

RE-BUILDING TRUST IN BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS FOR EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IN NIGERIA

Stella Mathew Usen PhD, & Commy Precious Goddy-Mkpa PhD

Department of Business Education

Faculty of Education

University of Uyo

&

Akpan, R. W. Ph.D

Fine and Industrial Arts Department

Faculty of Environmental Studies

University of Uyo, corresponding, email: stellystar34@gmail.com

Abstract

Business Education is a skilled oriented programme. It is meant to prepare individuals for self-reliant, self-esteem, job-creation and wealth creation. This paper discussed on Re-building trust in Business Education students for empowerment and economic Sustainability. Empowerment was defined as the process of promoting will-power in a person or group of persons. Economic Sustainability was referred to as the use of available existing resources optimally so that a responsible and beneficial balance could be achieved over the longer term. Re-building trust was explained as the ability to create atmosphere that allows for trust, free flow of information, relaxation for studies and interaction between students, lecturers and the institution. Conclusion was drawn that to re-build trust in Business Education Students, lecturers are to make efforts to give attentive listening to students while institutions are to provide functional facilities for teaching and learning. Suggestion among others was that the Federal and State governments should provide takeoff-grants for Business Education Graduates at graduation in order to promote empowerment and economic sustainability in Nigeria.

Key words: Business Education, Empowerment, Economic Sustainability, Re-building Trust and Instructional Facilities.

Introduction

Many literatures have given diversified definitions to the word “education”. Education is the process of facilitating learning, or through which knowledge and skill is acquired. It is a tool for human empowerment. Ekong(2019) believed that education is the centre and circumference and the hub upon which development revolves. It involves the transformation of the entire life cycle of human development. Education has contributed immensely to human development, cultural and societal transformation, empowerment and economic sustainability. Education has many areas of specialization such as Business Education which can prepare students for skill acquisition and economic sustainability. Different strategies can be adopted to re-build trust in Business Education students to enable the individuals to acquire skill at the end of the programme. Rebuilding trust in Business Education students involves giving the students a focus and mentoring on the path to success at graduation. Here, empowerment for students means that the students are

thoroughly trained to acquire skill for increase economic productivity, for self and the society. While economic sustainability is the ability to keep the business graduate sustainable for some foreseeable period of time.

The Concept of Business Education

The term Business Education has been viewed differently by scholars. Generally acceptable definition has been difficult to arrive at because research and theoretical formations have continued to grapple with the problem, providing as many definitions as there are experts. Some schools of thought believe that business education is a programme of study to produce business teachers for secondary and post-secondary schools. Hence, they view business education as education for business teachers, as specialized and professional arm of the technical and science education focused at preparing and equipping those to impart business skills and competences to students and others who are interested in business. Another school of thought view the concept of Business Education as education for business. Supporting this view, Akpan, Etuk, Udoayang, Joseph and Bassey (2017) asserted that business education is involved in the preparation of an individual to survive in a changing but dynamic society as well as contribute meaningfully to the advancement of economic growth and development.

Accordingly, Agomuo (2015) stated that Business Education develops in the youths certain skills, attitudes and abilities that are relevant to securing jobs in the business world. Business Education as written by National Board for Technical Education (1987) is education that revolves around job skills, employability and self-dependency. As such, Business Education could be used for business empowerment and economic sustainability in Nigerian and beyond.

Business Education is a wide array of courses that are meant to teach students of various ages about the fundamental principles of business. This includes lessons on business management, business law, entrepreneurship, economics as well as computer courses, web design and many others. As observed by Usoro, Akpan, Udo and Usen (2020), Business Education prepares student to function intelligently as job-creators, consumers and citizens in a society. It empowers students after graduation to contribute to economic sustainability for self and society. It also help them as business teachers to empower and impart business knowledge to others.

Objectives of Business Education

As stated by Asuquo (2016) are;

- a. Provision of opportunities for practical job preparation or vocational studies in order to make students render effective and efficient services in office, distributive and service occupations.
- b. Preparation of students, based on interest and aptitudes needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it.
- c. Development in students the basic awareness of the contribution which business and office employees make to the nation's economy.
- d. Provision of opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the business and economic system of the nation so as to enable them to participate actively as producers and consumers of goods and services.

- e. Preparation of students to assume the role of building a future generation through teaching and knowledge impartation.

Other objectives of Business Education include;

1. Helping students to gain knowledge on business through teaching them various business related subjects.
2. Teaching students how to deal with finances, taxes and other business –related thing.
3. Developing the analytic and evaluating skills when it comes to making business-related decisions.
4. Giving a theoretical base for future entrepreneurship.
5. .Providing useful life skills that can be applied to other spheres of life other than business (e.g computer science or keyboarding).
6. Engaging students in activities that prepare them for their adult life in the capitalist society.
7. Explaining the possible problems and pitfalls of having your own business.
8. Encouraging students to be more interested in business.

Forms of Business Education

1. Asuquo (20116) discussed the following forms of business education;
 - 1 Business Education in Secondary: At this level, subjects like keyboarding and computer science are taught from the early years. Other courses taught are economics and accountancy.
 - 2 Business Education for Undergraduate students: This includes all sorts of undergraduate degrees in the field of business, such as business administration, commerce, economics, management, accountancy, business science, finance and others.
 - 3 Business Education for Postgraduate students: This type of programme provides students seeking a postgraduate degree in business with a more in-depth and scientific view on business and its elements. Postgraduate degrees can be either about business in general or about one of its many fields. Students can choose a very specific sphere of study like marketing research
 - 4 Business Education for Doctoral degree students: This type of education focuses more on the scientific aspects of business rather than on the practical.

After a good course in business education, students should have the necessary skills for living in to a consumerist society, understand how and why things work in business, and be able to make their own sound assessments and decisions when it comes to business.

The Importance of Business Education

Business Education gives people the necessary skills for living in today's society. Hundred years ago, there was no need for Business Education. However, as the economy changed, the education needed to change as well.

Business Education has helped the society to know how economy works or why things cost money. It has help people to be productive members of the society. Good Business Education can make a person competitive on the market, both as an employee and as an entrepreneur. It could help a person to avoid many mistakes and save quite a lot of money when opening one's own business, interestingly Business Education could make a person more creative, and teach someone how to

think outside the box and achieve goals through unique methods. There is need to study Business Education, if a person is prepared to function in the modern world. Business Education provides the required theory, explains it through practice and helps raise new generations of skillful, intelligent and responsible citizens. Therefore, if person wants to become better at business or just learn a new useful skill, definitely there is need to study Business Education.

Goals of Business Education

Business Education has been carefully designed to meet basic skills, knowledge and capabilities to function either as a business teacher or business executive. Akpabio (2018) stated that Business Education outlined the following goals which include:

- a) To make available to all students the opportunities to explore and learn about the word of business and the possible interests and potential careers it has to offer.
- b) To help develop in all students, the ability to choose wisely the goods and services that business has to offer.
- c) To assist in developing an intelligent understanding on the part of all students of the various occupations of business.
- d) To development in practical ways an understanding and an appreciation of the actual function of our economic system.
- e) To enable students acquire business knowledge and skills that may be needed for personal use.
- f) To prepare students to enter into and follow business as a career.
- g) To prepare students to perform business activities common to many professional areas.
- h) To prepare students for more effective study in the field of business.
- i) To prepare students to be business teachers.

In order to achieve the stated goals, there is need to re-build trust in the students who are the beneficiary of the programme. Business Education students need to be empowered by their lecturers and institutions through re-building trust in them

Empowerment to Re-build trust in Business Education Students

Empowerment means giving or promoting the will-power in a person or group of persons. It means performing action that causes a person's positive reaction for self-actualization, self-esteem and self-reliant. It often mobilizes an individual or groups for creative thinking, and brings out their thoughts to practical realities. Empowerment can be a set of measures designed for Business Education students at graduation which could help to re-build trust .It assists to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities in order to enable members to represent their interest in a responsible and self-determine way, acting on their own authority. As a multi-social process, it helps people to have control over their own lives and fosters power in them. The process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's right is empowerment. Many governments, individuals, organizations and philanthropist groups get involve in promoting empowerment among different groups and individuals for self-empowerment and to professional support which enable people to overcome sense of powerlessness and lack of influence, and to recognize and use their resources, to do works for power. This explained why Ow hoeke, Enyiche and Sotonye (2020) defined empowerment as a

process by which youths gain greater control over resources such as income, knowledge, information, technology, skills and training thus challenging that ideology of patriarchy and participates in leadership decision making process. It enhances self-image of youths to become active participants in the process of change and develop the skills to assert themselves. This means that when Business Education students are empowered at graduation, the graduates could take control of their circumstances, exercise power and achieve pre-determined goals and maximize the quality of lives for economic sustainability in Nigeria.

Economic Sustainability for Business Education Graduates

This entails the ability of Business Education graduates to consciously and courageously attend to personal needs for a long time without having to depend on others for survival. It involves giving proper attention to satisfy the basic economic issues/problems of a Community and State for a foreseeable period. Economic Sustainability refers to practical growth without negatively impacting on social, environmental and cultural aspects of the community. It involves the activities whereby Business Education graduates make use of the available or various strategies to employ existing resources optimally so that a responsible and beneficial balance can be achieved over the longer term. In business, economic sustainability involves using the assorted assets of the company efficiently to allow it to continue functioning profitability over time. It is equated with economic growth which is considered sustainable as long as the total amount of capital increases and this encompasses financial cost and benefits for the individuals and organizations as reasoned by Usen, Usoro and Charles (2020). In this regards, when the lecturers and institutions are able to re-build trust through utilization of functional instructional facilities which enhances skill acquisition, then Business Education graduates could experience or contribute positively to economic sustainability.

Re-building Trust: Business Education Students are dependent on their lecturers for academic success and for skill acquisition. Re-building trust means the lecturers ability to make the students believe in them again. To bring back confidence of students in the lecturers, it is the process whereby the relationship between the students and the lecturers are strengthen for better teaching, learning and understanding in the classroom. Re-building trust entails the lecturers' ability to create an atmosphere whereby the students can study in a relax environment and ask questions for clarification where necessary. It allows for free flow of information and interaction among students and the lecturers which, equally improves academic performance of students. Hence, Scottt (2012) referred to academic performance as how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies. Lecturers can re-build trust in the students through building of confidence to positively change students' academic performance.

General Strategies to Re-building Trust in Business Education Students

Absolutely, there is need for teachers to build trust in their students if they hope to succeed. **Gana (2019)** discussed the following strategies in order to rebuild trust.

Ability to become Popular and Proud Teachers;

As teachers, your primary goals are for students to try hard and behave in class. If teachers can make that happen, then being popular is a good thing. Teachers become popular by building good relationships with their students. Students would like to be treated with respect, offer positive reinforcement, smile, and listen to their concerns. All these could help to re-build trust and friendships in the students.

Ability to know your Students;

This means that teachers are to make effort to know students individually. There is need to find out area of interests by way of initiating conversations with the student about school activities. By so doing, the teacher will get to know what is in their minds and the student will realized that someone is genuinely interested in them. This will re-build trust in the student.

Ability to Protect Student's Self-Esteem;

Teachers are to be careful in dealing with students at the adolescence stage. Ability to make them feel good, important and secure before their peers is highly acceptable and will boost students' self-esteem. Being criticized by a teacher in front of their peers humiliates them. Hence, to avoid "losing face" students may react by talking back, smirking, or walking out of class. In order to bring a positive change in behaviour, the teacher is to make discipline corrections quietly and quickly without sarcastic or condescending comments in the classroom. As noted by Woolfolk (2010) classrooms are by nature multi-dimensional, full of simultaneous activities, fast-paced and immediate unpredictable public and affected by the history of students' and teachers' actions and that a teacher must judge all these elements every day. Therefore, application of jokes and private address that is without audience is appreciated by the students and could help immensely to re-build trust in students.

Ability to Build Goodwill on Good Days;

Teachers are expected to appreciate students good study habit in class. Comments like "you are a great class, this is a lively class, I enjoy being your teacher. Such comments make them feel accepted and love. This can certainly re-build their trust.

Ability to Listen to Students:

Students like to feel that they have some "say or influence on what goes on in class." If a teacher is open to receiving feedback, this can bring about a better level of mutual respect and re-build trust in the teacher. If a student raises a concern about a school policy, an assignment or grading, the teacher is to pay attention. Taking time to listen to student's concerns show that "I care enough about them to value their ideas". Maintaining a good relationship between teachers and students is an all-round winning proposition as it fosters an environment where real teaching and learning can take place and this help to re-build trust in business education students. Business Education students hope to graduate with some saleable skills and be empowered for employment, job creation and economic sustainability. Hence, it is expected that they are prepared or trained with appropriate instructional facilities for the world of work. Therefore, their trust can be re-build through the utilization of functional facilities. Abuh and Nzimoha (2019) opined that functional facilities play significant roles in teaching and learning process. The authors stated that functional facilities are school facilities that are useful for teaching, learning and for work or serve the purpose

for which they were designed for effectively. Further, authors explained that facilities are material resources that enhance effective teaching and learning. As noted by Inyang, Ekpo and Ekanem (2018), school facilities, such as school plants/equipment and facilities are important elements needed for the realization of educational objectives. School equipment and facilities comprise all the things that have been put in place to aid effective teaching and learning. The main equipment and facilities in school include ; (1) Equipment: Laboratory and workshop equipment, sporting equipment, teaching aids, computer and photocopier (2) Permanent and semi-permanent structures: classroom, hostels, workshop, staff quarters, assembly hall, dining hall, administrative block, libraries, laboratories, (3) Furniture: desks, tables, chairs, beds, and others. There is need for periodic maintenance through renovation, replacement, painting and repairs so that students can graduate with skills.

Usen, Usoro and Charles (2020) asserted that skill is thought of as a quality of performance which does not depend solely upon a person's fundamental, innate capacities but must be developed through training, practical and experience. The authors added that, it the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable one to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It is the ability for an individual to handle a task, competently and skillfully for effective, efficient and satisfactory result. However, it has been observed that Lack of skill acquisition by business education students have led to lack of trust on the lecturers and institutions.

Failure to re-build trust in Business Education students will promote many problems such as;

- a. Lack of skill acquisition for empowerment: This is due to the fact that well-equipped laboratories with modern equipment are lacking in schools, as such, lecturers are unable to carry out practical with the students, to get familiar on how to manipulate the equipment for useful result. At the end of the programme, business education students graduate without acquiring skill in any area of specialization hence are not empowered for the world of work. This will further lead to increase in unemployment rate in Nigeria.
- b. Lack of skills for economic sustainability: Failure to be empowered with skill will definitely make the student to remain dependent even after graduation. Therefore such a graduate, instead of being an asset to contribute to economic sustainability will rather turn to be a liability for the society.
- c. Lack of confidence on the Lecturers: Failure on the part of the lecturers to give attention and listen to their students lead to lack of trust, confidence and eventually lose of interest in the course.
- d. Lack of adequate lecturers: This can pose a serious problem for students. Students that are duly registered for a programme can become discouraged and frustrated. Here, Usoro, Akpan, Udo and Usen (2020) observed that in this situation, there is every tendency for such institution to produce half-baked graduates, and they go out to increase unemployment rate in the society due to lack of skills and for want of empowerment. This shows that the institution do not care about the plight, interest and progress of the students.

- e. Frustration and students drop out from school: Ugboaja (2016) confirmed that the high rate of dropout is due to the fact that some programmes stress only mental activity. Practical activities are lacking, as such, students feel frustrated and dropped out from school.

Accordingly, to avoid this ugly situation, lecturers have to make effort to re-build trust in their students. In support of this, Usen, Okon and Ukpong (2019) noted that this bleak scenario demands that practical knowledge and skill of prospective business education graduates be intensified so as to promote skills acquisition at graduation, self-reliant for wealth creation and for economic sustainability.

In additions, many institutions may be busy making registrations of students without giving considerations to the quantity or capacity of the available facilities. Having for instance 200 students offering computer in office management, to utilize 20 computers is inferably putting students to stress. This means, attaching one computer to ten students (1:10). This condition of lack of adequate facilities has failed to prepare the students for skill acquisition and empowerment for secretariat duties in office management.

Another problem is in the area of school environment, some schools environments are not conducive for studies. There is lack of ventilated lecture halls for cross ventilation, broken seats, fans, doors and windows, floors and poor lighting, absent of all these constitute serious health hazard, disruption of studies and distraction for the students. Okposi and Umoh (2019) observed that extreme environmental conditions, poor quality of facilities and equipment in some of our institutions, are some of the factors that hinder proper academic activities (teaching and learning). This scenario breeds students' distrust on the institution, and may even discourage the current students from recommending would- be students to such institution.

Further, institution may offer courses in Business Education such as Accounting Education, Office Management Education and Marketing Education but fail to provide modern and appropriate facilities that could aid in teaching and learning. Usoro, Akpan, Udo and Usen (2020) wrote that some business laboratory, lack equipment such as cash register machine, card punching machine, cheque confirmation machine, POS machine, billing, inventory keeping and accounting/transaction posting machine. In Office Management, equipment like functional computers with internet connections to expose students to website design, soft wave programming, word processing, coral draw design, photocopying machine, paper cutter are not available hence, students are not skilfully prepared and empowered for the industry. While in some institutions, under Marketing Education, there is lack of a prototype market in the laboratory. Hence, students fail to have idea of product pricing and, lecturers are unable to prepare students to be competent in the practice of the three Ps (Products, Pricing and Place) in marketing after graduation.

Another area is on Library facility, this remains a centre where academic exercise hinges. Students need to be prepared for academic excellent, skill acquisition, knowledge empowerment and for economic sustainability. Here, Abuh, and Nzimoha (2019) opined that library is the academic life wire strength of the school. Hence, any high school without a library is like car without a functional engine. In some higher institutions, the library is filled with obsolete text books, no reading tables, chairs, shelves and, with old spoilt air conditioners, in this case, students are disappointed and frustrated as they lack current materials to make references in their research work and assignments. When frustration set in, students begin to lose trust in the institution.

Conclusion

Re-building trust in Business Education students for empowerment and economic sustainability is very paramount in Nigeria today. This is to give the students re-assurance in their programmes. Since Business Education is meant to prepare students for skill acquisition at graduation, there is need to adopt different strategies such as getting to know students' problems, listen attentively to their concerns, so as to protect their self-esteem. Equally, it is important that school environment, facilities to facilitate teaching and learning be properly put in the right shape. With these activities, their trust will be re-built and Business Education students will be adequately prepared for skill acquisition, empowerment and economic sustainability in Nigeria.

Suggestions

- 1 The three tiers of governments (Federal, State and Local) should give take-off grant to Business Education graduates at graduation for empowerment and economic sustainability in Nigeria.
- 2 Philanthropists, multi-large company like Dangote, Exxon mobil should assist institutions in Akwa Ibom State to build school laboratory with modern equipment.
- 3 The Federal and State governments should build e-library for their different institutions so as to promote research and give knowledge empowerment.
- 4 Institutions should endeavour to march their lecturers dispositions with the programmes they have mounted to be sure that all the courses have lecturers to attend to students.

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