

**PERCEIVED IMPACT OF BUSINESS
EDUCATION ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN A PERIOD OF SOCIO-
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
UNCERTAINTY**

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Abstract

Business education as an education that equip her recipients with skills that are required for both business and industry is expected to significantly impact the sustainability of the nation at all times. This study was necessitated by the need to ensure that the teaching of business education in Nigerian colleges of education has positive impacts on sustainable development of the nation especially in the current period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. Two research questions guided the study and four null hypotheses were tested. The study adopted a survey research design. The entire population of one hundred and thirty four (134) business educators in all the colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria was studied without sampling because the size was not too large. A four point rating questionnaire titled "Impact of Business Education for Sustainable Development"(IBESD) was use to collect data for the study. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts. The internal consistency method was used to determine the reliability with Cronbach Alpha and reliability coefficient value of 0.84 using Cronbach Alpha reliability test. Copies of the instrument were administered to the subject with the help of two research assistants through on the spot completion and retrieval method and 130 copies (representing 97%) were duly completed, retrieved and used for analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determine the closeness of the responses to the mean while null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test statistics. The findings of the study showed that various skills in business education are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of social-political and economic uncertainty. Findings also revealed that the respondents did not differ significantly in there mean ratings as a result of gender but did as a result of institution ownership. Based on the findings, the study concluded that business education as a functional education that prepares recipients for success in the world of work has all it takes to bring about sustainable development even in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. It was therefore recommended among others that government at all levels should adequately support Business Education because it produces skillful manpower that are indispensable in every sector of the economy for sustainable development.

Keywords: Business Education, Sustainable Development Socio-Political, Economic Uncertainty

Introduction

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The primary objectives of sustainable development is to reduce poverty through providing lasting and secured livelihoods that minimize resources depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruption and social instability. For any nation to sustain her development, a functional education is required. Functional education is education that meets the needs of the students and the society. Budgetary allocations to education in Nigeria over the years has shown that adequate attention is not given to the education sector generally and to vocational business education in particular. This is evident in the assertion of Ezekwesili (2013) that Nigeria was under-funding education with percentage budget to education between four African countries as follows, South Africa-7.9%, Ghana-4.4%, Angola-4.2% and Nigeria-0.79%. Socio-political relates to a combination of social and political factors and describes the difference

between groups of people relating to their social and political beliefs. Collins (2012) describes sociopolitical as relating to, or signifying the combination or interaction of social and political factors. On the other hand, socio-economic refers to social differences caused by individual economic states. It is primarily concerned with the interplay between social processes and economic activities within a society (Evan, 2024). It may attempt to explain how a particular social group or socio-economic class behaves within a society including their actions as consumers. Socio-political and economic problems in a country could include high level of unemployment, poverty, social inequality, youth restiveness, organized crimes and limited access to public services by the citizens. These problems have persisted and continue to increase in Nigeria whereas they could be solved through functional education programme that is effectively executed. It was on this note that Dikeocha and Onwukwe

(2011) averred that business education as a functional education programme possesses all that it takes to sustain the development of any economy. However, Awodi cited in Nwaiwu, Dikeocha and Nwagu (2015) and Nwosu and Ibe (2015) highlighted that business education, as a programme that has all it takes to sustain the development of the nation even in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty is grossly underfunded in Nigeria. Business education is an aspect of vocational and technical education which has a significant role in

shaping the socio-economic future of Nigeria. It is concerned with teaching the skills, attitudes and knowledge needed for a successful business career. Ezeani and Ogundola (2016) described business education as an educational programme that provides the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform in the business world as a producer and consumer of goods and services that business offers. Thus, one can see business education as education for and about business because it prepares students with knowledge about business with a view of making them active and intelligent producers and consumers. According to Dikeocha and Onwukwe (2011) business education is education or training programme

that encourages the beneficiary to acquire skills that fit into the world of work. This shows that business education does not just provide skills rather it provides relevant skills that enable individuals fit into the world of work. This is why it focuses on training and retraining of students to suit the present conditions and changes that may be brought about by technology. Nwachukwu (2012) described business education as education for business or

training in business skills, which are required in business offices, clerical occupation and business policy analysis. This shows that business education has two major objectives which are; to provide training for specific jobs and to develop skills to apply the acquired knowledge effectively in the work and business environment. Furthermore, Oguegbulu (2013) noted that business education is a form of vocational education that is directed towards developing the learner to become productive in teaching, paid employment and self employment. This means a student of business education can become a teacher, employee, a

self-employed individual as well as employment creator/employer. According to Onojetah (2014) business education is a vocational discipline that prepares its recipients with skills that will enable them to contribute significantly to the economic development of a nation.

Onyesom and Okolocha (2013) and Aquah (2014) posited that business education involves the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and competencies, attitudes and attributes which are needed for efficiency of the economic system. In the same vein, Igboke and Okoro (2015) asserted that business education empowers the individual with desirable skills, knowledge and values to perform specific functions within the spectrum of business so as to become employable or self reliant. Business education is taught both in state and federal colleges of education. State owned colleges of education are established, owned, controlled and funded by state government while federal colleges of education are established, owned, controlled and funded by the federal government. Both state owned and federal government owned colleges of education have male and female lecturers. The study determined the perceived impact of business education on sustainable development by lecturers from state and federal owned colleges of education and the influence of gender and institution ownership on their views in order to draw a logical conclusion. Gender refers to the social

and psychological dimension of being female or male. Madaki-David and Onyema (2016) viewed gender as a term describing behaviours and basis of being born either a male or female. It is used to analyze the roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities and needs of women and men in all area and in any given social context. Abdullaziz (2021) opined that gender influences behaviours and preferences across a variety of contexts. Gender of business education lecturers may have influence on the perceived impact of business education on sustainable development in a period of sociopolitical and economic uncertainty. That is to say that male business education lecturers may perceive impact of business education on sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty differently from their female counterparts. This hypothesis needs an empirical support, hence the inclusion of influence of gender and institution ownership in the lecturer's perceived impact of business education on sustainable development in a period of socio-political

and economic uncertainty. From any angle one looks at it, business education with its numerous branches has all it takes to sustain the development of any economy even in a period of socio political and economic uncertainty. It is believed that the result of this study will help business education lecturers in colleges of education to see the need to teach the students in such a way that they will be well equipped with skills that can enable them contribute meaningfully towards the sustainability of the nations economy after their graduation. This is because business education is purposive, usable and performance based.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigeria nation has been facing a lot of challenges over the years. The present hard economic situation is virtually affecting all and sundry. There is no sector of the economy that is not affected by these challenges. There are also doubts whether the nation would be able to sustain her development in the face of the challenges of economic meltdown, recession, inflation, insecurity, downsizing, political instability, hunger, agitations and political tussles biting hard on the nation and the common masses. This puts a big question on the sustainability of the nation's development which can only be possible when her educational programmes are functional and effectively implemented. Business education is not just a functional education but education for the present and future. Inability of the government to provide business education required resources to equip students adequately for work in business and industry has adversely affected the, achievement of its laudable

objectives. The problem of the study is that the impact of business education on the sustainable development of Nigeria is not clearly known possibly because of lack of relevant resources for effective teaching and learning resulting in production of half-baked individuals who do not possess requisite skills for effective performance in the work place. It is believed that if business education is given the attention it deserves to produce manpower with marketable skills there will be significant impact on sustainable development even in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. The study was therefore, conceived to provide empirical evidence on the impact of business education on sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty as perceived by lecturers in colleges of education in South Eastern Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to determine the perceived impact of business education on sustainable development in the period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. Specifically, the study determined:

1. Skills in business education that are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of social-political and economic uncertainty
2. The effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of social-political and economic uncertainty

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What skills in business education are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty?

2. What is the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on skills in business education that are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers of federal and state government owned colleges of education on skills in business education that are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty
4. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers of federal and state government owned colleges of education on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The area of the study was South-East Nigeria, consisting of five states namely: Imo, Anambra, Enugu, Abia and Ebonyi State. Population of the study consisted of one hundred and thirty four (134) business education lecturers in all the colleges of education in the area of the study. A Census survey sampling techniques was adopted. The instrument for data collection was a four point scale questionnaire titled Impact of Business Education for Sustainable Development (IBESD). The instrument was validated by three experts. The entire items numbering nineteen yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84. this was obtained using Cronbach Alpha reliability test. A total of one hundred and thirty four (134) copies of the instrument for data collection were distributed with the help of two research assistance through on the spot completion and retrieval method. Only one hundred and thirty (130) copies of the instrument distributed were completed, retrieved and used for analysis. The analysis was done with the statistical package for social science (SPSS). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determine the closeness of the respondents from the mean while t-test was

used to test the null hypotheses at 0.5 level of significance. A null hypothesis was accepted where the p-value was equal to or greater than the alpha level of 0.05 and rejected where p-value was less than the alpha level.

Results

3. **Research Question One:** What skills in business education are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty?

Table 1: Respondents' Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Skills in Business Education that is necessary for Achieving Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty

S/N	Items on skills in business education that are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty	X	SD	Remarks
1	Information and communication technology skills	3.69	0.60	Agree
2	Accounting computation skills	3.78	0.79	Agree
3	Marketing skills	3.37	0.88	Agree
4	Entrepreneurial skills	3.45	1.26	Agree
5	Teaching skills	3.69	0.60	Agree
6	Managerial skills	3.78	0.79	Agree
7	Office technology and management skills	3.37	0.88	Agree
	Cluster Mean	3.59		Agree

The result in Table 1 reveals that all the seven business skills listed have mean scores ranging from 3.37 to 3.78 with agree. The cluster mean score of 3.59 shows that respondents agreed the skills are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. The standard deviation scores ranging from 0.60 – 1.26 indicates that the respondents' mean scores were closely related.

4. **Research Question Two:** What is the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty?

Table 2: Respondents' Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on the effectiveness of Business Education in promoting Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty

S/N	Items on the effectiveness of Business Education in promoting Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty	X	SD	Remarks
8	Develop in the learners intelligence to understand dynamism and complex business and economic activity	3.97	0.95	Agree
9	Inculcate in the recipient skills that makes for self-reliance	3.89	0.77	Agree
10	Provide recipient with problem-solving skills in business	3.51	0.98	Agree
11	Production of skill manpower for business and industry	3.43	0.91	Agree
12	Exposes recipients to small business management	3.14	0.68	Agree
13	Develop in the recipient ability to become wise consumers of goods and services	3.57	0.95	Agree
14	Provide information useful to investors	3.89	0.78	Agree
15	Prepares recipients ahead of technological trends through ICT	3.46	1.13	Agree
16	Prepares recipients with vocational skills and ability to engage in productive activities	3.53	1.05	Agree
17	Provides recipients understanding and appreciation of the actual function of the economic system	3.55	1.16	Agree
18	Prepare her recipients for future life	3.26	1.15	Agree
19	Provide skills that leads to provision of economic goods and services	3.06	1.10	Agree
	Cluster Mean	3.52		Agree

Table 3: Summary of t-Test analysis of Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Lecturers on Skills in Business Education that necessary for achieving Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic are Uncertainty

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	α -value	Remark
Male	48	22.13	3.63					
				128	1.69	0.491	0.05	Not significant
Female	82	21.93	4.23					

Data in Table 3 reveals that at 128 degree of freedom and t-cal value of 1.69; the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($df = 128$; $p > 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected therefore there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on skills in business education that are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Table 4: Summary of t-Test analysis on the Significant Difference in the Mean Responses of Lecturers on Skills in Business Education that are necessary for achieving Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty based on type of institution

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	α -value	Remark
Federal lecturers	83	26.05	3.49					
				128	3.325	0.002	0.05	Significant
State lecturers	47	27.47	3.11					

Data in Table 4 reveals that at 128 degree of freedom and t-cal value of 3.325; the p-value is less than 0.05 (df = 128; $p < 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis is rejected; therefore there is a significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers on skills in business education that are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty based on institution ownership. The hypothesis is therefore, rejected.

Table 5: Summary of t-Test analysis on the Significant Difference in the Mean Responses of Male and Female Lecturers on the effectiveness of Business Education in promoting Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	α -value	Remark
Male	48	29.90	3.63					
				128	0.987	0.122	0.05	Not significant
Female	82	26.23	4.09					

Data in Table 3 reveals that at 128 degree of freedom and t-cal value of 0.987; the p-value is greater than 0.05 (df = 128; $p > 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected therefore there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty.

Table 6: Summary of t-Test analysis on the Significant Difference in the Mean Responses of Lecturers on the effectiveness of Business Education in promoting Sustainable Development in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty based on type of institution

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	α -value	Remark
Federal lecturers	83	21.93	3.81					
				128	5.53	0.000	0.05	Significant
State lecturers	47	22.43	2.51					

Data in Table 6 reveals that at 128 degree of freedom and t-cal value of 5.53; the p-value is less than 0.05 ($df = 128$; $p < 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis is rejected; therefore there is a significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty based on type of institution.

Discussion of Findings

Finding of the study revealed that several skills in business education like ICT, managerial, accounting and computing, entrepreneurial skills among others are necessary for achieving sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. This findings agrees with Amesi and Taiger (2021) which revealed that managerial skills and modern office skills are among business education skills used by graduates to create positive working environment. The study also revealed that the respondents did not differ significantly in their mean ratings as a result of gender but did as a result of institution ownership. The difference in opinion of respondents from state and federal institutions may be as a result of difference in the availability of teaching and learning materials required by lecturers for effective skills demonstration and students practice in their institutions. Federal institutions generally provide better facilities for teaching and learning than state institutions in Nigeria. The study as regards research question two determined the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. It revealed that business education is effective in developing in the learners intelligence to understand dynamism and complex business and economic activity, inculcate in the recipients skills that make for self reliance, provide recipient with problem solving skills in business, produce skill manpower for business and industry, expose recipient to small business management, provide information useful to investors, prepares recipients with technological trends through ICT, prepares students with vocational skills, prepares recipients for future life among others. The findings of the study is in conformity with that of Eebo (2018) which revealed that business education have multi-dimensional opportunities for beneficiaries of the programme in solving economic problems and the problem of unemployment that is rampant among youths by guarantying self employment in-built business like attitudes useful for success in business. The findings of this study also collaborated with the result of the study by Olalekan (2022) which showed that business education programme to certain extent promotes skills building for national decisions in the business world, increase in size of labour force, creation of economic awareness embedded appropriate work habits and social values, improve standard of living, improvement in entrepreneurship spirit and directly impact employment generation. The result of hypothesis three revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty lecturers of state and federal government owned colleges of education have different views on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty.

While the result of hypothesis four showed that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of state and federal government owned colleges of education on the effectiveness of business education in promoting sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. The difference in opinions may be based on institutional peculiarities.

Conclusion

The study determined perceived impact of business education on sustainable development in the period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. The study, found that several skills in business education are relevant for achieving sustainable development and that the programme effectively promotes sustainable development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. Based on the findings it was concluded that business education as a functional education that prepares her recipients for the present and future has a significant on sustainable development of Nigeria even in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty.

Recommendations

Based on the finding and conclusion of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Implementers of business education programme should endeavor to adequately equip learners with the identified skills to enable them contribute to sustainable development even in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty.
2. To ensure that business education remains effective in promoting sustainable development through its multi-dimensional opportunities, government should give it the attention it deserves by providing institutions with adequate relevant resources to effectively equip learners with knowledge, skills and attitude to take advantage of the numerous opportunities in the society and succeed even in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty.

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