

## INFLUENCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM CONTENT ON COLLEGES OF EDUCATION STUDENTS ACQUISITION OF SKILLS FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN NIGER STATE

BY

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### Abstract

*The study was intended to assess the influence of adequacy of colleges of education students' business education curriculum content for the acquisition of job skills and job opportunities in Niger state. One research question was raised to guide the study, while one hypothesis was formulated and tested at the significance level of 0.05. The population of the study was 305 final year students of the Business Education Department of the colleges. Since the population is manageable, the researchers use the entire 305 final year students, hence there was no sample size for the study. The researchers developed a structured questionnaire for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts from the rank of senior lecturer and above from the business education department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Cronbach Alpha method was used to test the reliability of the instrument which yielded a coefficient value of 0.82. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while Simple Regression (SR) was used to test the null hypothesis formulated for the study at a significance level of 0.05. The findings of the study revealed, among others that business education curriculum content in Niger colleges of education does not provide students with essential skills required for their employability after graduation. In view of the findings, one of the recommendations made was that, the business education curriculum need' an in-depth review that would enable the NCE graduates to respond to challenges in the labour market and field of work. This should be done by selecting contents that are consistent with emergent and anticipated needs, namely ICT competency, conflict resolution and economic survival and entrepreneurship.*

**Keywords:** Business Education, Curriculum and Skills for Job Opportunities.

### Introduction

Business education like many other subjects in the school system has been defined in several ways by several scholars, to suit different situations and purposes. Some scholars define it from the way it is practiced in the field, while others define it from the angle it is taught in schools and colleges. Jubril (2010) defines business education as a specialized area of vocational education that provides educational training, skills development, attitudes adjustment towards business orientation and academic challenges. Bilyaminu (2011) views business education as an aspect of a total education programme that provides the knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding needed to perform in the business world as a producer and/or consumer of goods and services. Professionally, business education can be defined as a programme designed to provide students with the basic processes of educational training; decision making; the philosophy, theory, and psychology of management; practical applications; business start-up and operational procedures (USLegal.com, 2001).

The curriculum is cluttered by an array of definitions of the concept. It is defined as a prescribed course of studies, which students must learn in order to reach a certain level of education. Coles (2013) defined curriculum as the sum of all the activities, experiences and learning opportunities that institution(s) and teacher(s) have responsibility for either deliberately or by default to make learning take place. This author expatiated that curriculum included the formal and the informal education, the overt and the covert, it recognized and overlooked, the intentional and the unintentional actions that take place in school. Thus, the curriculum is plan activities of learning opportunities for a specific time frame guided towards changing learners' behaviour. The business education curriculum is part of the continuous process of planning and development, that involves the selection of learning experiences calculated to help in the attainment of goals and objectives of the programme. According to Coles (2013), the Business Education curriculum was designed to educate students in the skills, processes, understandings and responsibilities

necessary for success in the world of business. Dike (2019) viewed the business education curriculum as an educational process of action about opportunities for the engagement of students to be educated in business and educational related disciplines. Business education curriculum in this context is responsible for equipping students with skills, attributes, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours required for teaching, entrepreneurship, administrative and clerical work.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Nigeria, colleges of education play a crucial role in contributing to economic and human development. The nation's professional and highly skilled personnel such as teachers, secretaries, entrepreneurs and administrators among others are products of colleges of education. The curricula of colleges of education in this context define the in-depth knowledge, skills, competency and attitudes to be achieved. As a result, the curricula are prepared towards integrating relevant skills with diversity in considerations to enable graduates to gain jobs and enhance their performance in the fieldwork (Robert, 2016). As a result, the curriculum of business education is geared towards equipping students with broader knowledge and skills attributes, such as team-working, communication, leadership, critical thinking and problem solving for graduates employability has emphasized by the philosophy of business education programme in Nigeria. Despite the laudable philosophy of business education programmes in Nigeria, recent studies have shown that business education graduates do suffer labour market discrimination in areas of administrative and financial institutions in the country. Oduma (2010) reported that most employers of labour continue to reject business education graduates arguing that their skill is only needed in the classroom. As a result of these, Okoro (2013), Adamu and Sani (2013) observed that the business education curriculum is inadequate and it has very little capacity to develop students' skills for job opportunities and entrepreneurship consciousness in the country. By implication, the possibility of securing a job is becoming more difficult while the number of unemployed NCE graduates is always increasing. The situation triggers hundreds of unemployed NCE graduates (business education inclusive) to mount a demonstration as far back as October 18, 2000, in Abuja. However, the outcry of the labour market and other bodies have led to commendable changes in the procurement of more facilities and modern equipment, employment of more manpower, construction and renovation of structures and even partial review of curriculum as testified by Jibrin (2012). Considering that, these developments are anticipated to make robust changes in Nigerian colleges of education the researcher to assess the adequacy of the Business Education curriculum in colleges of education on students' acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The research work is expected to provide answers to the following specific research questions:- 1. What is the influence of business education curriculum content on students' acquisition of job skills for the teaching profession in Niger state?

### **Research hypothesis**

In line with each of the research question, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the significant level of 0.05%.

H<sub>01</sub>: Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students' acquisition of job skills for the teaching profession in Niger state.

### **The Concept of Curriculum**

The curriculum has various definitions among scholars, however, the term is used here to refer to the knowledge that society selects from the total available reservoir of knowledge and deems as valued and essential for students to learn in schools. In this context can be defined as all the learning activities which are planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school, it comprises the totality of the experiences of children for which schools are responsible. Grundy (2011) defined a curriculum as a programme of activities (by teachers and pupils) designed so that pupils will attain certain educational and other schooling ends or objectives. The definition sees curriculum from the angle of what is done in schools under the guardians of teachers. The Commonwealth of Learning (2011) viewed curriculum as a composite whole including the learner, the teacher, teaching and learning methodologies, anticipated and unanticipated experiences, outputs and outcomes possible within a learning institution. This definition considered curriculum from the angle of what is happening during teaching and learning exercises. In another related definition, Ubulum (2011) viewed curriculum as an intention about

opportunities for engagement of persons to be educated with other persons and things (all bearers of information, processes, techniques and values) in certain arrangements of times and space. Buttressing this definition, Hass & Hassan (2011) maintained that curriculum is all experiences that individual learners have in a programme of education whose purpose is to achieve broad goals and related specific objectives, which is planned in terms of a framework of theory and research in past and present professional practice. The definition considered curriculum as the aspect of deliberate actions or intention made teaching and learning. Hass emphasized on educational experiences of the learners during their schooling period.

In another related definition, Emmanuel (2018) defined curriculum as a plan that consists of learning opportunities for a specific time frame and place, a tool that aims to bring about behaviour changes in students as a result of planned activities, these include all learning experiences received by students with the guidance of the school. The definition unlike others stressed the time frame, place and materials used to bring desirable change to the learners. The curriculum is a connective link between teacher and student, organized in such a way to achieve goals previously set by the teacher, the learning organization or by the curriculum specialists (Okoro, 2013). The author centred on the relationship that exists between teachers and students geared towards achieving educational goals. Tricia (2010) defined curriculum as the contents of a subject, concepts and tasks to be acquired, planned activities, the desired learning outcomes and experiences, the product of culture and an agenda to reform society. From the definitions reviewed so far, the curriculum can be defined as the sum of all the activities, experiences and learning opportunities for which an institution or a teacher takes responsibility either deliberately or by default.

**Methodology**

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 305 business education students from the Federal Colleges of Education, Kontagora and Niger State College of Education, Minna. Since the population size is manageable, the researchers used the entire population, and so, there was no sample size for the study. The researchers developed a structured questionnaire for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts from the rank of senior lecturer and above in the business education department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Cronbach Alpha method was used to test the reliability of the instrument which yielded a coefficient value of 0.82. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while Simple Regression (SR) was used to test the null hypothesis formulated for the study at a level of significance level of 0.05. For the hypotheses testing, where the calculated value is less than the critical value, the hypothesis was accepted. Conversely, where the calculated value is greater than or equal to the critical value the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Results**

**Null Hypothesis:**

Business education curriculum content has no significant influence on students’ acquisition of job skills for the teaching profession in Niger State.

**Table 1: Regression analysis of Respondents opinion on the Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Student’s Acquisition of Skills for Teaching Profession in Niger State.**

Model	B	Std. Error	T	R-cal	R-crit	R2	Adjusted R2	Sig.
TRS	5.694	.648	8.787					
BEC	0.053	.015	3.665	0.860	0.088	0.740	0.696	0.000

**Source:** Result of fieldwork 2021

From the Table, the computations indicated a calculated R-value of .860 greater than the critical R-value of 0.088 at  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the observed value of (R = 0.860) was significant. The summary from the regression analysis Beta, the constant has a value of 5.694 indicating that the regression equation needs to be adjusted by 5.694 in order to get regression equation relating to BEC with TRC. The result indicates 74% of the variability in TRS determined by BEC. The result shows that business education curriculum content significantly equips students with the requisite skills required for the teaching profession. Hence the null hypothesis was not retained

### **Discussion**

The study in Table 1 revealed that business education curriculum content in colleges of education equipped students with skills required in the teaching profession. This finding concurred with what was obtained by other researchers such as Stephen (2010) and Imeokparia & Ediagbonya (2012) who posited that the business education curriculum has the potential to reinforce students with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values for gainful employment and be efficient in the teaching profession. They had also indicated further that the current level of skills possessed by Business Education graduates is good enough for them to secure placement in the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study present a number of issues and challenges on requisite skills and job opportunities of graduates of business education from colleges of education in Niger state. Based on the objective that this research work addressed, the researcher concluded that business education curriculum content in Niger colleges of education does not provide students with essential skills required for their employability after graduation.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:-

Curriculum of business education needs an in-depth review. This would enable the NCE graduates to respond to social goals, economic realities and future life challenges. This should be done by selecting content that is consistent with the emergent and anticipated needs of society.

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