

## **DEMAND-DRIVEN BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM: PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE IN NIGERIA.**

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### **Abstract**

*Business Education in Nigeria has been misinterpreted by so many as just education for and about Business. It is seen and explained by so many as education that train business educators. Since the world is being transformed digitally there is need for Demand Driven business education curriculum to be redesigned to be able to produce graduates who can transform what was learnt in school to place of employment for sustainable workforce in Enugu State, Nigeria. This study examined the need for demand-driven Business Education curriculum in public universities for training- to- employment for sustainable workforce in Enugu State. Since curriculum covers entire course of study in school, there is need for business education curriculum designer and policy makers to fashion out demand- driven curriculum in business education that equip the graduates of business education for living productive and useful lives in this contemporary society and to make them fit in the competitiveness of the global market. This paper also examined the curriculum development in Business education- meaning, importance , types; curriculum implementation, challenges of implementing Business education curriculum and some strategies for effective implementation of Business education curriculum.*

*Curriculum, Demand –Driven Curriculum, Business Education, Panacea and Sustainable Workforce*

### **Introduction**

Curriculum play a very vital role in teaching and learning (business education). Curriculum is the base in education on which the learning process is planned and implemented (Emeye, 2019). According to Blenkin (2012), curriculum is a body of knowledge, content and subject transmitted or delivered by teachers to students. To the author, it is totality of all learning which students are exposed during their study in the school, classroom, laboratory, library, workshop, farm and the playground. Business education curriculum therefore is base in which learning and training process are planned and implemented. Wheeler in Umor (2017), also defined curriculum as a planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the school and the evaluation of its effectiveness in achievement of education goal. Business Education need to have a well developed curriculum which should aim at achieving its aims and objectives. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), outlined the aims of vocational education and technical education (business education) in Nigeria as follows: Providing trained manpower in applied technology, particularly in craft, advanced craft and technical level. Providing the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development.

Give training and impact the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.

Since curriculum covers entire course of study in school, there is need for the business education curriculum designers to fashion out demand- driven curriculum in business education to equip the graduates of business education for living productive and useful in this contemporary society and to make them fit in the competitiveness of the global market. There is a serious need to develop and implement curriculum that will make business education graduates move forward in this technology driven and competitive world. The business education curriculum planners should fashion out curriculum that is technology embracing since the era of market as a place is fading out and money is now on air.

The introduction of 6-3-3-4 system of education by the federal government of Nigeria was aimed at development and implementation of sound vocational education curriculum in both secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Both the federal and state as well as other educational stakeholders have been trying to find a better way of developing a suitable vocational education curriculum to satisfy both the learner and the society in order to achieve the aim of vocational education. Nigeria has continued to

reposition vocational education towards national development but has continued to lack skilled manpower to compete in the global world of industrialization and has continued to waste a lot of resources to hire technology and expatriates for its industries and other projects (). In any educational system the success depends on development of sound educational curriculum and implementation. Business education which is the aspect of vocational education that its main purpose is to produce graduates who will be both self-reliance and teachers to others need to be built with well-developed demand-driven curriculum to make them useful to the society.

Business education is a programme of study which is geared towards equipping the learner with employability skills and knowledge which would enable them create or acquire jobs, stay on the jobs and grow in the jobs (Utoware, et.al, 2019). Williams in Mfam and Ntino (2018), opined that Business education is learning experience in those phases of business and economic activity in which all persons engage, regardless of occupational interests and either economic or social status, as well as learning experience designed to enable some persons to gain the competencies and understandings needed for satisfactory business employment. Adebayo (2004), maintained that Business education provides the economy with the needed manpower mix that is required for today's business adding that it involves a broad general education and skill training that offers skills and competency to work in industry. Osuala in Mfam and Ntino (2018), asserted that Business education is a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: office education – a vocational education programme for office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education; and general education, a programme to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services. Business education a programme of study which is designed to equipping the students' employability skills, knowledge and attitude which will enable them create, acquire and grow in the jobs, has been implemented for decades in the Nigeria educational system yet the problem of unemployment of our business education graduates is still talk of the day. Business education programme in Nigeria as a laudable programme of providing the learners with skills, knowledge, understanding and attitude needed in the business world has remained in theory and never manifested in practice as unemployment continue to increase in the country, and those employed continue to show incompetent in discharging their duties, as some

of them lack the practical skills needed. All these problems may be due to lack of sound and standard business education curriculum. The importance of demand-driven business education curriculum cannot be over emphasized. Business education curriculum is part of continuous process of planning and development that involves selection of learning experience capable of attaining program objective (Shehu, et. al. (2019). They also emphasized that it is an educational plan born out of the need to provide adequate manpower for the industry, commerce and society.

Looking at the system of education in Nigeria, there seem to be problem with the Business education curriculum development, implementation process and technologies applied in the delivery system. In our education system today from post primary to tertiary institutions what is practiced is not in line with the aim of vocational education as in NPE (2013) above. Critical examination of most of the curriculum used in post primary which is the base, where basic subjects in business education are taught are lacking in content. Some of the curriculums were not developed by experts. For Business education to produce graduates who can participate in competitive global economy, function in domestic and international business environment, develop information technology skills with relevant academic knowledge there is need for development and implementation of demand-driven business education curriculum. Curriculum development is a planned, purposeful, progressive and systematic process to create positive improvements in the educational system (Alvior, (2014). Curriculum implementation on the other hand refers to how planned curriculum is broken into syllabus, scheme of works and lessons to be delivered to the students by the teachers (Glazier in Akelele, 2018). Teachers knowledge of the subject matter, the choice of teaching strategies, materials and teachers' ability to utilize the instructional materials is imperative in the development and implementation of demand-driven Business education curriculum for students training for employment. Demand-driven curriculum is a curriculum designed for keeping the potential employer in mind and incorporating industry interest (Amir, 2014). That goes to prove Dokubo (2008), who opined that the needs of the nation or society be considered in curriculum development and that educators must be knowledgeable about the labour force needs within the services area of the institutions and they must also be informed about the pattern of labour migration within a particular era. According to Alvior (2014), Curriculum development has a broad scope, it is not only about the school, learners and

teachers, it is also about the development of society in general. Education should be developed in such a way that the impact should be felt in the society. Since business education programme is designed to make the learner to be self-reliant demand-driven curriculum is imperative to the students training to employment.

## **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN BUSINESS EDUCATION**

### **Meaning of Curriculum Development**

For any institution to function well there must be a well-structured curriculum which must be in line with the country's educational policy. Business education which is aspect of vocational technical education needs a sound curriculum to achieve the objectives – impacting of skills, knowledge, understanding and attitude to be self-reliant and contribute to the society.

Curriculum development is a planned, purposeful, progressive and systematic process to create positive improvements in educational system (Alvior, 2014). Every time there are changes or developments happening around the world, the school curricula is affected.

According to Rogers & Taylor (2020), Curriculum development describes all the ways in which teaching or training organization plans and guides learning. This learning can take place in groups or with individual learners. It can take place inside or outside the classroom. It can take place in an institutional setting like school, college, training centers or in a village or a field. It is central to the teaching-learning process. To, the authors curriculum development is a process involving activities like: Conceptualizing the curriculum. Selecting and organizing the content, material and learning experiences. Suggesting the method and ways of providing these experiences. Evaluating the learning outcomes in terms of attainment of desired educational objectives. There is a need to update them to address the society's need.

### **Importance of Curriculum Development**

Curriculum development is important not only to the learners, the teachers, but it is also important to organization and development of the society. According to Alvior, (2020), some of the importance of the curriculum development are as follows: It also provides answers or solutions to the world's pressing conditions and problems, such as threats to the environment, issues on politics, socio-economic problems, and other issues related to poverty, climate change, and sustainable development. There must be a chain of the

developmental process to develop a society. First, the school curriculum, particularly in higher education, must be designed to preserve its national identity and ensure its economy's growth and stability. Universities have innovative curricular programs and demand in the local or global markets, many students, even from foreign countries, will enroll. A higher number of enrollees would mean income on the part of the universities. As a result, if the income is high, it can be used for teachers' promotion, scholarship, and remuneration. It can also be used to fund research and development endeavors and put up school facilities, libraries, and laboratories. The country's economy can improve people's way of life through curriculum development. And to develop it, curriculum experts or specialists should work hand in hand with lawmakers such as senators and Congress members, the local government officials, governors, and mayors. Likewise, business communities and industries and other economically oriented players in society may be engaged in setting and implementing rules and educational reform policies. Curriculum development matters a lot in setting the direction of change in an organization, not only at the micro but also at macro levels. As long as curriculum development goals and objectives are apparent in the planner's mind, cutting-edge achievements in various concerns can be realized. The following points iterate the needs and importance of curriculum development.

1. **Clear purpose and goals:** Curriculum construction provide written curricular goals which are nothing but intended student development outcomes. These goals and objectives are specified in considerable detail and in behavioral language.
2. **Continuous assessment and improvement of quality:** Valid and reliable assessment of the curriculum is necessary. The curriculum followed by an institution should be reviewed regularly in order to maintain it's effectiveness in regards to the changing needs of the society as a whole.
3. **A rational sequence:** In a curriculum educational activities are carefully ordered in a developmental sequence. This developmental sequence helps to form a well-planned (or coherent) curriculum based on intended goals and outcomes of the curriculum and its constituent courses.
4. **Making strategy in teaching and learning:** Curriculum development helps in suggesting suitable teaching-learning strategies, teaching methods, instructional

materials, etc. It helps in providing for the proper implementation of the curriculum on the part of teachers and learners.

5. **Helps in the selection of learning experiences:** Curriculum development is needed for appropriate selection and organization of learning experiences. It helps in the selection of study matter and other activities so that learners are able to acquire goals and objectives of teaching. To development Demand-Driven Business education curriculum, the aims and objectives in Nigeria have to be revisited to serve as a guide. For this to be done types of curriculum development has to be known.

### Types of Curriculum Development

Types or patterns are being followed in educational institutions. Some of these designs according to Offorma in Bessong & Atah (2019), are as follows: Subject centered curriculum, Learner centered or child centered curriculum Integrated curriculum, Special curriculum, Correlated curriculum.

**Subject Centered Curriculum-** Subject matter is the most used and accepted curriculum Design, it is also the oldest curriculum Design. It is also known as content centered or teacher centered curriculum. This type of curriculum is psychological as it does not consider the students need, interest, and ability. It is not helpful in developing the democratic outlook of the students. This type of curriculum is easy to design and easy to understand by the teachers. It can be easily revised and modified. It depends on the social and educational thinking. It helps to test the students' performance easily.

**Learner Centered Curriculum:** It is also known as child centered curriculum. This type is more psychological and given by the naturalism. The curriculum is designed, based on the nature of the child. It considers the needs, interest and ability of the child. It considers the stages of growth and development of children. The type of curriculum is used in Crèche and Kindergarten education.

**Integrated Curriculum:** An integrated curriculum is described as one that connects different areas of study by cutting across subject-matter lines and emphasizing unifying concepts. Integration focuses on making connections for students, allowing them to engage in relevant, meaningful activities that can be connected to real life. Students not only connect and create more real world connections in integrated classrooms, but they are also more actively engaged. Creating an integrated

curriculum means that teachers are charged with having to create challenging, fun, meaningful tasks that help students connect to information. An integrated curriculum allows children to pursue learning in a holistic way, without the restrictions often imposed by subject boundaries. In early childhood programs it focuses upon the inter-relatedness of all curricular areas in helping children acquire basic learning tools. It recognizes that the curriculum for the primary grades includes reading, writing, listening, speaking, literature, drama, social studies, math, science, health, physical education, music, and visual arts. The curriculum also incorporates investigative processes and technology. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining partnerships with families; having knowledge of children and how they learn; and building upon the community and cultural context. Integrated teaching and learning processes enable children to acquire and use basic skills in all the content areas and to develop positive attitudes for continued successful learning throughout the elementary grades.

**Correlated Curriculum:** In this type of curriculum different subjects of school are taught by correlating each other. All the school subjects have some purpose. It assumes that knowledge in a unit. All the subjects should be taught with the help of the correlated curriculum. It is difficult to design this type of curriculum. The content of different subjects should have same level of the student's comprehension.

**Special Curriculum:** Special curriculum is basically designed for the special children. A course of study or a part of a course of study designed solely to provide basic educational services to handicapped students or to students of limited English-speaking ability. A course of study or a part of a course of study in which any student is unable to participate because of his or her limited English-speaking ability. A course of study or a part of a course of study in which any student is unable to participate because of his or her limited financial resources. A course of study or a part of a course of study that fails to provide for a participating student's meeting the requirements for completion of elementary or secondary education in the same period as other students enrolled in the applicant's schools.

### Curriculum Implementation

The business education curriculum which is like a road map of programme to be followed in teaching and learning is very important. Since business education is an education plan born out of the need to provide adequate manpower for industry, commerce and society there is need for proper implementation of

the curriculum to achieve the aims and objectives (Shehu, M.A., et.al 2019),.

Curriculum implementation refers to how planned curriculum is broken down into syllabus, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to the students by the teachers (Gliazie in Akerele, 2019). Proper implementation of Demand-drive business education curriculum is very important, as poor implementation of the curriculum may have adverse effect on both the students and the society. In this case therefore, there are certain elements that should not be left out – the elements in the learning environment: the subject matter, the teacher, the learner and the physical environment. The knowledge of the subject matter, the choice of teaching strategies, materials and the teacher's ability to utilize the instructional materials can go a long way to help in implementation of Business education curriculum.

### Challenges of Implementing Business Education Curriculum

In Nigeria especially in Enugu State there are so many barriers militating against proper implementation of a demand-driven business education curriculum which will help the student from training to employment. Some of these challenges as enumerated by Ezenwafor (2012), are as follows: **Resistance to change:** Some business education teachers have not accepted society's entrance into information age. The resistance of most business education teachers to the new technologies has affected seriously the implementation of demand driven business education in the society. According, to Prosser, C.A. (1949) theory of vocational education, vocational education (business education) will be efficient in proportion as the environment in which the learner is trained is a replica of the environment in which he must subsequently work. Looking at Prossers principle above there is need for teachers to embrace change especially in this era of new technologies to be able to produce graduates who will be useful in the society. Teaching students with obsolete equipment and the old method will not make any change in the economy of the country. **Inadequate funding:** One of the major challenges of implementing a demand driven Business education curriculum even in our universities talk less of secondary schools in Nigeria is fund. Inadequate funding has affected the implementation of a sound business education curriculum. Since business education is for skill acquisition the government supposed to be funding schools and providing them with necessary equipment for both the teachers and the students but they do not

provide for them. This has seriously affected the quality of graduates produced in our educational system. **Inadequate infrastructure:** Most secondary schools in the country are faced with the problem of poor or no infrastructures. Business education which supposed to train students in skill acquisition and to be self-reliant has a serious problem of infrastructure. Some of those schools have no place to set the computers due to inadequate infrastructure. **Inadequate skilled manpower:** This has posed a very big challenge in implementation of business education curriculum in Nigeria. Most of the teachers teaching business education in secondary schools are not trained business education teachers. Some of them are graduates of other disciplines using secondary school knowledge of commerce and economics to teach.

### Strategies for Improving on Effective Implementation of Business Education Curriculum

Teaching strategies are practice and refinement of presentations which a teachers use to make teaching more effective and interesting when using a specific method or teaching aid (Akpan in Bessong and Atah (2019).

According to Hornby in Bessong and Atah (2019), strategy is a plan designed for a particular purpose or the process of planning something or carrying out plan in a skillful way. Business education teachers should adopt or develop a good teaching strategies to make his teaching interesting in order to boost the interest of the students. Business education teachers should also try to vary their teaching strategies in different classroom situations. According to Amadiohain Bessongand Atah, (2019), use of single approach causes boredom and discipline problems in the classroom. For teaching to be more interesting and to make the learning environment conducive for the learners there are certain strategies to be applied by the business education teachers for effective implementation of demand driven business education curriculum in Enugu state.

According to Maggie, (2013),and Merlot(2014), some of the strategies business education teachers should use for effective implementation of business education curriculum are thus:

The business education teacher should have a well-drawn lesson plan in line with the scheme of work aim at achieving the content goal. The business education teacher should establish expectations in the class which will help in the classroom control. The teacher should diversify teaching methods to incorporate multiple

experience. Teaching of business education should not be only reading and writing. Concept approach of different experiences should be adopted.

Active learning where students are taught other skills other than listening alone in the class.

Collaborative cooperative learning where business education students work together in small group to accomplish common learning goal should be adopted.

The students should be engaged in critical thinking whereby they engage in collection of mental activities that include the ability to perceive, clarify, reflect, connect, and judge. Discussion strategies should be applied to help deepen their learning and motivation by propelling them to develop their own views and hear their own voices

### Conclusion

Business education curriculum is the life wire of teaching and learning of business education. Proper development and implementation of demand driven business education curriculum in Nigeria will be possible if the challenges pointed out – resistance to change, inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructures

and inadequate manpower are addressed and the strategies suggested applied.

For effective development and implementation of sound business education curriculum in Enugu state, stakeholders and experts in Business education should be involved in development of business education curriculum.

### Recommendations

Those concerned in curriculum development like stakeholders and curriculum designers should be familiar with the culture of the people, the curriculum is developed for, to be able to develop a demand driven curriculum. There must be a follow up in the curriculum developed to ensure that it is properly implemented in order to achieve the aims and objectives of business education. Teachers should be motivated either by way of enumeration or sending them to conference to help them in updating their knowledge to follow the new trend in the society. Government and stakeholders in vocational education should try as much as possible to fund vocational education (business education) so as to provide them with current technological gadgets make the graduates saleable in field of work.

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