

## **Quality Business Education as impetus for Sustainable Development**

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### **Abstract**

The study examined the strategies for enhancing sustainable development quality business education programme. The paper described the nature and goals of business education. The study also conceptualized sustainable and highlighted the impediment to a functional business education programme for boosting sustainable development. Comprehensively the paper identified the role of quality business education in boosting sustainable development to includes motivation and training of personnel towards improved efficiencies as well promotion of viable and sustainable. The paper highlighted the following, among others as strategies for enhancing sustainable development through quality business education: institution flexible, workable and adaptable programme, developing and implementing a designed curriculum suitable for innovation as well as strengthening research, innovation and development. Finally the paper recommends that business education programme should be adequately so that it can serve as effective impetus for sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Business Education, Sustainable Development, Quality, Impetus

### **Introduction**

Sustainable development is basis of any meaningful development in contemporary society and it is pivotal to the survival and future of any countries. One of the major pillars of sustainable development is Business Education. Business education as an integral part of vocational education according to Olaniyan and Titiloye (2013) is a well-known programme that is capable of seeing the dream of the federal government through in the areas of creating wealth, generating employment, reducing and re-orienting values for sustainable development. Olaniyan and Titiloye (2013) maintained that if business education is adequately funded at the various levels of education, all other segment of the economy will be greatly improved. Thus business education exposes one to various business opportunities that are capable of bringing about sustainable economic and national development. Business education embraces entrepreneurship, basic education, business environment and vocational practice, the adjustment and development of the individual group and national potentialities. Aliyu (2013) saw business education as education for the development of skills/competencies, attitude and attributes which are necessary for the efficiency of the economic system. Utoware and Edionwe (2014) maintained the business education equips the youth with certain economic and business concept as a vehicle for understanding and analyzing of the world in which they live. Etonyeaku (2013) stated that in this era of globalization, business education has contributed a lot in the economic development of every nation in the areas of provision of employment, accountability etc. and has become an indispensable tool for development. Anao (2012) opined that business education is an educational process or context that has as its primary aims, the preparation of

people for roles like entrepreneurs, employers and employees in the enterprises. That is to say business education provides one with knowledge and skills which hold prospect of gainful exploitation in the context of business enterprises. Thus business education makes one a job creator rather than job seeker.

Business education is an educational programme that prepares the individual for the world of work as a teacher, office employee or to be self-employed. Business education prepares its graduates for employment in the workplace, typical existing business enterprises as well as the acquisition of knowledge relevant to employment. The business education programme basically equips the individual with necessary skills and abilities with the practical acquisition and application of these necessary basic skills for real life situations. Anao in Ekpenyong and Ojo (2018), stated the major goals of business education, amongst other, to include:

- 32 Adopting the various business concepts acquired in class to real life situations
- 33 Acquiring necessary skills and competencies required for the performance of basic business jobs which includes taking simple administrative decisions and dealing with correspondences
- 34 Keeping simple records of financial and other transactions in the office, and
- 35 Playing productive roles in a free enterprise economy.

Business education requires the use of expensive equipment and machines as well as specialized and skilled personnel. It is, therefore, capital intensive. Funding is a major obstacle to the quality, growth and progress of business education programme in Nigerian university (Ilo, 2014). According to Okojie (2013), funding affects the facilities to be provided for effective teaching, learning and research activities. The quantity and the quality to be provided to make for a conducive learning environment is dependent on the volume of financial resources made available to the programme, of course, it also depends on the management of such resources. Funding affect the provision of laboratories, studios, theatres and workshops. The number, size and quality of classrooms, lecture theatres are all dependent on fund availability; these in turn affect class size, cohort size and predict student performance. Funding affects the type of teaching staff that can be engaged to undertake teaching and it definitely affects student performance. Funding has effect on the recruitment level, the quality of staff, training and retention of staff.

Hornby (2015) defined quality as the standard of something when compared to other things like it; how good or bad something is or a high standard or level. Quality in education means the type of education which agrees with the national education, norms and philosophy. It is that education system which consciously articulates how education should be practiced and run in accordance with the philosophy. Such quality education specifies quite clearly the contents. Hence quality in education conveys the idea of attainment of prescribed standards. And so quality education suggests a national standard and ensuring that such standards are strictly adhered to. Accordingly, the standard are usually publicly set criteria to which activities of product must conform so as to be considered valuable. Valuable teaching is not easy task because it requires a lot of physical and mental efforts.

Onyeachu (2018) submitted that quality is anything everyone consider good and want to have. In line or relevance, validity, functionalism and efficiency of education system in the achievement of national goals and objectives. From the above definitions, one can conclude that quality is something that is essential which every individual of the society consider good and strives to possess for effective utilization.

According to Maduewesi and Oyeachu (2013), the heart of education is quality. Similarly Ogunribido (2014) observed that the central issues in the production of any product be it material or human is the quality. This is due to the fact the quality of a product determines the extent to which the functionality and performance of the product meets the expectation of the users. According to Lockyer in Ogunribido (2014), the quality of a product measures the extent to which the producer conforms to the procedures laid down for its production. Umoru (2016), maintained that quality is related not only to profitability, but also to growth, the other key dimension of business performance through the impact of qualitative in perceived value. The quality of graduates could be measured by how well they have been prepared for life and for service to society in various spheres of human endeavor. Assuring the quality of educational provision is a fundamental aspect of gaining and maintaining credibility for programmes, institutions and national systems of higher education worldwide. Maduewesi and Oyeachu (2013) defined quality assurance as the practice of managing the way students are trained and instructions given to make sure they are at a high standard. Adegbesan (2014) opined that instruction are given to make sure they are kept at a high standard. He also opined that quality assurance is related to accountability both of which are concerned with maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational systems and services in relation to the contexts of their mission and their stated objectives. Education being a veritable tools for national development, higher education in Nigeria needs to be managed in such a way that quality is assured. In recent times, the quality of graduates in our tertiary institutions has been questioned. Among the issues in question are the standard of various programmes in business education, quality of teachers and students, problem of adequate funding and management of school resources (Adedeji, 2017). Okeke (2012) explained that in order to achieve qualitative knowledge in Business Education Programmes, the training centers must ensure that the following skills are required:

- Technical skills
- Business management skills
- Personal entrepreneurial skills
- Innovative skills
- Self-motivation
- Financial resources skills
- Marketing skills.

Quality in business education has to do with the quality input and output entirety. Quality in education, according to Nwanna (2015) refers to the scale input in the form of funds, equipment facilities, teacher and pupils alike and to the facilities acceptable, desirable, beneficial, efficient and effective from the point of view of the government, society, private agencies and stakeholders.

Igwe (2017) explained quality in higher education to cut across policy formulation implementation of educational process covering the scope of curriculum teaching/learning process, resources and facilities, students and teachers environment again, Igwe (2017) perceives quality in education as ‘‘better school environment, qualified teachers and adequate supply of textbooks and other resources relevance social needs. Quality is therefore considered as the baseline standard in education which can be measured on a scale of preference, hence quality is an expression of standard or the mean by which a certain set of standards in education can be achieved (Maduewesi, 2013).

### **Concept of Sustainable Development**

National development comprises the general level of efficiency attained in a nation’s production process as it affects output, real income and standard of living. National development according to Anao (2012), fall within four broad facts namely: economic system, education/technological state, legal/political framework and socio-cultural setting. Thus, the process of national development is therefore the pursuit of a collective enhancement in all the four spectrums of activity. Therefore there is need to improve the quality of human factor to advance in knowledge and diffuse in new ideas and objectives to stop economic backwardness and embrace economic development for self- sufficiency and global sustainable development.

Sustainability on the other hand is the practice of maintaining process of productivity indefinitely- natural or human made, by replacing resources used with resources of equal or greater value without degrading or endangering natural biotic systems. Sustainable development according to Hasna (2014) is concerned with the carrying capacity of natural system with social, political and economic challenges faced needs of the present and not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

### **Objectives/Features of Sustainable Development**

Ishta (2013) outlined the following as objectives/features of sustainable development

- (1) To respect and care for all forms of life.
- (2) To improve the quality of human life
- (3) To conserve the earth’s vitality and diversity
- (4) To minimize the depletion of natural resources
- (5) To change personal attitudes and practice towards the environment.
- (6) To enable the communities care for their own environment.
- (7) To reduce poverty
- (8) To improve and promote good governance.
- (9) To encourage urban redesign.

Looking at the concepts of business education and national development, it implies that there is relationship between the two (that is business education and national development are positively correlated). Thus, there is a minimum level of education of a nation’s citizens that will guarantee a reasonable high level of development.

## **Challenges of Business Education**

The programme is confronted with a lot of challenges which brought a setback in the attainment of its objectives. These challenges have not enabled Nigerians to enjoy the benefits of this programme as expected. Some of the challenges have been pointed out by eminent scholar such as Aiyeduso (2014), Osuala (2012) and they include:

1. Poor funding by government and Non- governmental organisations.
2. Poor or ineffective planning, supervision, information and evaluation of the programme across board.
3. Inadequate teaching materials, equipment and infrastructural facilities.
4. The challenges poses on globalization, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have effect on curriculum, methodology, facilities, staff and equipment.
5. Inadequate qualified teachers and instructors as well as supporting staff at all levels.
6. High level of corruption and very poor maintenance culture in the system.

## **Roles of Quality Business Education in Sustainable Development**

1. Adequate funding and implementation of business education programme will bring about viable and sustainable economy.
2. Makes possible the procurement of modern teaching facilities possible for update of curriculum instruction and delivery.
3. Makes motivation and training of manpower possible thereby ensuring up-to-date delivery.
4. Makes the products of business educations viable in modern office, business and technological settings.

Today, there are fundamentally three types of nations: the non-industrialized, the industrializing and the industrialized (Okojie, 2013). Nigeria and other sub-Saharas African nations are the non-industrialized nations of the world. Human beings according to Ogbimi, (2013), acquire competencies and all capabilities through learning''. The higher the intensity of learning, the higher is the rate of progress and the faster it takes to achieve a particular target. Education and training, therefore, promote rapid development because they are high intensity learning processes. Education and training are two distinct aspects of personnel development process which a wise nation must emphasize to achieve rapid growth and development (Okojie 2013).

The classification of nation is not unconnected with the seriousness and importance these nations attach to the twin issues of education and training. Whereas education on the one hand equips with theoretical principles to provide theoretical solutions to present and future problems, it also enhances character development and prepares one for eventual acquisition of skills. Training on the other hand, equips with the skills and competencies to perform specific tasks or a series of tasks. Training prepares people for work and life. Skills are largely acquired in a working environment and competencies are acquired through improvement of awareness, knowledge and skills. The question to ask according to Okojie (2013), and which has been of concern to many stakeholders is whether the youths/graduates of our universities are actually benefiting from a robust education and training programmes to prepare them for work and life.

In today's world, knowledge is valued as the determinant and driver of economic growth, development and competitiveness, and the university education is the major source of providing the required knowledge that will help generate and accelerate knowledge flow for modern based economies. The general growth and development of any given nation are functions of quality of its human resources produced mainly by the system (Ayo-Sobowale and Akinyemi 2012). For these reasons, individuals, firms, corporate organisations and government are faced with investment decisions on regular basis. The concern for quality in university education in Nigeria is most desirable for reasons that are obvious above. University education is the nation's hope for national development.

In Nigeria, university education is the focal point of higher education. It is the type of education given to individuals after secondary level of education which consists of education and other disciplines of study. The Federal Ministry of Education (2008), reveal that vision of the Nigerian higher (tertiary) education system has the following expectations:

1. Relevance and responsiveness to the need of the society
2. Adequacy in quantity and quality with a well-motivated, highly skilled and qualified staff whose products are knowledgeable, technically competent and adequately prepared for fulfilled life and for positive contribution in the society.

### **Strategies for Enhancing Sustainable Development through Quality Business Education**

The vision statement of NPE(2013) at secondary and tertiary levels is to provide trained manpower in applied science, technology (Ghouri, Khan, Malik, & Razzaq, 2012) and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels; provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for commercial and economic development and to give training and impart necessary skills to individual who shall be self- dependent economically. At the tertiary level, graduates are expected to acquire both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable them to be self- dependent and useful members of the society. To meet the policy goals of NPE, and the challenges facing the business education in Nigeria, Business Education should adhere to the following strategies:

- 1 **Institute Flexible, Workable and Adaptable Programme:** For Business Education to address the technological changes currently taking place worldwide, there should be readiness to amend and revise some of its curricula where necessary. Business education should strive to adopt strategies to produce graduates who are innovative and adaptable to changes in the world of technology. Business Education graduates should be able to adapt to the dynamic technologies. Effective strategies can be developed at all administrative and decision levels for the purposes of maintaining or improving Business Education quality. Strategies may need to vary by particular social and economic context and by the developmental level of the targeted education institutions. Such conditions do no eliminate the possibility of useful national policies related to quality. (Okolocha 2012).
- 2 **Developing and implementing a well- Designed Curriculum Suitable for Innovation:** Perhaps one of the simplest and least expensive actions that could be taken

over the next decade to improve education quality is to ensure that all teachers have and know how to use a well- designed curriculum and correlative textbook for what they teach. One approach to the implementation and coordination of new curricula and related changes is through a national instructional strategy prepared policy made in education included would be a set of guidelines and action plans related to the use of instructional time , development of instructional materials, and instructional support roles. (David & Don in Mark (2013).

- 3 **Strengthening Research, Innovations and Development:** Research is ahead of practice. Although much is now known about conditions and factors that build and sustain quality education, education policies and practice are too rarely informed by the insight research can bring. National research centers can provide leadership in mapping and implementing research and development programs to improve education quality. They can also disseminate information on strategic implication of existing research and exemplar practices on education quality, assist in developing school- level instruments to monitor school quality, and participate in development of national and cross- national efforts to improve education indicators.

In the light of the above, it becomes imperative to propose the following as suggested alternative funding strategies for quality business education programme In Nigerian institutions:

1. **Endowment Funds/Donations:** Many institutions of higher learning do establish endowment funds where rich citizens assist in the development of quality education. According to Akangbou (2016), usually prominent citizens donate money to the institutions to be held in their honour in perpetuity. The intention is for the donor' name to be immortalized in the institutions.
2. **Tuition Fees:** Universities receive a reasonable proportion of their revenue through student' fees, especially with the establishment of Satellite/External campuses all over the place (Odekunle, 2015). Adeyemi and Osunade (2015) remarked that the part-time programmes are offered on a 'for-profit' basis (that is, profit-making venture) which help to boost the financial base of tertiary institutions. The proponents of tuition fees believe that it is a means of generating income for the university and at the same time makes the university to be more responsive to students' needs.
3. **Undertake Researches, Contracts and Consultancy Services:** Institutions of higher learning can also undertake researches which can be used by the institutions. Consultancy services can also be undertaken by the institutions and the proceeds from these used to fund the institutions.
4. **Private Contributors:** Parastatals, big firms, investors in the country, all should be intimated of the need to help fund our higher education so as to have both quantity and quality education. In this awareness campaign, the public should be made to know the gains of education in general to the individuals and to the nation at large.
5. **Alumni Association:** The old students' of an institution are usually very proud to remember their Alma Mata. Old students should be recongnized and invited from time to time. The institutions should keep track of their old student to invite them from time to time.

## **Conclusion**

If the federal government is serious with achieving sustainable development through its policy of transformation agenda, she will not hesitate in equipping and funding business education because the programme is a sine qua non to education, economic, political, technology and social development. As part of funding strategies, it is very important to generate more fund internally to achieve qualitative education than depending on the level of government under-funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, there is the need to introduce the alternative funding strategies for quality business education programme and also encouraging private sector participation in business education programme which will also provide additional resources for the programme.

## **Recommendations**

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

- 1.0 Business education and other programmes of higher institutions should endeavor to sell the products of their researches and the available expertise (in form services) through competitive project bidding and consultancy as fund generating strategy.
- 2.0 Business education and other programmes of higher institutions should also strive to explore joint-venture participation with private sector operatives in diverse areas of endeavor.
- 3.0 Business education should embark on aggressive fund-raising campaigns with greater private sector participation in the form of private support and endowment funds.
- 4.0 Business Education should develop a strong and vibrant relation with their alumni/alumnae within and outside the country by organizing Home-coming programmes on annual basis to source for funds from the alumni.
- 5.0 During annual budgetary allocation, amount that will be budgeted for business education should be separated from general education for adequate utilization and accountability
- 6.0 Business educators as well as policy makers as the prime movers of innovation should always come together during programme planning in order to evolve the right prescriptions at all time.
- 7.0 There should be annual convention of business educators as an important tool for pursuing and harnessing the programme objectives.



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