

Ideal Quality of University Business Education Curriculum Required for Successful Graduates Employment as Perceived by Lecturers

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Abstract

Business education is education for and about business. The purpose of business education programme is to make the business education graduates successful entrepreneurs after graduation. The problem of the study is that business education graduates are not doing well in their entrepreneurial ambitions. The study therefore assessed the ideal qualities of business education curriculum for successful graduates employment. One research question was raised and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The design of the study, was a descriptive survey. The population which also served as sample consisted 126 lecturers in Business Education in Universities in South South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. A questionnaire comprising 20 items which was adequately validated and has a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83 was used for the study. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings are quality university business education curriculum should be comprehensive, varied in nature, provide an understanding of business world, ability to acquire relevant knowledge and skills, correlation of subjects, individualized instruction, constant review and provision for entry into jobs among others which are required for successful graduates employment. It was recommended that universities authorities should provide adequate teaching facilities and constant curriculum review to make the business education programme functional in the world of work.

Keywords: Quality; universities; business education; graduates; employment.

Introduction

Business education is a major component of vocational education which the National Policy on Education (2009) emphasized. It is a medium by which people can acquire office and business skills. Business education curriculum is designed to build in the learner different skills and knowledge that would enable her individual's earn living by becoming an employee, entrepreneur, employer and self employed. Aliyu (2006) viewed business education as education for the acquisition and development of skills, competencies and attribute which are necessary for efficiency of the economic system. Thus, business education is necessary for entrepreneurship development with emphasis on pre-vocational preparation for the individual (Tashie, 2011).

According to Okwuanaso and Agbamu (2010), the skills acquired in any area of business education will promote training in entrepreneurship as well as make graduates establish small business on their own. Anao (2001) and Umemzia (2003) assert that business education produces manpower that possess the required knowledge, skills and attitude for harnessing other resources and bringing them into goods and services demanded by the society for satisfaction of their wants and needs. Business education breeds and constantly maintains adequate manpower with skills needed for productive ventures. Oborah (2006) outlined areas of employment opportunities for graduates of business education which includes wage consultancy and entrepreneurial employments. Business education exposes the graduates to secretarial consultancy, managerial consultancy, establishing photocopying, computer and inter-net centres, and so on. With these opportunities, business education is now widely believed to be a veritable employment alternative to wage employment and widespread retrenchment necessitated by the global economic recession.

Unemployment of whatever type and magnitude is an abominable condition within the economy (Tashie, 2011). The problem necessarily creates waste of man hour, loss of valuable skills and of productive energy. The unemployed persons are said to lack access to income and wealth. They are usually faced with physical and moral deprivation and are psychologically unhealthy. Oke (2003) describes the unemployed as liabilities to the society, thus a source of social threat, thereby being susceptible to vices, such as armed robbery, hired assassins; internet scam popularly referred to as "yahoo! yahoo!" and prostitutions and among others.

Entrepreneurship development through business education is an option for employment generation. This is as a result of the fact that several subjects are taught in business education which lead to the development of entrepreneurship skills. Economics accounting, shorthand, typewriting, office practice, management, marketing, commerce, business law, computer application / appreciation and entrepreneurship in Vocational and Technical Education to mention but a few, are taught in university business education curriculum. As identified by Oke (2003), business education will offer several benefit to the individual and the nation at large. Office

practice, shorthand and typewriter/computer studies will prepare the graduate for a well paid career such as secretary, receptionist, or personal assistance to chief executives or better still enable the individual to have his own business centres with internet facilities.

Curriculum is defined as a group of courses or planned experience, in proper sequence of topics designed to prepare an individual for efficient service in a specific vocation. Curriculum is seen as the instrument/means of which educational institutions seek to translate the hopes of the society into a concrete reality. Isyaku (2006) and Okike (2011), are of the opinion that an ideal curriculum can be planned and organized by experts and can be implemented and attained. Curriculum development is basically concerned with content development with other areas related to it. It is the process by which a content is identified, sequenced experiences selected and knowledge organized. Developing a curriculum is a very complex task involving many decision situations such as government policy statements, priority determination, course selection and standards setting. It is a pre-requisite to lesson planning that is designed to accept the content of a programme and translate that content into methodology and process for instruction. In business education, curriculum thrives on relevance and usefulness. The extent to which a curriculum assists students to enter and succeed in the business world-of-work is what matters most. Consequently, an outstanding characteristics of a curriculum is that it should never be static. A worthwhile business education curriculum should be dynamic and relevant, possessing the following characteristics as outlined by Isyaku (2006).

- 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, hence, curriculum oriented towards both the students and the support the curriculum should derive from employment opportunities that exists to the graduates.
- A 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.
- Equipment, facilities, supplies and instructional resources must be obtained for effective implementation of the curriculum
- The ultimate success of a business education curriculum issues that must be addressed students academic achievement but through the results of that achievement the result that take the form of performance in the workplace

Esene (2012) also identified the following qualities of university business curriculum. These are: comprehensiveness and varied in nature and scope, providing an understanding of the business world, ability to acquire the relevant knowledge and skills, correlation of subjects, individualization of instruction, prevention and reduction of dropouts, constant review, provision for entry into jobs and acceleration at all levels, desirable equipment for maximum productivity and so on. Iseniyi (2009) observed that the present situation of Business education curriculum is not meeting employers demand. She observed that the present curriculum of business education that is outdated, theoretically based, no correlation of subjects, as a result no uniformity in the courses taught, and university business education graduates are not doing well in the entrepreneurial ambitions.

Statement of the Problem

A good business education curriculum is the one that is regularly reviewed, has correlation of business subjects, maximum use of office machines and equipments, relate to business world, teaches business skill and wide coverage of the course content. Such curriculum enhances entrepreneurial skills of business education graduates (Nwiyu, 2009). Business education graduates are not doing well in their private businesses due to curriculum defects. The problem of the study is that, the current spate of unsuccessful business education graduates could be due to a faulty curriculum. The question, therefore, what is the ideal quality of university business education curriculum required for successful graduates employment as perceived by lecturers?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the quality of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment. Specifically, the objective is:

- to determine the mean rating of ideal quality of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment among business education lecturers in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Research Question

The following research question was raise to guide the study.

What are the ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female business education lecturers in their mean rating of ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment.
2. There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced business education lecturers in their mean rating of the ideal qualities' of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment.
3. There is no significant difference between federal and state business education lecturers in their mean rating of the ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment.

Scope of the Study

This study assessed the quality of University Business Education curriculum. It was restricted to lecturers of state and federal universities who are teaching business education in south south Nigeria.

Methods

The design of the study was a descriptive survey which investigated the quality of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment. The population which also served as sample comprised 126 Business Education lecturers in the south south universities. The population was manageable, hence there was no sampling.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. It has two parts. Part A contained four items which has information on demographic variables of the respondent while part B contained 16 items that has information concerning the research question. The questionnaire was structured on a 4-point scale of Strongly agree, 4-points, Agree 3-points, Disagree 2-points, and Strong disagree 1-point. The questionnaire had face and content validity as verified by experts in business education and Measurement and Evaluation. The instrument was also subjected to Cronbach alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.83. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research question. A cut-off point of 2.50 was set to accept or reject items of the instrument. Mean above 2.50 shows agreed, while less than 2.50 shows disagreed. Z-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. If the calculated z-value (zv) is less than table value (tv) the hypothesis is retained, on the other hand, z-calculated (zv) which is above table value (tv) hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Result

What are the ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment?

Table 1: Respondent mean rating on quality ideal of business education for successful graduate employment
N = 126

S/N	Ideal qualities of business education curriculum	X	SD	Decision
1	Business education curriculum should be comprehensive in scope	2.88	0.78	Agreed
2	Business education curriculum should varied in nature	3.00	0.73	Agreed
3	Business education curriculum should have correlation of subjects	3.16	0.86	Agreed
4	Business education should provide skills for entry into jobs	3.06	0.91	Agreed
5	Business education should provide opportunity for dropouts	3.14	0.77	Agreed
6	Business education curriculum should provide opportunities for student to accelerate at all level	2.55	0.78	Agreed
7	Business education should be constantly revealed to bring new ideas	2.92	0.88	Agreed
8	Business education curriculum should be technologically based	3.25	0.74	Agreed
9	Business education curriculum should provide opportunity for individualized instructions	2.74	0.79	Agreed
10	Business education curriculum should provide the relevant knowledge and skills	3.11	0.82	Agreed
11	Business education curriculum should make provision for maximum use of equipment for productivity	3.01	0.70	Agreed
12	Business education curriculum should be practically based	3.10	0.93	Agreed
13	Business education curriculum should be focused on career opportunities	2.86	0.90	Agreed
14	Business education curriculum should be based on societal needs	2.78	0.76	Agreed
15	Business education curriculum should be based on success standards	2.76	0.88	Agreed
16	Business education curriculum should have ease of implementation for maximum results	2.52	0.91	Agreed

The data presented revealed that an ideal university business education curriculum should be comprehensive in scope, varied in nature, correlation of subjects, provide entry into jobs, provide opportunities for dropouts, provide acceleration for individualized at all levels, constantly reviewed to provide new ideas. Other qualities of the curriculum are technologically based, provide opportunities for individuals instructions, provision of relevant knowledge and skills, make provision for maximum use of equipment and productivity, practically based and provide career opportunities. The mean scores ranged from 2.50 and above.

Testing of Hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers in their mean rating of an ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment.

Table 2: Z-test of the mean score of male and female lecturers in their mean rating of an ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment

Variable category	N	X	SD	DF	Lev. of sig	z-cal	z-val	Decision
Male lecturers	79	3.10	0.83	127	0.05	1.28	1.96	NS
Female lecturers	50	2.98	0.86					

Since the Z-calculated value (z-cal) 1.28 is less than table value (tv) 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis therefore retained.

2. There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced business education lecturers in their mean rating of the ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduates employment.

Table 3: Z-test of the mean score of experienced and less experienced lecturers in their mean rating of an ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment

Variable category	N	X	SD	DF	Lev. of sig	z-cal	z-val	Decision
Experienced lecturers	73	3.03	0.99	127	0.05	1.43	1.96	NS
Less experienced lecturers	56	2.94	1.00					

Since the z-calculated value (z-cal) 1.43 is less than table value (zv) 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis is therefore retained.

3. There is no significant difference federal and state business education lecturers in their mean rating of an ideal university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment.

Table 4: Z-test of the mean score of federal and state lecturers in their mean rating of an ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment

Variable category	N	X	SD	DF	Lev. of sig	z-cal	z-val	Decision
Federal business education lecturers	57	2.93	.96	127	0.05	1.16	1.96	NS
State business education lecturers	72	2.90	1.01					

Since the z-calculated value of 1.16 is less than table value (tv) 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis earlier stated is therefore retained.

Discussion

Business education is education for and about business. The aim of business education at the university level is to ensure that students are prepared for employment after graduations. The curriculum of business education has to be tilted towards job opportunities and how to possess some qualities. The study revealed that an ideal university business education curriculum should be comprehensive in scope, varied in nature, correlation of subjects, provide entry into jobs, provide opportunities for dropouts, provide acceleration for individualized at all levels, constantly reviewed to provide new ideas. Other qualities of the curriculum are technologically based, provide opportunities for individuals instructions, provision of relevant knowledge and

skills, make provision for maximum use of equipment and productivity, practically based and provide career opportunities. This study is consistent with a Isyaku (2006), Esene (2012) and Okike (2011). The findings also revealed that There is no significant difference between male and female business education lecturers in their mean rating of ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment. There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced business education lecturers in their mean rating of the ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment. There is no significant difference between federal and state business education lecturers in their mean rating of the ideal qualities of university business education curriculum required for successful graduate employment. An ideal business education curriculum could result to successful graduate employment and this will reduce high rate of graduates unemployment. Business education graduates that have acquired skills in the business education curriculum could also run their businesses successful without failure.

Conclusion

In order to reduce graduates unemployment in Nigeria economy, business education curriculum that has to be wide in scope, varied in nature, correlation of subjects, provide entry into jobs, provide opportunities for dropouts, provide acceleration for individualized at all levels and should be constantly reviewed to provide new ideas.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made.

1. Business education curriculum should provide opportunities for student to accelerate at all level
2. Business education curriculum should provide opportunity for individualized instructions
3. Business education curriculum should have ease of implementation for maximum results
4. Business education curriculum should be regularly supervised by school authorities to ensure standards are maintained.
5. Business education programme should be provided with adequate facilities to ensure skills and knowledge are acquired by the students.

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