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## Perception of Business Education in Meeting Objectives of National Economic Empowerment and Development through Business Education Programme

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**ABSTRACT:** This study was carried out to seek for the opinion of business educator towards the role that Business Education programme plays in achieving the objectives of NEEDS. A sample size of 43 respondents was used which was derived through simple random sampling method from lecturers in the four institutions in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi state University, Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Alex Ekwueme federal University, Ndufu Alike Ikwo and Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo. The finding from the study shows that Business Education lecturers believes that Business Education programme can go a long way towards achieving the goals of NEEDs if properly and effectively planned and executed. They however suggests amongst others that the provision of adequate equipment for use, training and retraining of both staff and students for skill competencies and efficiency will enhance the rate of competent graduates in Business Education.

### INTRODUCTION

Education as posited by (Vin-Mbah, 2012) is a systematic training and instruction designed to transmit knowledge and develop skills in individuals. It is also a process of changing the behavior pattern of individuals in the desired direction). Business Education on the other hand throwing the same pattern has been defined by various persons according to what they believe education in business should set out to achieve. Shield (1930) defines Business Education as economic education not of the academic sort, long in theory and short on fact; but that which gives the student knowledge of basic realities of business life and relationship. Osuala (1981) defined Business Education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts office education, a vocational education programme for office careers and general business education, a programme for office careers and general business education a programme which provides students with information and competencies needed by all managing personal business affairs, and using the services of the business world. However, in as much as understanding of Business Education is sought for the purpose of making progress in planning its curriculum. It is useful to seek a generally acceptable and encompassing working definition for the term business education as a programme of studies, which aims at creating awareness in business occupation, preparing people to become better citizens and consumers Azuka, Nwosu, kanu & Agomuo (2006).

Therefore Business Education prepares youths for vocations by developing in them certain skills, attitudes and abilities that are relevant to securing jobs in the business world. Secondly, it gives them insight into general business and acquaints them with general information that will make them efficient and rational purchasers and consumer of business products (goods and services). Thus the principles and techniques of business education are needed by all in all walks of life for use both for vocational and non- vocational reasons. One way in which business education has contributed to the economy is through the training of unskilled workers. The economic transformation from an industrial economy to an automated economy brought about a shift in the skill demands of its workers. Business



Education has provided training that has allowed unskilled workers to become skilled in a particular vocation or trade. As technology changes so does the skill demands of the workforce. By providing the training necessary to update skills Business education allows the workers to maintain contemporary job skills or seek advancement through increased knowledge and update skills. The economic effects of retraining are similar to those providing training for an unskilled worker. Another result of Business Education has been to provide both employees and employers with increased geographic mobility. By providing a well-trained and competent work force in diverse geographical regions, employers are able to relocate from one state to another or even from one country to another. This allows companies to stay competitive in an increasingly global market. Therefore by providing workers with skills that is transferable from one geographical region to another. Business Education provides the employees the opportunity to seek better employment, and or higher wages through geographic mobility.

However, for its strategic position Business Education is one of the major Educational programmes which play a vital role in poverty reduction/eradication of the national economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS). NEEDS is Nigeria's home grown poverty reduction strategy (PRSP). NEEDS is not just a plan on paper, it is a plan on the ground and founded on a clear vision, sound values and enduring principles. NEEDS is a nationally coordinated framework of action close collaboration with the state and local government (with their State Economic Empowerment and development Strategy SEED) and other stake holders to consolidate on its achievements of its NEEDS- The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy is Nigeria's plan for prosperity. It is the people's way of letting the government know what kind of Nigeria they wish to live in, now and in the future. It is also the government's way of letting the people they know their prestige in the society and the country at large. It is also a way of letting the international community know where Nigeria stands – the region in the world as well as how it wishes to be supported.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has been a traditional and longtime belief that Business Education is a job creator and not a job seeker. This is because of the nature of the programme. With this belief, it is expected that Business Education programme should play a major role in meeting the objectives of National Economic empowerment and development Strategy which is poverty reduction/eradication through the provision of empowerment, self employment in particular but unfortunately, it has been observed that the rate of unemployment among school leavers both secondary and tertiary levels is always in the increase. It is as a result of this situation that the researcher was prompted to investigating the perception of Business Educators in the role of business Education in meeting the need of NEEDS.

### **Objective of the Study**

This study was directed towards finding out Business Educator's perceived role of Business Education programme in poverty reduction/eradication as a major aim of the National



Economic Empowerment And Development Strategy (NEEDS), on the whole the study was meant to achieve the following objectives;

- (1) To determine the degree Business Education programme could be used for poverty reduction/eradication.
- (2) To find out if Business Education programme has an impact on poverty eradication/reduction as perceived by Business Educators.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were drawn in order to give a lead way to solving the problem of this study;

- (1) To what degree do Business Educators believe that Business Education programme could lead to poverty eradication/reduction?
- (2) To what degree do Business Educators perceive Business education programme as having impact on poverty eradication/reduction as enunciated by NEEDS?

### **Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out in Ebonyi State. It involved Business Educators in the States tertiary institutions. Such Business Educators includes lecturers in Ebonyi State College of Education, Ebonyi State University, Alex Ekwueme Federal University as well as Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic Unwana. The major subjects were Business Educators in both Universities i.e (Ebonyi State University Abakaliki and Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu Alike-Ikwo), Polytechnic and College of Education in the State.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study is significant in the sense that it will further enhance the spread of the importance of Business Education programme towards creation of employment opportunities for its beneficiaries.

### **Research Methodology**

An opinion survey design was adopted for the study because the study involves gathering information by selecting some people to be a representative of the entire group

### **Population and Sample**

The population consists of all the Business Education Lecturers in the afore mentioned school schools. The total number of lecturers in the selected schools were fifty six (56). From the total figure, a sample of forty three (43) respondents were selected through the use of simple random sampling technique (Kejue & Morgan 1970).

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

A questionnaire which consists of 8 items was developed by the researcher using the research questions to collect data from the respondents. The items was structured on the modified four point likert scale were the mean score of 2.5 and above is regarded as being accepted and below 2.5 was rejected. The figure generated were used for the analysis and the mean score were used as basis for generalization



Formular for the analysis are as follows;

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum FX}{N}$$

Where  $\bar{X}$  = mean

$\sum FX$  = summation of the mean distribution

$N$  = the total number of distribution.

Agree = 4

Strongly Agree = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly Disagree = 1

## Findings

### Research Question One:

To what degree do business educators believe that Business education programme can lead to poverty eradication/reduction in Nigeria.

**Table 1: Role of Business Education Programme as Perceived by Business Educators**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1	Business Education programme generally helps in poverty eradication/reduction	13	20	-	10	43	2.8	Accepted
2	Accounting education is a veritable tool for poverty eradication/reduction	10	22	3	8	43	2.8	Accepted
3	Marketing education is a veritable tool for poverty reduction	15	12	4	12	43	2.7	Accepted
4	Office education is a tool for poverty eradication/reduction	16	14	3	10	43	2.8	Accepted

### Research Question Two

To what degree do Business educators perceive Business Education programme having impact on poverty eradication/reduction as enunciated by NEEDS?

**Table 2 : Perception of Business Educators of the programme meeting the objectives of NEEDS**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1	Business Education meets the needs of NEEDS	12	16	2	13	43	2.6	Accepted
2	Accounting Education meets the needs of NEEDS	13	14	5	11	43	2.7	Accepted
3	Marketing Education meets the needs of NEEDS	14	13	3	13	43	2.7	Accepted
4	Office Education meets the needs of NEEDS	20	10	2	8	43	2.8	Accepted



### **Analysis of Table 1**

From the analysis of research question one above, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents believed that Business Education can lead to poverty eradication/reduction in Nigeria. This assertion is true since the mean score of item 1 to item 4 of table one were all accepted. This means that Business Education, Accounting Education, Marketing Education and Office Education programme generally helps in poverty eradication/reduction. From the analysis of research question two above, it could be seen that the majority of the respondents believed that Business Education programme can lead to poverty eradication/ reduction if properly planned and executed.

### **Analysis of Table Two**

Table 2 presents the perception of Business educators of the programme meeting the objectives of NEEDS. From its analysis it could be seen that the mean score of the four items were all accepted, meaning that majority of the respondents believed that Business Education in one way or the other has a lot to contribute in the realization of the objectives of NEEDS if properly planned and implemented. However, item no 4 had the highest mean score. It indicates that Office Education amongst the rest is the Business Education programme with the highest ability of meeting the objective of NEEDS.

### **Prospects**

The federal republic of Nigeria (2013) in realization of the crucial role of tertiary institutions in human empowerment has made standing policies in respect of the goals of education at that level. The policies amongst others are training of high level manpower, developing and inculcating proper values for the survival of the individual and society and developing the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments. In achieving this aim, Business Education programme has a substantial contribution to make. Business Education as a vocational Education programme with all its objective in different subjects would enable the owners of small scale business owners to keep accurate account, file accurately, retrieve documents with ease and develop an effective sales habit. The study of office technology and management programme would enable the beneficiary and the employer develop human relationship skills that would enable both parties work harmoniously; business communication would help them to write valuable and convincing letters to their customers. The acquisition of goods sales technique will help to influence customers to increase their patronize of commodities that were sometimes very appealing to them; knowledge of typewriting will help the business man to type his official documents personally which will help him keep his secrets more secret, each of the above programme can be used as a self – employment device by the beneficiaries. Since no country can absorb its entire work force, a clear understanding and proper implementation of business education programme would help to sustain the economy and contribute meaningfully to the national development. This is a long way in reducing the rate of unemployment and business failure (Njoku & Nwosu 2002).



## CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the opinions of Business Educators on the role being played by Business Education programme towards reducing/eradicating poverty as enunciated by the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) meeting the needs of Nigerian people and the nation. Business Education is regarded as the salvation of civilization because it reduces incidents of unemployment, juvenile delinquency, adult crime, unstable and unsatisfactory homes. Some social reformers, professional sociologists, educators and writers have been so convinced of the broad social values of Business Education that they ascribe most social ills to occupational incompetence and therefore conclude that Business Education-an aspect of Vocational Education was the answer to many of them. The National policy on education (2004) places equal faith in the capacity of Business education to solve some social problems of our time.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Business Education programme curriculum at all levels should be raised to meet the current needs of the business world.
- (2) Business Educators need to improve their attitudes to work and help students at all level to embrace relevant courses and be encouraged to take vocation in Business Education.
- (3) The provision of adequate equipment for use, training and retraining of both staff and students for skill competencies and efficiency.
- (4) There should be proper administration and supervision of Business education programme as posited by Kpanghan & Onwuegbu (2014) so that actual objectives and the general purposes of Business Education would be achieved at all levels of human endeavor.

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