years business education has been bedeviled by multidimensional curriculum problems which have undermined the plans and policy statements of government with regards to the achievement of the broad goals and objectives of producing self-reliant graduates. Despite the efforts made by the stakeholders the problems still persist till date with different dimensions. Without any doubt the problems besetting business education have attendant consequences not only for the university education but the senior secondary level of education which the products of the university are expected to serve. Therefore, there is a dire need to arrest this ugly trend through Strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by university lecturers for self-reliance in South East Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The main aim of this study was to investigate strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by university lecturers for self-reliance in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:



1. The instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.
2. The institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.

Research Question

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?
2. What are the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference among the mean responses of lecturers studied on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum.

Methodology:

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 89 lecturers (from five federal and state universities in South-East Nigeria) consisting of 20 lecturers from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 25 from University of Nigeria Nsukka, 17 from Imo State University Owerri, 13 from Alex Ekwueme University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State, and 14 from Michael Okpara University of Agricultural Umudike, Abia State. No sample was drawn because of the small population.

A researcher-developed instrument titled "Strategies for Effective Implementation of Business Education Curriculum for Self-Reliant Questionnaire (SEIBEC SRQ)" was used for collecting data for the study. The instrument was divided into 2 sections based on the specific purposes of the study. Each item in the questionnaire was assigned a four response options of Strongly Agree (SA =4), Agree (A =3), Disagree (D =2), Strongly Disagree (SD =1). The instrument was validated by experts from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the department of business education and one from computer and robotics education all in University of Nigeria Nsukka. To test the reliability of the instrument a pilot test was conducted using twenty-five (25) lecturers in University of Nigeria Nsukka which is outside the study area and the instrument yielded a reliability index of 0.89.

The researchers and two research assistants administered copies of the questionnaires to the respondents in their various universities. Since, efforts were made to retrieve the instruments the

same way it was distributed within a period of one week and two days and this yielded a 100 percent rate of return. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The independent t-test was used to test null hypothesis 1, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test null hypothesis 2 all at 0.05 level of significance. The study used Statistical package for Social Science (v26.0) for analysis. Mean of 2.50 was used as cut off point any item with a mean of 2.50 and above will be agreed while any item with a mean less than 2.50 will be disagreed. Conversely, in testing the null hypothesis, any item whose p-value was greater than 0.05, then the hypothesis of no significance will be accepted but if p-value was less than or equal to 0.05, the hypothesis of no significance was rejected.

Result

The result is presented according to the research questions that guided the study and the hypotheses tested.

Research Question 1: What are the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Table 1: This table shows mean responses of lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	Training of Lecturers in regard to Technologies.	3.52	0.75	Agree
2	Conducting seminars and workshops to help lecturers keep abreast of technological changes.	3.42	0.77	Agree
3	The curriculum should be developed and updated based on the market needs.	3.05	0.78	Agree
4	Lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theory and practical.	3.47	0.51	Agree
5	Lecturers' use of current teaching strategies should be encouraged.	3.16	0.69	Agree
6	Incentives should be given to lecturers who improve their knowledge and skills especially in technology.	3.56	0.73	Agree
7	Adequate time allotment for practical lectures.	3.37	0.60	Agree
8	Lecturers' use of emerging technologies during teaching.	3.51	0.63	Agree
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		3.50	0.60	Agree

Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation

Table 1 presented the result of the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in South East Nigeria. Result showed mean ranged from 3.05 – 3.56 with a grand mean of 3.50 which is above the 2.5 cut-off point. This implies that the respondents accepted that the items identified are the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities. The standard deviation ranged from 0.51 – 0.78, implying that the respondents are not far from each other in their responses.

Research question 2: What are the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Table 2: This table shows mean rating of lecturers on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
9	Provision of instructional materials for teaching and learning business education.	3.55	0.71	Agree
10	Public enlightenment programmes on business education.	3.32	0.67	Agree
11	Adequate modern business education library facilities, textbooks in business education and provision of foreign periodicals.	3.42	0.51	Agree
12	Students should be exposed to industrial practice and properly supervised.	3.51	0.66	Agree
13	Adequate funding of modern infrastructures.	3.57	0.76	Agree
14	There should be a well-established communication link between the schools and industries.	3.56	0.85	Agree
15	Alternative power supply should be provided during lectures.	3.09	0.85	Agree
16	Provision of well-equipped laboratories.	3.32	0.75	Agree
17	Provision of well-equipped ICT facilities	3.53	0.61	Agree
18	Review of business education curriculum	3.42	0.69	Agree
Grand mean and Standard Deviation		3.54	0.67	Agree

Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation

Table 2 showed the result of the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria. The result reveals mean range of 3.09 – 3.57 which is above 2.5 cut off point. This implies that all the business education lecturers accepted that the institutional strategies identified can support them for effective

implementation of business education curriculum in the universities. Also, standard deviation ranged from 0.51 – 0.85 indicating that respondents were homogeneous in their responses.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.

Table 3: T-test Analysis of the difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Level of Sig.	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Male	36	3.43	0.61	0.05	87	2.07	0.12	NS
Female	53	3.55	0.77					

Note: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, df = Degree of freedom.

The t-test analysis in table 4 revealed p-value of 0.12 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance at 87 degrees of freedom. This indicates that the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities is retained.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference among the mean responses of lecturers studied on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance on the Difference Among the Mean Responses of Business Education Lecturers in Universities on the Institutional Strategies for Effective Implementation of Business Education Curriculum

Sources of Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Sig	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Between Groups	1.782	4	0.05	.445	2.106	.087	NS
Within Groups	17.769	84		.212			
Total	19.551	88					

Note: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, df = Degree of freedom.

Table 4 shows that the calculated probability value (p-value) of .087 is greater than the alpha level of .05 with the degree of freedom of 84 and 88. Based on this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference among the mean responses of business education lecturers in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka , University of Nigeria Nsukka, Imo state University



Owerri, Alex Ekwueme University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi state and Michael Okpara University of Agricultural Umudike, Abia state on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum is upheld.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that training of lecturers in regard to technologies, lecturers use of emerging technologies during teaching and lecturers' use of current teaching strategies should be encouraged to ensure effective implementation of business education curriculum. This is in line with Ololube, 2006 and Teo (2004) which stated that business education teachers' competence is now connected with how they integrate technology in their classroom activities in order to enhance learning. Also, the findings of the study show that the curriculum should be developed and updated based on the following: market needs; adequate time allotment for practical lectures; provision of instructional materials for teaching and learning business education; adequate modern business education library facilities; textbooks in business education and provision of foreign periodicals; public enlightenment programmes on business education; students should be exposed to industrial practice and properly supervised; adequate funding of modern infrastructures; lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theory and practical; alternative power supply should be provided during lectures; and provision of well-equipped laboratories, provision of well-equipped ICT facilities and review of business education curriculum. These findings are consistent with earlier studies of Okoro (2020) which agreed that some of the possible strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum are: lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theory and practical, the curriculum should be updated based on the market needs, students should be exposed to industrial practice, adequate funding of business education programmes, review of business education curriculum by school authorities, collaboration with National Universities Commission for accreditation of courses, provision of Modern Equipment in business education programme and public enlightenment programmes on business education. More so, the study revealed that conducting seminars and workshops to help lecturers keep abreast of technological changes will enable effective implementation business education curriculum. Ibelegbu (2013) work supports these findings by stating that the need for identification of value calls for retraining of business education teachers in the areas of technology so as to enable them improves their instruction to students in business education.

Therefore, to assist the business education teachers in the area of study, it becomes important to retrain these teachers through intervention programmes to update their knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective instruction. The study also shows that there should be a well-established communication link between the schools and industries. This is in consonance with the study of Emesoba and Mmuo (2018) which revealed in their findings that for innovative strategies to be used in enhancing quality business education programme in tertiary institutions through school industry collaboration for economic development, the following facts are to be considered: formulation of government policies that will encourage school-industry collaboration in business education programme; involving business educators in planning school curriculum for business education programme; and government establishing special grant scheme for school-industry collaboration in

business education programme. The findings of the study revealed that lecturers accepted all the instructional strategies as possible ways of effective implementation of business education curriculum. This is in agreement with Okafor (2012) that teacher's instructional method can serve as a means for improving the development of entrepreneurship among the students.

This implies that business education is also about entrepreneurship because it prepares students to be self-reliant. The findings of the study further revealed that the lecturers accepted all the institutional strategies as possible ways of effective implementation of business education curriculum. This is in support of Promise and Blessing (2017) who noted that entrepreneurship is best promoted by school administrators that have interest, implying that school administrators have a huge role to play in the implementation of business education curriculum so as to promotes students' self-reliance on graduation.

Conclusion

For business education to achieve its major purpose which is self-reliance that will lead to poverty alleviation there is need to follow the above-mentioned strategies in order to attain effective implementation of business education curriculum. This study demonstrates that adequate time allotment for practical lectures, provision of instructional materials for teaching and learning business education, adequate modern business education library facilities, textbooks in business education and provision of foreign periodicals, public enlightenment programmes on business education, students should be exposed to industrial practice and properly supervised, adequate funding of modern infrastructures amongst other are strategies that can enable the effective implementation of business education curriculum. Moreover, if these strategies are not absorbed then the success of business education programme will be hindered. Whereas, if these strategies are rightly implemented in the business education curriculum, then business education graduates will be equipped with effective and efficient skills that will enable them become self-reliant, create jobs for themselves and others. This will go a long way to reduce poverty in the society and unemployment in the labor market.

Recommendations

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

1. The university authorities should seek assistance from non-governmental organization, alumni, parents and philanthropies in order to adequately fund Business education Programmes to enable them have some required facilities for effective teaching and learning.
2. There should regularly organize workshops, seminars, in-service training, and re-training programmes to equip the lecturers with the skills and strategies needed for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities.
3. Hardworking lecturers of business education who utilize appropriate technologies during lectures should be adequately rewarded to encourage them to put in their best.
4. Business education course structure should be regularly reviewed by the university management to meet up to the current economic trends.



5. Lecturers should be encouraged to make use of modern equipment and instructional facilities during instructional delivery in order to bring about effectiveness and efficiency in business education.
6. Collaboration and synergy between institutions and industries should be encouraged through policy formulation, and institution and industry efforts.

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