

Mobile Business Education Skills Acquisition Centres: A Panacea for Addressing Fulani Herdsmen Crisis in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper looked at the concept of business education, the genesis of Fulani herdsmen crisis, the economic implication of it. The paper went ahead to discuss that education is the best instrument to curtail the problem using business education as a tool. The paper concluded that business education would be the more permanent instrument for addressing this problem through imparting skills to Fulani herdsmen at Grazing Centres through posting instructors to such areas. On the basis of the conclusion drawn, some recommendations were offered one of which was to provide mobile skills acquisition centres.

Key words: Business Education, Skills, Fulani Herdsmen

Introduction

Education will ever remain the instrument for addressing problems of mankind. It could be used in every area of human pursuit to solve problems and at the same time to uplift the social starter of the respective people. Aliyu (2006) asserted that “education is thought of as the adjustment of the individual to his environment looking at this assertion; it means education enables one to meet up the challenges of his immediate environment. It has so many branches which are referred to as specialization or discipline.

Business Education is one of the areas of specialization or areas of disciplines which is a branch of general education. It is education for business; it is the internal and vocational preparation of people for earning a living in a contemporary industrial and business environment (Aliyu 2006). Business Education is design for development skill acquisition and competences attitude and attributes which are paramount for economic growth. Ulinfun in Bala (2015) looked at business education as education in business or training in business skills which are required for use in business offices, clerical occupation and business policy analyses. It enables students to acquire practical skills for real work situation. In this case current expectation on School graduate to have experiences in different aspects of human endeavour could be achieved through comprehensive business education. It could infer from the foregoing therefore, business education is such a preparation given to pupils to enable them to be utilized in many fields of human endeavour. It is in the light of this that new standard encyclopedia in Aliyu (2006) defines business education as instruction meant to prepare students for jobs in the business world. Aliyu (2006) therefore defined business education as the deliberate intent of teacher to inform students about economics and business concepts and skills that might be of use in later life. It is therefore meant to enable students to critically look and analyse the prones and cones in day-to-day businesses, the profitability and otherwise of any business via the appropriate ratio analysis as well as overall performance of business in an economy.

While talking about business education, it is important to notice that is an aspect of vocational and technical education as clearly spelt out in the National Policy on education (2004). And it has the following objectives:

1. To provide trained manpower in Applied Science, Technology and Commerce particularly at sub-professional grade.
2. To provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for Agricultural, Commercial and Economic development
3. To produce people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man;
4. To give an introduction to professional studies in engineering and other technologies
5. To give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsman, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant
6. To enable our young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

Fulani herdsmen are nomadic Fulani who go around with their livestock for feeding them especially during dry season. There have been crises among them and farmers who persistently claim that the herdsmen allow their cattle to destroy their farm product. The objective of the paper therefore, is to show how the state and federal government can provide Mobile Business Education Skill Acquisition Centres use business education to overcome this problem.

Concept of Mobile Business Education Skill Acquisition Centres

Business education is an education designed for use in business:

a : training in subjects (such as business administration, finance) useful in developing general business knowledge

b : training in subjects (such as accounting, shorthand) useful in developing commercially useful skills.

Nanacy in Bala (2015) described Business Education “as that aspect of the total Education programmes that provide that knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform in business world as a producer and as a consumer of goods and services that business offers”.

The National Policy on Education (1998) revised edition described business education as a technical education and so defined it as “that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge”. Akanbi and Ogunleye (1996) in Bala (2015) from the policies commission for business and economic education of 1975 said:

“Business Education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all types of education delivery system, elementary, secondary or post-secondary..... Business Education can begin at level it can be continued throughout the life span of an individual. Business Education includes education for

office occupations, business teaching, business administration and economic understanding.

It can be summarized that the Mission of business education includes: -

- a. Educating individuals for and about business
- b. Providing a continuous programme of planned experiences designed to equip individuals to make judicious socio-economic decisions as citizens.

Objectives of Business Education:

The general objectives of business education have been summarized by Popham (1975), in Bala (2015) irrespective of whatever levels it is studied as follows:

Personal Competence; initially when Business Education was first introduced in school and it was strictly vocational in aims. But later many non-business educators soon discovered some of the courses like Book-keeping, Type-writing, Salesmanship could be useful to them, hence it is not surprising seeing a physician studying Book-keeping or a journalist studying short-hand or a lawyer learning how to type documents. For consumer Business Competence; Traditionally Business Education meant education for the producer, for the distributors and not for consumers. However, recognition has been given to the fact that everyone is a consumer, and that business education plays an important role in our daily life. Consequently, courses have been developed and curricular have been revised in an attempt to develop students in the method of buying goods and services, and also efficient use of these goods and services. For vocational competency; this is simply to prepare the recipients for office occupation in such areas in Book-keeping, Stenography etc. it is pertinent to note that Business Education provides greater responsibility in the area of occupational education for future employees of business to gain a higher level of education and more completely developed skills to meet the new demands of jobs entry. For Socio-economic Competence; Business is an exchange of Value between people and it is both economic and social in nature. Business Education as a part of general education, therefore, is in a position to make a major contribution to the development of socio-economic competence by helping the recipients to develop a clear understanding of the nation's economy. This means that exchange of values among people of various culture leads to interactions or friendliness.

History of Fulani Herdsmen

A pastoral Fulani family is the traditional herding unit. Tasks are divided by gender and age among the members of the family. The main work of men is to manage the herd, find grazing sites, build tents and camps and make security tools such as knives, bow and arrows and guns. Women in the unit take on traditional roles such as sourcing food produce in the market, milking cows, weaving and mat making. Some women are also involved in farming such as growing vegetables and raising poultry. Cattle are the dominant composition of the Fulani herd in countries such as Nigeria and camel is the least liked animal. The livestock is largely female with close to 60% of cattle being female, the male species are usually reduced by selling them. They are largely nomads who go through towns with their cattle. In Nigeria, the Fulani and the Hausa people dominate the northern states, with a population of well over 30 million. Notably, people of the Fulani tribe rarely ever use artificial birth control

methods and, as a result of this, the tribe is very fertile, hence their vast population and their presence in almost every state across the country.

Fulani herdsmen's engage in both random and planned transhumance movements. Random movements are usually taken by the pure nomadic Fulani herdsmen while planned movements are taken by the semi nomadic pastoralist. A primary reason for the migratory nature of the herdsmen is to reach areas with abundant grass and water for the cattle. The herdsmen also move to avoid tax collectors, harmful insects and hostile weather and social environment. A major benefit of the movement for the herdsmen is to maximize the availability food resources for the cattle and reduce excessive grazing. Before moving new areas, the herdsmen send a reconnaissance team to study the area for availability of resources such as grass and water.

As a result of the peculiarity of the activities of the herdsmen, they move from one place to another in search of pasture. In this process, the herdsmen have reportedly encountered cattle rustlers and made complaints to the relevant authorities who fail to investigate the issue, hence their purported reason for carrying arms about. During their journey, they frequently trespass farmlands owned by locals in their host communities, destroying crops and valuables. Attempts by farmers to prevent them from causing havoc are met with stiff and violent resistance. Most times, the farmers are overpowered, injured and killed, while others are evicted from their homes. Sometimes, the herdsmen are accused of taking these opportunities to steal, rape, raze houses and kill innocent members of the communities they pass through. They are largely nomads who go through towns with their cattle. In Nigeria, the Fulani and the Hausa people dominate the northern states, with a population of well over 30 million. Notably, people of the Fulani tribe rarely ever use artificial birth control methods and, as a result of this, the tribe is very fertile, hence their vast population and their presence in almost every state across the country.

Economic Implication of Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers Crises in Nigeria

According to Mercy corps in Bala (2015), the incessant attacks have a drastic effect on food security and have caused a loss of \$14 billion in three years. This global humanitarian organization, funded by the British Department for International Development (BFID) carried out a research between 2013 and 2016 on the causes and effects of the perennial clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria. The study also pointed out that ongoing, conflict is thwarting the country's economic development to an enormous extent, and if conflicts were resolved the average household affected today could see income increase by at least 64 percent, and potentially 210 percent or higher. And also, states affected by Herdsmen-Farmers conflicts lost an average of 47% of taxes (Internally Generated Revenue) during these attacks.

Other economic impacts include: impeding trade practices, reduction in crop yield, displacement of farmers, loss of lives and properties, loss of products in storage and destruction of public and private buildings.

The Role of Education in Curving Social conflict

Education refers to the intellectual and moral training that systematically enlarges the spheres of knowledge, develops character as well as mental faculties and evolves a definite pattern on relationship between an individual and the society (Mitra 2014). It refers to the

systematic process of teachings, training, and guiding students to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding through practical experience or deep study on a subject, especially at schools, colleges, and other educational institutions. In simple words, education refers to the knowledge or skill that is acquired in the process.

Considering the role of education in developing character and shaping behavior of mankind, it could be used to re-position the behavior and understanding of the nomadic Fulani herdsman towards love for peace and coexistence by stop trespassing into the farm lands of villagers and farmers in general. Education is a lifelong instrument for addressing societal problems, communal clashes and misunderstandings among individuals. It is in line with this that Artha(2018) asserts that “Education is the best possible way of addressing the social issues”. Some of the social issues include the lingering crises among Fulani herdsman and farmers in north-east Nigeria, by this assertion it means Nigerian government can use educational approach to address the worrisome crises

Mobile Skills Acquisition Centers

A mobile skills training center is a movable skill acquisition center that is brought directly to trainees. The training unit can be held in any location that's suitable access to users and can be relocated after training. It involves the full or partial use of shipping containers as the basis for functional human inhabited buildings. We take 8” x 40” shipping containers and turn them into Modular training centers that provide promotive, efficient, accessible and affordable services. Staffed not only by trade-skilled facilitators, the center provides users with trading skills, craft, computer skills, I.T, business acumen, and access to market-places. Users have the opportunity to work closely with and learn from skilled professionals as they identify users in need of follow-up financial independence and employment. Successfully trained users will work alongside with trainers at intake and also help run skilled training programs for new users. The typical Mobile training year includes registering interested intakes on-site at the center, working with user on development project, graduation day for completion of training and providing resources to start business, and cultural exhibition at trade shows. The Mobile training stations will be staffed by professional teachers and mentors who are excellent communicators and provide users with culturally sensitive training and mentoring.

Herdsman and Farmers Crises

Business education has been a branch of the general education which prepares individual for skills acquisition for self-reliance, it is in line with this that Aliyu (2013) looked at business education as deliberate intent of teacher to inform students about economics and business concepts and skills that might be of use in later life. Hence business education is a good instrument of general education for imparting skills for survival to students.

The need for publicity and dialogue between representatives of government and that of the Fulani herdsman needs to be stressed at this juncture. As they sometimes carry around weapons for self-defense protection of their cows, and other purpose may be, they need to be enlightened that a program in the nature of skills acquisition would be extended to their people with the sole purpose of improving their incomes. So in case, tutors are sent to them they would not hurt them nor should they chase them away. Business education instructors on this note need to be employed by government, provide them with facilities and security

personnel in order to protect their lives and properties. To stabilize and ensure the smooth flow of the training, there is also need for time table or contacts period with the herdsmen so that the training will not stop them from looking after their Cows. Similarly, it is important of government would provide Nomadic Colleges where business education Curriculum would be taught to the fullest and where they would be exposed to the rigour of academic activities of business education.

The crises of Fulani and farmers were as a result the trespassing of Fulani herdsmen into the farm land of farmers because they cannot feed their livestock during dry season. Eyekpimi (2016) asserts that “it is a simply a farming, grazing land and water dispute, whereby they clash with farmers who accuse them of damaging their crops and failure to control their animals” To address this problem there is need to provide Fulani with necessary knowledge for understanding and identifying the right and wrongs in life and secondly, to equip them with skills via business education program for self-reliance. This basic knowledge of business education would enable the Fulani Herdsmen to diversify in their investment of life stock rearing to other investment options which in turn naturally will boost their income. This diversification in the investment does not mean that Fulani herdsmen should desist from their life stock rearing but rather to supplement to their income. The sufficiency of their income will enable them to feed their live stocks without intruding into the domains of farmers. Fulani herdsmen can learn a lot from business education program which will eventually boost their resources. There are quite a number of skills especially the entrepreneurship aspect of business education which different skills are taught. There are skills like shoe making, repairs, hair dressing, sowing, poultry farming, fishing, G.S.M repairs among others. These skills are not deprivable to Fulani herdsmen, this is to say Fulani herdsmen can equally acquire these skills and use it to earn income and of course if they are economically buoyant they can comfortably provide food for their livestock. This may even exceed the level of their consumption but rather contributing to boosting the gross domestic product (GDP) of our dear nation. So business education if properly applied to young Fulani herdsmen would:

1. Enlighten the Fulani herdsmen to know and differentiate between the rights and wrongs
2. Provide Fulani herdsmen with skills for self-reliance and boosting their resources to enable them feed their live stocks
3. Contributing to nations Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
4. Douse the tension suffered and security challenges faced in the areas of Benue and surrounding cause by the clashes
5. Bring Fulani herdsmen close to farmers and general public which would enhance understanding between them and clearing their differences.
6. Help Fulani herdsmen to settle at one place and avoid their nomadic attribute which always result into crises and clashes with the affected communities
7. Put a stop to the cases of stealing, razing houses done by Fulani herdsmen

The foregoing, among others benefits are to be yielded through proper business education programme Fulani herdsmen. It therefore seemingly revealed that the more permanent and simplest solution to the perturbing problem of the Fulani herdsmen sound business education which would enable them to engage into some other economic activities and of

course ultimately, improve their earning and income in general thereby enabling them to feed their livestock without trespassing into the farmlands of farmers.

Conclusion

The use of education to address societal problems is not a new thing. The paper tried to look at how business education can be used to address lingering crises between Fulani herdsmen and farmers. Having the paper concluded that unless sound business education is given to the herdsmen the problem would not permanently be solve.

Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were offered:

1. The Federal Government should be engaged in giving Fulani herdsmen sound education
2. Business education course should be emphasized so that they can get lifelong skills
3. Mobile skill acquisition Centres should be introduced to take care of nomadic Fulanis all over the Country
4. Facilities needed should be provided.

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