
HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH EFFECTIVE FUNDING OF BUSINESS EDUCATION AMIDST GLOBAL PANDEMIC AND SECURITY CHALLENGES; A REVIEW

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Abstract

This paper explored the role of human capacity through funding of business education for sustainable development. The paper disclosed that the ability of education to promote economic growth depends on its relevance to the needs, values and aspirations of the society it is meant to serve. This implies that education should impact appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies needed by the society in order for the products of education to contribute meaningfully to economic development. The paper concluded that financing business education is a formidable tool for sustainable development in Nigeria via strengthening human capacity because it provides its recipients with the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies that are needed for sustainable development. Finally, the challenges of business education were identified and a number of recommendations made to tackle them.

Keywords: Human Capacity, Business Education, Economic growth, Sustainable development, Global Pandemic, National Insecurity.

Background of the Study

Human capacity building is the process by which individuals, organizations and societies develop abilities to perform functions, solve problems, set and achieve goals. The issue of National development has never been attained without harmonizing the various inherent capacities of a people, identification, development and utilization of the various human capacities of the people for sustainable development. Any development process visualized in its simplest or broadest context must meet the expectations of the people in order to enhance their standard of living and helping to contribute to national development. The United Nation Development Program (UNDP) (2003) defined human capacity building to cover human resource development and the strengthening of managerial system, institutional development that involves community participatory

creation of an enabling environment. In relating human capacity building to organizational human resource development. Okorie (2003) refers the scenario as the effective tool for management of people at work in an organization, giving them leverage opportunities of being more productive and have job satisfaction.

Human knowledge and skills are known as Human Capacity. Human capacity is the core of intellectual capacity that drive business performance. People are the organization's greatest assets, providing the intellectual capacity that drives differentiation and value added. Therefore, human capacity building as a human development strategy must aim at improving skills for carrying out key functions, solving problems, defining and achieving objectives and focusing on building the individual's knowledge base, skills, attitudes, competencies, abilities while at the

same vein, expanding and strengthening network of individuals and institutions by creating a pool of talents which will potentially and significantly improve sustainable development practices. Westphalen (2009) said human capacity can be defined strictly within an economic context as production factor, and Koednok (2011) described the skills and knowledge that individuals draw upon to generate outputs of value, such as innovation and productivity in job performance. However, Rephann et. al. (2009) defined human capacity as the stock of knowledge and skills embodied in labour as a result of training and education that improves labour productivity. Papadimitriou (2011) affirmed that human capacity is investing in the skills and knowledge that faculty and staff needs in order to be outstanding teachers, scholars, innovators and leaders. Human capacity is the intangible factor of the production that brings human intellect, skills and competencies in the production and provision of goods and services. In summary, human capacity represents individual's knowledge and skills. It is not owned by the organization but it can be rented; it is in the minds of individuals (individual property) and finally, it goes with the individual (Sharabati and Nour, 2013).

Education is the systematic way of assisting individuals to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and habits. According to Meghna (2019), it is a power driver of development. Stressing the role of education Meghna further pointed out. That an educated society facilitates better development programme than an illiterate one, adding that education improves productivity and prosperity. Education not only contributes towards the growth of the individual but also

the society as a whole. Ajash and Kummer (2018) stated that education is an important input for the growth of a person. According to them, it plays a major role in capital formation which connects the productive part of the country, if is in recognition of the pivotal role of education that the Federal Government of Nigeria, in her National policy on education declared that education is an instrument per-excellence for effective national development. In Nigeria, government at the three tiers of governance, corporate bodies, philanthropists, donor agencies and even religious organizations have and art continuing to make enormous contributions towards the growth of education in the country. Owing to growing interest and the demand for education by children, youths, parents, communities, industries and commercial houses, the number of educational institutions has increased tremendously in Nigeria in recent years. For example, an NUC report as at August 2017 indicated that there was a total of 153 accredited universities in Nigeria, comprising 40 owned by the federal government, 45 owned by the states government and 68 owned by the private sector. As at January, 2020, another report revealed that the number of universities has risen to 174. This is made up of 49 federal universities, 59 states universities and 79 universities privately owned. However, the official data from NUC as at 3rd August, 2022, indicates that there are 49 Federal Universities, 49 State owned Universities and 111 Private Universities. (<http://www.naija homebased.com>).

Apart from the steady rapid growth in University education, Polytechnics and Colleges of education are not left out in the continuous expansion of tertiary education in Nigeria. The rest of the paper is structured as

follows: Apart from the Introduction which gave the general background for the paper, section two enumerates Tertiary Institutions offering Business Education in Nigeria. In section three, salient terms were reviewed. Section four delved into Global Pandemic and National Security were discussed. The role of business education in sustainable development was elaborated in section five. The paper closes with conclusion and recommendations

Profile/Enumerated of Tertiary Institutions Offering Business Education in Nigeria

Recent reports revealed that presently there are 132 polytechnics that are duly accredited. Of this number, 29 are owned by the Federal Government, 48 by the states and 55 privately owned. The report also indicated that there are 152 Colleges of Education in the country. Federal government owned 27, states owned 54 and 82 privately owned (Myschoolgist, 2022). The above account is to confirm the fact that on the whole, our education system is on a steady rise quantitatively. The challenge however lies on whether the same thing could be said about the quality. The quality of education is measured in terms of its utility, that is, the extent to which the knowledge, skills, attitudes, habits and beliefs acquired from education can improve the wellbeing of its recipient in particular and as well advance the wellbeing of society. For any education system to achieve this, the programme should be designed to meet the current needs, aspirations and values of the society it is meant to serve. Effective funding is the wheel upon which an educational programme glides or moves to be able to fulfill its objectives. Fund enables the supply of all faculty and facilities requires for education to aid development. The focus of this paper

therefore is to examine how human capacity building via funding business education can be used as an effective tool for sustainable development.

Conceptual Review of Salient Terms

Capacity Building

UNDP (2003) defined capacity building to cover human resource development and the strengthening of managerial system, institutional development that involves community participation and creation of an enabling environment. Capacity building in the context of development implies a dynamic process which enables individual agencies to develop the critical social and technical capacities to identify and analyze problem as well as proffer solution to them. Azikwe (2006) cited in Azikwe (2008) defined capacity building as the process by which an individual's, irrespective of sex, are equipped with skills and knowledge they need to perform effectively and efficiently in their different callings. Azikwe also added that capacity building could also be defined as the ability that enable people to make use of their creative potentials, intellectuals' capacities and leadership abilities for personal as well as organisational growth and development. Capacity building therefore means planning for people to acquire knowledge and advanced skills that are critical to the organizational growth, its standard of living and individual's empowerment.

The human aspect of capacity building relates to the stock of trained, skilled and productive personnel which can perform key tasks required for an Institution or organization to achieve its corporate goals or for a country to achieve its development objectives (Oshionebo, 2004). Building human capacity could be accomplished through training and

education provided by Schools, Colleges, Universities and professional training and management institutions. Education/training is being regarded increasingly as the catalyst for social development and economic transformation (oshionebo, 2002). There is no doubt that the development of any organization would revolve around its ability to train, retrain and educate its people. However, organization which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its personnel and to utilize them effectively in the organizational economy will be unable to develop anything else (Harbison, 2005).

Concept of Business Education

Osuala in Azuka and Nwosu (2018) defined Business Education as an essential part of the preparation of youths for life and living. Osuala later saw business education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: Office Education: A vocational programme of office careers through initial refresher and upgrading education and General Business Education - A programme to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the service of the business world.

Igwe (2017) defined business education as a subject of vocational education which provides the recipient with skills, competencies, attitude and general knowledge to enable the individuals live, function, imbibe and appreciate the present. Furthermore, Akaeze (2014) described business education as that which equips its recipients with creative skills that would make them to perform well as entrepreneurs. Also, Abdullahi in Akaeze (2014) defined business education as an aspect of total educational programme which provides the recipient with

knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform well in the business world as a producer or consumer of goods and services. The National Open University of Nigeria (2008) also defined business education as an aspect of vocational education that equips people with necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in business world either for job occupation or self-employment.

From the various definitions of business education enumerated above it is clear that business education is concerned with the acquisition of skills, competencies, knowledge, attitude and creativity for personal adjustment in society as an employer, employee, a producer or a consumer of goods and services. Several definitions of business education exist as it encompasses knowledge, attitudes and skills needed by all citizens in order to effectively manage their personal business and economic system and advancement in a broad range of business careers (Amesi; Akpomi & Okwuanaso, 2014). In this vain, it is necessary to state that business education means education for business or training skills, which are required in business offices and clerical occupation. To this effect, it implies that financing is very necessary in business education as no programmes or department can exist without funds. According to Adegbenjo (2007), in Nigeria, the major source of institution funds is the government. These are in the forms of allocation from government or inform of taxes like the Education Trust Fund (ETF) and Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND). The government carries the primary responsibility of funding education, including vocational education which business education is part of it. Despite this, the

government has not provided adequate funds from its annual budgetary allocation to run the institutions efficiently. This is usually attributed to the economic recession in the country. Vocational education which business education is embedded suffers more in the sense that the necessary equipment, machines, and materials needed have to be imported for teaching, learning and research (Akpomi & Amesi, 2013).

Financing can be defined in several ways by several authors in the field of education. The word financing/funding is the act of providing resources, usually in form of money or other values such as effort or time (sweat equity), for a project, a person, a business, or any other private or public institutions. The process of soliciting and gathering finance is known as financing/fund raising which is all about providing financial resources to finance a need, programme, or project (Funding, 2010). In general, the term finance/fund is used when a firm fills the need for cash from its own internal reserves, and the term 'financing' is used when the need is filled from external or borrowed money. It can also be seen as grant of authority to an agency, department, or unit to incur monetary obligations and to pay for them. In institution, funds are injected into the system as capital by the government and are not usually taken as loans by borrowers, rather they are used for investment or procurement of facilities into the institution, which in turn will be allocated to programmes within the faculty. Financing/funding such as donations, subsidies, and grants that have no direct requirement for return of investment are described as "soft financing/funding" or "crowd financing/funding".

Financing/funding that facilitates the exchange of equity ownership in an organization or institution for capital investment via an online funding portal is known as "equity crowd funding" (Amesi, 2010).

Covid-19 Global Pandemic and National Insecurity

Corona-virus diseases 2019 (Covid-19) global pandemic is a mysterious new illness caused by a novel corona virus called severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-Cov-2) which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China where officials attempt to contain the virus. Soon after, new cases of deaths related to covi-19 in December to January 2020 emanated. The virus spreads cases multiply in various continents which led to the world shut down; countries seal borders, sport teams cancel seasons, schools closed and employees go home, people started wearing face masks and social distancing was effected in order to contain the spread of the pandemic. This affected all segments and sectors of the nation's economy, particularly Nigeria and third world countries, which further plunged world economy into serious economic recession. The impact of covid-19 resulted to the following, to mention but few:

Declining Consumption

Declining Investment

Increasing Government Expenditure

Declining Net Exports

Insecurity in Nigeria has become a constant national embarrassment, wherein the northern part of the country has developed to theatre of wars, forcing more herders southward into the country's Middle Belt and aggravating herder farmer tension in affected

regions. The region's abysmal literacy level, unskilled labour force, ungoverned spaces, overstretched poverty indicators, expanse of porous border and intense competition over land and water between predominantly Fulani herders and mostly Hausa farmers are all the needed catalyst for insurgency, armed banditry, budding jihadist activities, kidnapping and other violent crimes. Insecurity does not only pose threats to the lives and properties of citizens, but arrest the overall developments of a nation. Peace and stability have been the core objective of most nations in the world over the years, security challenges have continued to remain a major setback to achieving meaningful socio-economic development in most African countries including Nigeria. The Nigerian governments have spent over 462 trillion on national security over the past five years. The government's effort to bring the menace to a standstill to avoid total possible breakdown of the law and order seems not to have yielded the desired result.

Business Education and Sustainable Development

In order to clearly explain the concept of sustainable development, it is important to define, first the terms, "sustainable" and "development". According to the Oxford Dictionary of English, sustain means to strengthen or support physically or mentally, cause to continue for an extended period or without interruption. On the other hand, it defined development as a specified state of growth or advancement. Therefore, putting the two meanings of sustainable and development together, sustainable development implies a continuous state of growth or advancement for an extended period. Sustainable development has also

been defined as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Data Revolution World, 2020). It is important to emphasize here that sustainable development stems from the present to project the future. The desired result of sustainable development is a state of human living conditions in society and the use of resources to meet human needs while preserving the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Business Education has been defined as an aspect of the educational programme that prepares the individual to acquire relevant skills that are needed for personal use or for employment or for managing business. Since one of the goals of business education, according to the NPE (2014) is to provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development, it then means that business education is imperative for sustainable development in any society.

Competencies Required in Business Education for Sustainable Economic Development

These competencies are as follows:

Accounting Competence

' Business Law Competence

Career Development Competence

Communication Competence

Computation Competence

Economic and personal finance Competence

Entrepreneurship Competence

Information Technology Competence

Management Competence

Marketing Competence

Policy statement number 71 of the Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education identified competencies provided

by Business Education as critical element for sustainable development. These include:

Accounting Competence: According to the policy statement, knowledge of accounting enables the individual manage organizations' financial resources, understand how accounting procedures can be applied to decisions about planning, - organizing, and allocating personnel and financial resources.

Business Law Competence: Business Law establishes business relationships among business partners and clients. The statement expressed believe in ability of skill in business law to assist the business professional to analyze the relationship between ethics and the law in conducting of business in the national and international market place; understand the laws affecting businesses, families and individual consumers.

Career Development Competence: Business education is a life-long education.

In Nigeria, it begins at the junior secondary school where it is referred to as a pre-vocational elective, as provided for in the National policy in Education. According to Azuka and Nwosu (2018), the aims of business education at the junior secondary school, include:

- To furnish exploratory experience.
- To contribute to the guidance programme.
- To give students elementary business knowledge and simple business skills that he can use in his personal affairs.
- To contribute to consumer business knowledge and socio-economic understanding of all students.
- To form a foundation for study of advanced business subjects.

It can be seen from the aims outlined above that business education at the junior

secondary school level is designed to build the needed foundation for the development of life-long careers in the different fields of business as the individual progresses in academics through the senior secondary school to the tertiary levels - college of education, polytechnics and university. In this regard, the commission for business education further believes that business education develops occupational competence for obtaining business positions and advancing in business careers; understand the ever-evolving requirements of • the workplace and the relationship of life - long learning to career success.

Communication Competence:

Communication is an essential element of human interactions. Business education enables the recipient to master oral and written communication skills. Communication skill, according to the commission enables the individual to interact effectively with people in the workplace and in society; understand the development of technology and processing skills for acquiring, interpreting, evaluating and managing information. Ability to manage information is essential for sustainable development.

Computation Competence: The commission also believes that business education offers computation skills. This enables the individuals to solve mathematical problems, analyze and interpret data, apply sound decision-making skills in business.

Economic and personal finance

Competence: Use of knowledge of economy and economic systems to manage the individual's roles as an informed citizen, and wise consumer and producer of goods and services; understand how to effectively

manage personal finance, is essential for sustainable development.

Entrepreneurship Competence: According to the commission, entrepreneurship competence provided by business education enables the individual appreciate the importance of responding to new business opportunities in domestic and international business environments; understand that entrepreneurship integrates the other areas of business, accounting, finance, marketing, management and the legal and economic environments in which a new venture operates. Entrepreneurship education is highly needed in Nigeria in general now than ever before. This is so because of the ever-growing army of unemployed youths, most of whom are graduates of the different levels of our educational system. It has been argued that many university graduates are simply not employable because they lack the requisite competence needed for employment. Besides this, the increasing number of young people being churned out from our tertiary institutions is more than the present state of the nation's economy can absorb -hence the growing advocate for the introduction of entrepreneurship education in the school curriculum. For instance, Okoli (2010) advocated that for business education to achieve its vision and mission the curriculum developers should integrate entrepreneurship education in the curriculum and insist that all tertiary institutions in Nigeria should include it in their programmes. Lending his voice on the need for entrepreneurship education as a means of curbing graduate unemployment and its attendant consequences, Oduma (2012) pointed out that entrepreneurship abilities and skills have to do with effective contribution to economic activities leading to self -

employment and job creation as well. He emphasized that the very essence of entrepreneurship education is to provide viable entrepreneurs who can use their spirit of initiative and innovation to invent business and manage same to escape the dangers of unemployment. Business education, as a leader in entrepreneurship education in Nigeria contributes meaningfully to sustainable development.

Information Technology (IT) Competence:

The commission - believes that through business education Information Technology (IT) skills can be acquired. According to them applying technology to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate situations at home, school and work and then to solve problems and complete task efficiently and effectively; understand that Information Technology (IT) is an information gathering, information organizing and problem solving tool that supports every discipline are Information Technology (IT) skills acquired through business education.

Management Competence: This aspect of business education enables the individual analyze the organization of a business in the global marketplace; understand various management theories, basic management functions and relationships. By so doing business education develops low and high-level managers who possess abilities to manage personal business and or corporations thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Marketing Competence: It is also believed that by acquiring marketing skills the individual will be able to describe the element, design, and purposes of a marketing plan;

understand the business functions that directly relates to marketing activities.

These content areas of business education, according to the commission are not isolated. Understanding their interrelatedness enables the individual use the content for creating and managing information, solving problems and making decisions. In addition, business education provides the individual with some value-added skills; such as creative skills, innovative skills, self-management skills; human relations, team work and leadership skills. Business education goes far beyond mastery of content but adds value because of the essential skills that it impacts to the individual. In supporting the role business education plays, Ahmed and Adamu (2019) pointed out that business education is a dynamic field of study geared towards preparing youth and adults for and about business. They added that business education makes positive impact on the development of human resources, productivity and economic growth. Ahmed and Adamu (2019) concluded that to achieve sustainable development attention should be paid to strengthening the bridge between education, schooling and preparation for the world of work with respect to improving vocational education of which business education is inclusive.

Financing Business Education

A number of areas that requires financing/funding have enumerated in literature. This paper enunciates selected components of business education that should be effectively financed. For adequate development of any nation, a lot of finance/funds need to be pumped into business education programme to achieve desired result. Inadequate financing/funding

is one of the constraints on business education as it has made the programme to suffer some serious problems that has limited its effective contribution to the nation. These problems according to Amesi (2010) and Akpomi (2013), includes poor infrastructures, workshop, equipment, studio, inadequacies of human and material resources and so on. Unfortunately, such funds are not provided by either the government or the private sector. Business education is very important and necessary to all aspect of national development, be it economic, social and political as the case may be. The following aspects of business education programmes should be adequately financed or funded in order to fulfill the aims of business education:

Industrial Training (IT): Students of business education needs to go on industrial attachment and payment of allowance to the students needs to be funded, also fund need to be allocated to the lecturers going on to inspect the students. This is the only way industrial training could be taken seriously by both students and lecturers (Alasa, 2005).

Educational Technology: This is a course taken by the business education students and it is otherwise known as instructional materials in this context. Thus, for learning to be effective and efficient, investment should be made on acquiring educational technology equipment and materials for sustainable development (Davies & Amesi, 2009).

Qualified Personnel: One of the problems facing business education is that of shortage of qualified teachers, instructors, lecturers and workshop attendants. There are many schools like colleges of education and polytechnic with qualified business teachers,

efforts should be made at training more business teachers. Remuneration should be added to business employed teachers, lecturers and instructors in the university system.

Secretarial Studies Studio: This is a major problem facing business education programmes as there is barely well-equipped studio with adequate computer, and information and communication technology gadgets for teaching and learning to take place. Studio should be provided and funded in business education for adequate sustainable development (Amesi & Akpomi, 2014).

Equipment: This is also a problem as learners learn without equipment, a typical example is a course titled business machines. This course is often time taken without the learners filling and touching the necessary equipment meant to be used in teaching them, as a result, equipment should be provided and funded in all our institutions that offers business education programmes within the Niger Delta (Amesi & Akpomi, 2014).

Constraints in Financing Business Education Programmes

In the context of financing scarcity, business education has to provide clear evidence of both economic and social returns. Such evidence should be seen in the learner's sustainable development and empowerment. In most countries which Nigeria is a part, such evidence is lacking thereby posing challenges to business education and leading to questioning business education programmes ability in overcoming the incidents in the educational system to sustainable development both economically and socially. According to Ibeneme (2005)

and Amesi (2010), the following can be sources or said to be financial setbacks in business education programmes:

- Lack of specific budgetary allocation.
- Lack of understanding of the difference between business education and general education by both government and individual.
- Mismanagement of available financial and material resources meant for business education programmes.
- Diversion of International Donor Assistance Funds, equipment and materials.
- Unfavourable government policies which negates effective financing of business education programmes.
- Headship of Business Education Programmes (HBEP) in institutions by non-business education programmes experts who do not understand the needs and demands of business education programmes. If these are looked into, the constraint in financing business education programmes will be minimized or reduced.

Conclusion and Recommendation

As far as the formal sector is concerned, the average products of Nigeria educational programme are basically unemployable because they lack the skills needed by employers of labour (Uddin and Uddin, 2013). This situation has resulted in the ever-increasing army of unemployed youths on the streets of our urban areas and villages with the consequent rise in crime wave in our society today. A situation like this does not create room for sustainable development in any society. In Nigeria, business education is a veritable tool for bridging the unemployment gap. This is because business education

equips youth and adults with relevant skills and competencies that enable them contribute meaningfully to the sustainable economic development of their areas as competent employees, entrepreneurs, employers, producers and informed consumers of goods and services.

Against this background, the following recommendations are made;

- Governments, institutional administrators, the organized private sector, communities, philanthropist and donor agencies like ITF, SMEDA, TETFUND etc. should as a matter of priority mobilize adequate finance/funds to support business education programme beginning from the junior secondary schools to tertiary level of education in order to overcome some of its challenges.
- There is need to motivate business educators adequately through, strengthening human capacity, improved remuneration and conditions of service by their employers.
- TETFUND, ETF and PTDF should be made to finance/fund tertiary institutions appropriately which in turn will help business education programme if adequate allocation is given in that regard.
- School administrators should be given proper orientation to enable them understand the role of business education in sustainable development. The NUC, NCCE, and NBTE should not end with prescription of minimum standards for business education in our universities, colleges of education and polytechnics. They should step up their support and supervisory roles in ensuring that these standards are maintained.
- Business education curriculum at every level should undergo constant evaluation and review in order to keep it up to date with current technological realities.
- Business educators should improve their personal skills in the area of ICT to enable them impact these skills effectively and efficiently to their students. As new technologies emerge, so new skills are needed to drive innovations in technology. Both teachers and students of business education should try to keep pace with emerging technologies in office and business administration.
- Human capacity, career guidance and public enlightenment should be provided by business educators and other education stakeholders to improve positive public perception (PPP) of business education by students, parents and the society.
- There is also the urgent need to replace obsolete equipment used in business education studios and laboratories with modern ones.
- Chatter on funding business education programme in our Institutions of learning should be the focus of business educators.

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