

PERCEPTION OF BUSINESS EDUCATORS ON ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The over-dependence on government subventions for running business education programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions has affected the quality of teaching and learning, hence the need to identify alternative sources of funding. The study determined the perception of business educators on alternative funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The entire population of 132 business educators in the four public tertiary institutions offering business education programme in Anambra State was studied without sampling. A four-point rating scale questionnaire containing 12 items, which was validated by three experts was used for data collection. Cronbach alpha co-efficient used to establish the reliability of the instrument which yielded an overall coefficient of 0.82. The researchers administered the instrument to the subjects with the help of three research assistants. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondents means while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study disclosed business educators agreed that enterprise based funding and non-formal partnership funding are alternative sources of funding business education programme in Anambra State. Also, respondents did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the alternative funding sources as a result of their years of teaching experience. The study concluded that utilization of alternative funding sources for business education will go a long way in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. It was recommended among others that business educators should conduct research and innovations that have commercial value in order to attract grants and patronage from the private sectors as alternative funding sources for the programme

Keywords: Business Education, Over-dependence, Teaching, Learning, Alternative funding, Tertiary institutions

Introduction

Business education is a specialized educational programme designed to provide students with knowledge, skills and competences for paid employment and advancement in office occupations, and teaching as well as self-employment or being an employer of labour. As an aspect of vocational and technical education, business education is designed to fill the gap between knowledge and practice by exposing students to general education as well as specialized areas in accounting, entrepreneurship, marketing and office management (National Universities Commission, 2023). The programme is designed in consonance with the needs of the business community to ensure that education and training offered are consistent with the competencies for the present and emerging job requirements and opportunities. This is why Okorafor and Onokpaunu (2023) submitted that business education is a specialized body of knowledge that positions students to confidently knock on the doors of the labour market upon graduation.

One of the philosophies of business education programme at tertiary education level is the transformation of students to become effective business teachers and high calibre professionals in business establishments upon graduation (National Universities Commission, 2018). Musa (2020) posited that the objectives of business education at the tertiary education level include to (a) provide business teachers with the necessary competencies in both business and professional education; (b) provide competent and well competent graduates in business subjects who will be able to teach all the business subjects in the basic secondary schools and all the secretarial and accounting subjects in senior secondary schools; (c) provide graduate business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of business education in society; (d) provide teachers who will occupy teaching research and leadership positions in secondary schools, tertiary level of education and the business community and to encourage and promote scholarship and research in all aspects of business education.

The philosophies and blueprints of business education programme are taught in tertiary institutions by business educators (Okorafor & Onokpaunu, 2023). According to Oluwasina, Onokpaunu and Durojaye (2018), business educators are operators of business education curriculum who prepare business education students for the world of work. Okon and Chukwurah (2020) submitted that business educators are professional instructors who have the ability to select appropriate instructional methods for teaching business education courses and its allied courses in universities, colleges of education and polytechnics. This means that business educators at the tertiary level exposes students to accounting education, office technology and management, entrepreneurship education, general education as well as information communication and technology in order to help them to acquire practical skills for running successful businesses.

Business education is capital intensive in terms of procurement of office equipment, machines, instructional materials as well as manpower training. This means that adequate funding is needed for business education programme in tertiary institutions in order to achieve the laudable objectives. Currently, the programme is being funded mainly by the government. As a matter of fact, the funding of education is majorly a responsibility of the government and, the fund is generated from the revenue that accrues to the government (Obeka & Okeh-Gaius, 2023). Funding is the act of providing financial resources to execute a programme or project. Eshemogie and Owie (2023) averred that Nigerian government funds tertiary institutions through Tertiary Education Trust Fund. The United Nations Educational

Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2015) prescribed minimum budgetary allocation for education to be 26 percent but Nigeria is yet to meet the target. Chuku (2023) revealed that in 2016 only about 6.7 percent of the national budget was appropriated to education, in 2017 it was 7.38 percent, 2018 was 7.04 percent, 2019 was 7.05 percent, 2020 was 6.7 percent and 2021 was 5.6 percent. Thus, funding of education has been and still remains a challenge in Nigeria and, this challenge cuts across various programmes including business education.

To buttress the effect of inadequate funding in business education in Nigeria, Nwaiwu, Dikeocha and Nwagu (2015) posited that there is inadequate quantity and quality of instructional equipment, insufficient number of quality academic staff and classrooms, inadequate provision of the latest technologies in business education, inadequate supply of consumables, machines and equipment spare parts, inadequate training and retraining for business educators and technologists. All these highlight the need to identify alternative funding strategies that would enable business educators to comprehensively teach business education courses both theoretically and practically in order to produce high quality manpower in the field for national development. Alternative funding is considered a viable solution to inadequate funding of tertiary education (Okpa, 2019). Tertiary institutions offering business education programme will not be able to effectively perform their basic functions without exploring alternative funding to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Alternative funding strategies such as enterprise based funding strategies and non-formal partnership can improve the sustainability of business education programme. Enterprise based funding involves business-oriented ventures used to raise funds in supporting the programme in tertiary institutions. Bray (2014) noted that many educational programmes can raise funds through their own productive activities. This means that business educators can use their consultancy and research skills to undertake research, projects, manufacture and maintain technological products (within and outside the institution) to generate money and boost the functionality of business education programme in tertiary institutions. Non-formal partnership, on the other hand, involves sourcing funds from foreign aids, industry leaders, alumni association and philanthropist donations to assist in funding the teaching, learning and research of business education programme in tertiary institutions. According to Femade, Omiyale and Adebola (2015), non-formal partnership is a collaborative arrangement that brings together the major stakeholders in education to help in fund raising and creating a bond between the programme and the society.

The fact that government alone can no longer effectively fund education programmes in tertiary institutions demands that business educators must source for alternative funding in order to implement the philosophies and blueprints of business education programme especially at the tertiary level of education in Nigeria. However, the perception of business educators on alternative funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State could be influenced by their years of teaching experience. In the context of this study, years of teaching experience refers to the classification of more experienced and less experienced business educators. The researchers view less experienced business educators as those with below five years of professional teaching and more experienced business educators as those with more than five years of professional teaching. Given their years of professional service, it is assumed that more experienced business educators may have more enlightened perception on the alternative funding sources for business education programme in tertiary institutions than their less experienced counterparts. However, this assumption

needs to be supported by empirical evidence in Anambra State, hence, the study covers influence of years of teaching experience in the perceptions of the subjects.

Statement of the Problem

Business education is a specialized educational programme designed to equip students with knowledge, skills and competence leading to employability and advancement in office occupations, teaching business subjects at different levels of the educational system as well as self-employment or being an employer of labour. The programme is capital intensive because it requires different categories of equipment, material and human resources for effective implementation. Unfortunately, these facilities and quality resources that will facilitate the achievement of these lofty goals are not adequately provided in tertiary institutions due to underfunding. This is because funding of education in Nigeria has been solely the responsibility of the government. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning in the programme has been falling persistently. The problem of the study is that there are no clearly documented alternative funding sources for business education in tertiary institutions for quality teaching and learning in order to achieve the set objectives since it is obvious that depending on government subventions is not sustainable. It was this problem that informed the study on perception of business educators on alternative funding sources for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the perception of business educators on alternative funding sources for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Specifically, the study ascertained the:

1. perception of business educators on enterprise based funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.
2. perception of business educators on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the perception of business educators on enterprise based funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?
2. What is the perception of business educators on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on enterprise based funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience (1 – 5, 6 – 10, above 10 years).
2. Business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience (1 – 5, 6 – 10, above 10 years).

Methods

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey research design is a research design which aim at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts of a given population. Descriptive survey research design makes it possible for the researchers to have a broad view from a sample of business educators on the alternative funding sources for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State with the use of questionnaire. The study was carried out in Anambra State. There are six public tertiary institutions in Anambra State, four of which run business education programme, namely, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Federal College of Education (Technical), Umuze; Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe; and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam/Uli. The population of the study was 132 business educators teaching in the various institutions. A census was adopted for the study. A census is adopted when the researcher is able to conduct a study with all the members of the population considering the size, resources and other exigencies (Anaekwe, 2016). Since 132 was a manageable number, a census was adopted.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire consisting of two parts (A & B). Part A has one item on respondent's years of teaching experience. Part B comprises two sections of B1 and B2 with 7 and 5 items respectively on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Face validation of the instrument was conducted by three experts (one in the Department of Educational Foundations and two in Technology and Vocational Education) from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

A pilot test was conducted to establish the internal consistency of the instrument by administering it to 10 business educators in tertiary institutions in Delta State which were not part of the study. The data collected were analysed using Cronbach alpha and reliability coefficients values of 0.87 and 0.77 were obtained for the two clusters with an overall coefficient value of 0.82. Questionnaire was administered on respondents by researcher and three assistants. Out of the 132 copies of the questionnaire administered, only 119 copies (representing 90 percent) were successfully retrieved and used for data analysis.

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' views. Decision s on the research questions was based on the grand mean in relation to the real limit of numbers on a four-point scale. Therefore, items with mean ratings of 1.00 - 1.49 are rated Strongly Disagree, those with 1.50 - 2.49 are Disagree, items with mean ratings of 2.50 - 3.49 are rated Agree and those with 3.50 - 4.00 are rated Strongly Agree. Inferential statistics of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted where the p-value is greater than the alpha level of 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), at an appropriate degree of freedom; otherwise, the null hypothesis was rejected. Data were analysed using SPSS version 23.0.

Results

Table 1

Respondents' mean ratings on enterprise based funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State

S/N	Enterprise based funding	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	Establishing of bookshops	3.88	.63	Agree
2	Launching of departmental journals	3.74	.41	Agree
3	Establishing business centres	3.96	.72	Agree
4	Establishing fast food joints	3.90	.59	Agree
5	Renting of office machines	3.63	.88	Agree
6	Renting of classroom halls for events	3.71	.49	Agree
7	Exhibition of students projects to attract patronage from industry executives	3.82	.70	Agree
Cluster Mean		3.81		Agree

Data in Table 1 show that the seven items listed on enterprise based funding were had mean scores ranging between 3.63 and 3.96 which means that respondents agreed with them. The cluster mean score of 3.81 indicates that business educators agreed that enterprise based funding is an alternative source of funding business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The standard deviations for all the items are within the same range which shows that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings

Table 2

Respondents' mean ratings on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State

S/N	Non-formal partnership funding	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
8	Donations from alumni association	3.73	.80	Agree
9	Donations from corporate organizations	3.61	.92	Agree
10	Donations from philanthropic individuals	3.79	.64	Agree
11	Donations from international bodies as the World Bank	3.84	.73	Agree
12	and UNESCO Donations from professional business associations	3.58	.55	Agree
Cluster Mean		3.71		Agree

Data in Table 2 show that the seven items listed on non-formal partnership funding were had mean scores ranging between 3.58 and 3.84 which means that respondents agreed with them. The cluster mean score of 3.71 indicates that business educators agreed that non-formal partnership funding is an alternative source of funding business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The standard deviations for all the items are within the same range which shows that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings.

Testing of hypotheses

Table 3

ANOVA summary of respondents' mean ratings on enterprise based funding for

business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	f-value	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	157.89	2	73.28	.211	.134	Accepted
Within Groups	942.37	116	108.54			
Total	1650.52	118				

Table 3 shows that the F-value of 0.211 with p-value of 0.134 at degree of freedom of 2 and 116 is greater than the criterion value of 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). This means that business educators did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on enterprise based funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 4**ANOVA summary of respondents' mean ratings on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State**

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	f-value	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	82.04	2	30.87	.456	.115	Accepted
Within Groups	1410.76	116	122.45			
Total	1598.39	118				

Table 4 shows that the F-value of 0.456 with p-value of 0.115 at degree of freedom of 2 and 116 is greater than the criterion value of 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). This means that business educators did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion

Outcome of the study revealed that business educators agreed that enterprise based funding is an alternative source of funding business education programme in Anambra State. This result corresponds with Femade, Omiyale and Adebola (2015) and Nwaiwu, Dikeocha and Nwagu (2015) which reported that business education programme can overcome the funding challenges through the exhibition and selling of lecturers and students' research works to attract grants and patronage from public and private investors. This implies that business educators can use enterprise based funding through the establishment of business centres and restaurants to fund business education in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Furthermore, the outcome of the study revealed that business educators did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on enterprise based funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience. This finding means that business educators, irrespective of their years of teaching experience share the same position that enterprise based funding is an alternative source of funding business education programme in Anambra State. This finding supports, Olufunwa, Waziri and Olorunmolu (2013) which reported that enterprise based funding provide regular financial and materials assistance for sustainable business education programme in tertiary institutions. The researchers believed that enterprise based funding is an alternative source of

funding business education programme in Anambra State because it is a form of alternative funding that will not only strengthen business education programme but also enhance effective delivery of business educators in the classroom.

Findings of the study disclosed that business educators agreed that non-formal partnership funding is an alternative source of funding business education programme in Anambra State. This finding tallied with Gebreyes (2015) and Ezeonwurie (2019) and which held that income can be generated through the renting and leasing of school facilities and equipment for local community clubs, businesses and private individuals. This implies that business educators can use non-formal partnership funding as a means of sourcing for external financial support in form of technical assistance, grants, credits, and donations to fund business education in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Furthermore, the outcome of the study revealed that business educators did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience. The non-significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators on non-formal partnership funding for business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State on the basis of their years of experience implies that years of teaching experience did not affect the opinions of the respondents on this matter. This finding is consistent with Okoli, Utoware and Kaizer (2018) which reported that adequate alternative funding is needed to provide the necessary facilities and equipment in order to provide quality teaching and learning in business education programme. The researchers believed that the implementation of alternative funding strategies such as non-formal partnership can improve the quality assurance indices of business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Conclusion

It has become clear that government alone is incapable of providing the needed funds to effectively implement business education programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that utilization of alternative funding sources for business education will go a long way in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Business educators should conduct research and innovations with commercial value in order to attract grants and patronage from the private sectors to fund business education programme in tertiary institutions.
2. Business educators should build rapport with international organizations and professional business associations in order to attract monetary and non-monetary interventions.
3. Alumni associations should be providing funds and instructional facilities to reduce the funding challenges faced by business educators for teaching in tertiary institutions.
4. Business educators should set up internally generated revenue platforms through innovative and creative practices by establishing departmental journals, bookshops, restaurants and renting of classroom halls for events.

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