

## **“Charting the Future: Educational Planning, Leadership and Innovations in Business Education Programme in Nigeria”**

**Musiliu D. RUFAI<sup>1</sup> (PhD)**

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education  
Lagos State University, Ojo <sup>1,2, & 3</sup>  
email: musiliu.rufai@lasu.edu.ng

**Abosede M. ABUDU<sup>2</sup> (Corresponding Author)**

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education  
Lagos State University, Ojo  
email: mariam.hassan@lasu.edu.ng  
Ocid number: 0000-0002-7188-6289

**Jamiu O. Yuusuf<sup>3</sup>**

email: olusholayuusuf06@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this paper was to examine the extent to which educational planners, leadership and innovation chart into the future of business education programme in Nigeria through bringing up of new ideas, assisting in revisiting curriculum, training and retraining of business education lecturers, priorities strategies, evaluate risk in the programme, etcetera. This paper provided a comprehensive literature review of business education in Nigeria in the past, present and future, as well as the concept of educational planning, leadership and innovation. The main aim of this paper was to give a better understanding on how effective leadership and proper planning can be achieved by bringing new ideas in business education programme and achieving opportunities now and in the future. By conclusion, for Business Education programme to chart into the future effectively, and to achieve the aim and objective to which the programme is designed for, the planners and leadership needs to assist*

*the programme in involving business education expert to develop, review and design innovative Curriculum content in which skill acquisition as well as practical courses, training and retraining of Business Education Educators, Educational Planners and Leadership should assist in promoting interdisciplinary learning and prioritizing strategies, ecetera. It was recommended among others that Business education programme should be run independently from other courses of study. Practical courses such as the students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) should be fully funded and closely monitored by the expert who will enhance student to achieve practical skills and prepare them for advancement after schooling.*

**Keywords:** Business Education, Future, Innovation, Leadership and Planning

### **Introduction**

Business Education programme in tertiary institutions is a three (3) or four (4) years course of study in the higher institution be it Colleges of Education or University. Business Education has been defined by various authors as an educational programme that prepares students for entry and advancement in jobs within business, handle business affairs, as well as to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy. In the context of this study, the meaning of Business Education will be looked at from the past, present and future because of the changes in the modalities of the programme due to the new ideas, innovations in the recent year and years to come.

Concept of Business Education in the Past: Business education can be defined as education in which knowledge, practical skills are been imparted through hands on experiences and apprenticeships. Individuals would learn from experiences and dedicated traders, skills, specialized knowledge are been achieved through observations and practical applications. In this period business education is not confined to the four walls of the school, but is an activity that people engaged in their everyday life which helps in shaping the economic activities of individual and the communities at large. As opined by Olatoye, A. O., Ojeyinka, G.

A., & Ogunleke, M. O. (2020) Business Education is a programme designed to prepare students for life after graduation. The programme and its curriculum are designed in order to impart knowledge, skills and initiatives needed by learners so that they can be outstanding and sought for in the labour market. Learners have the opportunity of utilizing the knowledge, ideas acquired during their period of study to establish a well-positioned business or for effective contribution towards the achievement of their employer's stated objectives.

Concept of Business Education in the Present: Business education can be defined as a practical course that prepares student to be self-employed and create employment for employees after graduating from higher institutions. According to Ebinga, 2014 defines Business education as a programme that provide practical learning environment or real-world experience for effective instructional delivery appear to be very useful in equipping recipients with requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes that would inspire them to start and operate their personal business, and become self-reliant after graduation (Ebinga, 2014).

Concept of Business Education in the Future: Since the introduction of business education programme, the programme has enabled knowledge acquired assist in bringing up innovating ideas that can solve the organization's challenges and pave way for rapid growth. On the other hand, Education 'about' Business makes them knowledgeable about the strategies required for the setting up and continuity of business (Olatoye, Ojeyinka, & Ogunleke, 2020). According to the researcher Business Education programme is capable of equipping students with knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours which can assist graduates in exploring various opportunities and innovation that might come their way after schooling and helps in fulfilling future aim and objectives if the current challenges of the programme are addressed and implemented. The challenges are: poor provision of financial allocation of fund and resources to the programme, inadequate and unqualified

manpower in the field of business education, inadequate supply of modern technologies and facilities, proper designed of the curriculum by expert in-order to be practical based and not theoretical based curriculum through ready adaptability of changes in technology, coupled with proper planning and leadership position of the programme.

### **Meaning of Educational Planning, leadership and Innovation**

The Leadership, Planning and innovation of all educational frameworks constitute the cornerstone of effective schools, educational institutions, and organizational entities.

Education is act of passing knowledge, skills, ecetera from birth to death. Education is seen as all efforts, conscious and otherwise incidental and direct, made by a given society to accomplish laid down objectives, considered desirable along the needs of the individual as well as that of the society where the education is taking place (Ojeleye, 2020).

Planning encompasses the process of defining a clear purpose, aim and objective of a particular action with the aim of achieving in the future. Ololube (2009) reiterated that educational planning, in its broadest sense, is the application of logical and methodical analysis to the process of educational development in order to increase education's effectiveness and efficiency in meeting the needs and objectives of students and society at large. The quality of the school, which is a reflection of the general performance of the instructors, pupils and school administrators, is determined by the educational planning (Hénard, 2012; Ololube & Kpolovie, 2013). Educational planners regulate and determine the extent to which educational resources and duties can be distributed among individuals and groups (Chance & Williams, 2015). Educational planning is to make education more effective for the development of the individual and the society (Oguntimehin & Adeyemi, 2018).

**Leadership**

This is the systematic and scientific method of mentoring, guiding others to achieve the aim and objective to which the programme is designed. Leadership refers to the process of influencing and guiding others towards the achievement of a common goal or vision (Northouse, 2018). Simply put, leadership is the ability to inspire, motivate, and empower individuals or groups to work collaboratively and effectively. Nizarudin (2017), stated that leadership encompasses a wide range of skills, traits, and behaviours, including decision-making, communication, strategic thinking, empathy, and vision setting – which are quite key for every leader.

**Innovation**

Innovation is defined as the process of bringing forward new ideas, thinking, process to the educational institutions. According to Jain, N. (2023), Innovation is defined as the process of bringing about new ideas, methods, products, services, or solutions that have a significant positive impact and value. Innovation is the process of developing new products, services, or processes that create value and solve customer problems (Nicholas, Donagh & Stefan, 2020).

**What is Educational Planning?**

Educational planning can be defined as the evaluation, progress and implementation of strategies with the aim of addressing the academic needs, goals of learners, teachers and the larger community. According to Davis (2023), educational planning is a process through which scarce resources should be allocated as efficiently as possible to better respond to specific academic needs in the country.

**How will Educational Planning, leadership and Innovation assist Business Education to achieve its aim and objective to which is designed for in Future.**

“Education in Nigeria is an instrument par excellence for national development” (FRN, 2014), Educational planning, leadership and innovation is tantamount to the skill, knowledge into the Business education programme in Nigeria. The extent to which educational planners, leadership and innovation chart into the future of Business Education in Nigeria is necessary and paramount so as to enable the programme to gain its ground and achieve its aims and objective to which the programme is been designed and this can be achieved through the following ways:

1. Educational Planners and Leadership will assist and involve business education expert in development, review and design of innovative curriculum content in which skill acquisition as well as practical courses should be made compulsory and mandated which will assist the programme to achieve the aim and objectives to which it is designed for in the future.
2. Educational Planners and Leadership will assist and involve business education expert in the planning as well as leading in the aspect of training and retraining of Business Education Educators, because there has been a decreasing trend in the quality of graduates of business education programme in the current year and will need improvement in the future of the educators. According to Osunde (2000), Nwazor (2012), and Essia (2012) that called for the training and retraining of business education lecturers on modern corporate governance practices like transparency and accountability, the legal and regulatory environment, appropriate risk management measures, information flows, and the responsibility of senior management

and the board of directors. These lecturers may be trained in cooperative governance through the organization of seminars, conferences, and professional courses. Since the curriculum cannot be well implemented with quality teachers, therefore, business education lecturers need to be trained and retrained to keep them up to date.

3. Educational Planners and Leadership should assist and involve business education experts in the process of engaging students in Work-Based Learning and practical courses such as Student industrial work experience scheme (SIWES).
4. Educational planners and leaders should also assist in advocating for lecturers/ experts who support the teaching of work-based learning as a programme for business education. The programme makes different for its utility. Williams, Merritt, Hughes and Bailey (1997) identified five primary purposes for work-based learning:
  - a. acquiring knowledge or skills related to employment in particular occupations or industries;
  - b. providing career exploration and planning;
  - c. learning all aspects of an industry;
  - d. Increasing personal and social competence related to work in general and
  - e. enhancing students' motivation and academic achievement.
5. Encourage entrepreneurial thinking: It becomes very important for educational planning and leadership to advise and encourage the business education expert and students to think outside of the bus in such a way that will be geared toward entrepreneurship to make them self-independent and reliable. Encouraging students in business education to imbibe the act of

entrepreneurial thinking will prepare them to be proactive, innovative, and self-resilient in facing challenges, which are essential traits for successful entrepreneurship.

6. Educational Planners and Leadership should assist in promoting interdisciplinary learning and prioritizing strategies: It is not worth saying that business education students fail to acquire interdisciplinary learning because the curriculum is narrowed down to business education alone. Educational planners and leaders need to integrate concepts from other fields, such as economics, social science, and technology; these will allow students to have a holistic understanding.

### **Brief History of Business Education in Nigeria from Yesterday till Date**

The history of business education in Nigeria can be likened to that of a child which was abandoned because the father thought that he already had the type of children he wanted; it was later picked up by a childless man who knew its usefulness, nurtured and groomed it to adulthood **Ekpenyong (1992)**. This according to them, implies that business education did not come about in Nigeria through government effort, but through individual initiatives of few entrepreneurs. Such individuals were quick to realise the importance of business education not only to their personal benefits, but also to national economic growth and development.

Business Education is a type of education which was founded in the last two decades of nineteenth century when some Nigerians in business partnerships with overseas exporters in order to learn simple commercial arithmetic, some book-keeping, business communication and some skills in typing for the purpose of facilitating business transactions. It was believed that children of these early businessmen were sent to learn simple proportion, invoicing, record keeping, profit and loss concepts among others. Hence, this showed evidence that



business education was pioneered by Nigerian entrepreneurs whose intention was to meet the needs of their export markets and the fact that this discipline did not buttress this historical account.

According to Akpan (2018), business education curriculum contains which is as follows:

- Bookkeeping
- Office Practice
- English
- Commerce
- Geography and
- Arithmetic

The above course content of business education of yesterday conferred on the graduates the following responsibilities – Typists, Clerks, Book-keepers, Stewards, etc.

### **Current Status of Business Education in Nigeria**

Today, Nigeria has witnessed tremendous increase in the numbers of institutions offering business education programme. It has spanned across all levels of the Nigerian educational system. At the University level, **Ekpenyong and Nwabuisi (2003)** submitted that University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), blazed the trail in 1965/1966 session, followed by Ahmadu Bello University in 1979 and University of Uyo joined the league of universities offering business education in 1981 with initial name Economic Business Education which later changed to business education in 1983. Other Universities in Nigeria running business education programme even at postgraduate level include: Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, the capital of Anambra State, Nigeria, Ebonyi State University in Abakaliki, the capital of Ebonyi State, Nigeria, University of Benin in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria and Rivers State University of Science and Technology is located in Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State, Nigeria.

Nyesom, Egbule and Okwuokenye (2012) claimed that almost all the Universities in Nigeria offer Business Education at undergraduate level including College of Education, Polytechnics and Secondary Schools. There has also been noticeable innovation in Business globally (e.g. on-line retail shopping) which has led to corresponding innovations in business education programme at tertiary institutions in recent times. Again, the high unemployment rate and the global economic recession which resulted in a change in the dynamics of the country's economy made government and the entire society to confer recognition on (that were once reserved for the so-called prestigious disciplines) business education. According to Ndinechi (2001), the present curriculum of business education programme in Nigerian Universities at B.Sc. Ed. Level include:

- Computer keyboarding
- Business Mathematics
- Office Practice
- Principles of Marketing
- Entrepreneurship Education
- Business Statistics
- Financial Accounting
- Business Communication
- Commerce
- Economics of Production
- Costs and Management Accounting
- Business Finance

According to the New Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standard (CCMAS), Business education has been given a huge preference because it contains a huge number of courses from 100 level to 400 level, by the time the students get to 300 level they will now choose as they now have different specialization which is Accounting Education option, marketing option, Office management option and entrepreneurship option which has not been designed in the BMAS,

after when this students graduate from school having different options and gain the necessary skills, knowledge, etc. it will assist these students to be fully grounded in becoming an employer of labour or fits into the labour market. Therefore, emphasis is not led on computer keyboarding as a replacement to typewriter and as a way of equipping students with skills relevant in computer application packages so that they may be able to key into the electronic business transactions (e-commerce). Generally, the method of teaching and learning were changed from apprenticeship and imitation respectively to more sophisticated teaching methods like team teaching and competency-based training with instructional materials such as projectors, interactive whiteboard, computer etc.

### **Charting the Future of Business Education through Educational Planning and Leadership in Nigeria**

The curriculum of business education programme, CCMAS (Core curriculum and minimum academic standard), has just been redesigned in Year 2023 by the National Universities Commission (NUC) through the Executive Secretary, Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, mni, MFR, FNAL, HLR under the leadership and planner of Professor Peter Okebukola, OFR to reflect the 21st Century realities, in the existing and new disciplines and programmes in the Nigerian University System, the educational planners still needs to continue monitoring and evaluating the progress of the programme so as for the aim and objectives to which the curriculum was designed and addressed will be achieved in the future.

### **Philosophy of Business Education in the CCMAS**

Business Education programme is to provide individuals with relevant knowledge, skills and competencies to be self-reliant and economically self-sufficient for gainful employment, meaningful living, and to contribute to the development of the society. The programme is designed in consonance with the needs of the business community to ensure that

education and training offered are consistent with the competencies for the present and emerging job requirements and opportunities.

### **Objectives of Business Education in the CCMAS**

The objectives of Business Education are to:

1. provide opportunity for practical job preparation or vocational studies in order to make students render effective and efficient services in office, distributive and service occupations.
2. prepare students, based on interest and aptitudes needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it.
3. provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of business and economic system of the nation so as to enable them to participate actively as producers and consumers of goods and services.
4. develop in students the basic awareness of the contribution which business and office employee makes to the nation's economy.
5. develop and improve personal qualities and attitude of students as required in personal and employment situation, ecetera.

With the new curriculum of the programme, Business Education seems to face many challenges which few has been discussed and government needs to address as much as Business Education is important for the entrepreneurial success of students in the society. This is particularly important because in recent times, Nigeria as a nation seems to be facing a major issue in the area of unemployment and underemployment. Many tertiary and secondary school graduates seem to be having difficulty in finding their feet in the labour market and world of work. As a result of increase in unemployment, it, therefore, becomes necessary that students are equipped with knowledge of business which Business education programme provides. The researcher seems to have identify

an increase in unemployment of the country (Nigeria) and provide solution that when students are trained the necessary skills, knowledge, ecetera, students will create employment and also feet in the labour market which will help reduce the unemployment in the country, and when they is proper planning and good leadership of the business Education programme, business education will be among the business schools in the developed countries and also the philosophy and objectives of the programme will be achieved in the future.

In the future, after which the challenges of business education have been addressed, the programme will be a programme that will be run independently, unlike presently that business education is been operated with other field of disciplines such as educational management, school of vocational education, etc

Practical courses such as the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) will be fully funded and closely monitored which will enhance student achieve practical skills and prepare them for advancement after schooling by them they will have been fully prepared to know what the outside school settings is all about, with this philosophy and objectives of the programme to which its designed for will be achieved in the future.

Also, entrepreneurship center will be created and fully equipped and designed, so as to achieve the philosophy and objectives of the programme to which its designed for.

All these aforementioned points can be achieved in the future if the government put more effort in addressing the current challenges of business education, it will enable the programme to achieve more recognition from the society as parents will be willing to ask their ward to study business education as a course of study in higher institution and eradicate the prevailing perception of the people towards the programme as being oriented towards blue-collar occupations rather than white-collar professions and also proud employers will be ready to recruit business education graduates after schooling since the

student has been taught and trained the necessary skills, knowledge to understand in the labour market which will help the country to reduce unemployment in the country, Nigeria.

### **Existing Challenges of Business Education in Nigeria**

- I. **Unqualified and Competent Business Educators:** They seem to have been low recruitment of business education teachers/lecturers because other course of study specialist seems to believe that business education is a course of study that can be taught by anyone since you are educated and obtain a Doctor of Philosophy in others field. But reverse is the case, the business education programme is a programme that needs to be taught by its own specialist that is why the Federal Government established one special-purpose technical teachers' college, National Technical Teachers' College (NTTC) at Yaba in 1969 with foreign technical assistance from USAID and UNESCO. The institution was to provide 1-year and 3-year technical teacher training in the relevant disciplines of vocational technical education, including business education. This was followed up several years later by the establishment of a second Federal technical teachers' college in Gombe in 1977. A few states, though unable to foot the bill for special-purpose technical teachers' colleges, were wise enough to use the facilities in their polytechnics to do so. This explains why business and technical departments were established at the Institute of Technology, Enugu, Kaduna and Calabar Polytechnics about the middle of the 1970s. Inadequate workforce supply has, for a long time, been recognized as a major factor militating against the successful and effective implementation of Business Education programmes at both secondary and tertiary levels of education and which the problem still persist which the federal government needs to look

into in order for business education programme to achieve the objective and purpose for which it is designed.

2. **Planning and designing of Business Education Curriculum:** Business education curriculum seem to be designed by people, professors which are not expert in the field. The first impressive effort to train Nigeria Certificate in Education, (NCE) teachers that would meet the curricula structure and course objectives of JSS and SSS Business Studies programmes was undertaken by the National Board for Technical Education in 1985 National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), (1987). National Commission for Colleges of Education, (NCCE) must be commended for its effort in trying to bring about important innovations in the business education curriculum, especially the bid to introduce new courses such as entrepreneurship and information technology in its revised curriculum, which is scheduled to take off in the 2002/2003 session. University curricula on business teacher education cannot be said to attain the level of commonality available at the NCE level. This is due to the fact that, while the NCCE has produced minimum standards for its programmes, the same cannot be said of the National Universities Commission, (NUC), as far as business education is concerned. The NCCE needs to look into the Curriculum of business education in Nigeria to contain courses that will be practical based and not theoretical base and business education expert should be fully involved when designing the curriculum.
3. **Adapt to the modern Facilities:** Business Education experts seem not to equip and adapt themselves with the modern facilities of the programme. In recent times, there has been a shift of emphasis from that of teaching business subjects through 'chalk and talk' to that of applying the resources provided by

Information and Communication Technology (ICT). It is concerned with systems for the creation, acquisition, processing, storage, retrieval, selection, transformation, dissemination and use of vocal, pictorial, textual and numerical information (Further Education Unit, 1984). Thus, the availability of items such as printers, disk drivers, fax and Internet facilities in business education should be regarded as a move towards the application of advanced information technology. It has become important for Business Education specialist to equip themselves with trainings, seminars, conference to equip themselves with modern technology in the field, so as to start and continue inculcating practical skills and knowledge to the students to which the programme is designed.

4. **Lack of Proper Planners and Leadership of business education:** Planners and Leaders in the field of business education in Nigeria seems to slow on the aspect of planning and foreseeing the future of the programme as a result of this, the programme has become to be more, more complex and it requires expert who are knowledgeable and computerized to handle new technologies in the field. Planners need make provisions for the training of business educator's expert who will be well placed in teaching of the students so that they will be useful after schooling.

### **Conclusion**

Educational planning, leadership and innovation is tantamount to the skill, knowledge of Business Education programme in Nigeria. For Business Education programme to chart into the future effectively, and to achieve the aim and objective to which the programme is designed for, the planners and leadership needs to assist the programme in involving Business Education expert to develop, review and design innovative



Curriculum content in which skill acquisition as well as practical courses, training and retraining of Business Education Educators, Educational Planners and Leadership should assist in promoting interdisciplinary learning and prioritizing strategies and encourage entrepreneurial thinking of both the educators and students. Hence, the emerging issues affecting business education as discussed in the paper needs urgent attention and consideration.

### **Recommendations**

1. Business Education programme should be run independently from other course of study.
2. Practical courses such as the Students Industrial work Experience Scheme (SIWES) should be fully funded and closely monitored by the expert which will enhance student achieve practical skills and prepare them for advancement after schooling.
3. Entrepreneurship centre should be created and fully equipped and designed, so as to achieve the philosophy and objectives of the programme to which its designed for.
4. Government should possess continued support and funding to business education in Nigeria.

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