

ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM CONTENT FOR JOB SKILLS ACQUISITION IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN BAUCHI AND ADAMAWA STATES.

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Abstract

The increasing rate of graduates' unemployment in Nigeria and particularly business education graduates call for concern. The study therefore, assessed the quality of Business Education Curriculum Contents earmark to equip students with job skills prior to graduation in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States, Nigeria. The descriptive research design was used for the study and the population comprised 171 students, 25 lecturers from Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University [ATBU] Bauchi, 37 students and 17 lecturers from Modibbo Adama University [MAU], Yola. A checklist structured questionnaire developed by Lockwood was adapted and used for data gathering. The questionnaire was validated and pilot tested, and reliabilities of 0.85 was obtained for lecturers and 0.83 for students respectively. Four research assistants administered the questionnaires for both the students and lecturers. 208 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the student-respondents with a return rate of 85.58% and 42 questionnaires administered to Business Education lecturers with 80.95 % return rate. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviations. The finding revealed that the respondents considered the quality of curriculum design processes, curriculum content and resources for teaching delivery to promote the acquisition of job skills as moderately adequate. It was recommended among others that training needs assessment should precede the design of Business Education curriculum content and such needs should be effectively translated into learning elements by curriculum experts.

Key Words: Assessment, Business Education, Requisite Job Skills, Quality of education, Curriculum Content

Introduction

Education is the most indispensable tool for personal and industrial transformation in our today's contemporary society. It maximizes the creative and imaginative potentials of individuals to respond to constantly changing needs in the world of work. FRN (2013) described education as a vital instrument for national development and social change. Therefore, the goal of education generally and particularly in Nigeria is to inculcate the values of functional skills and competencies necessary for self-reliance through lifelong learning. The FRN (2013) emphasized the need to promote delivery of quality business education curriculum contents at all levels in order to promote competencies required by individuals to effectively manage their business enterprises and earn a sustainable living. Business Education aimed to equip recipients with understanding of business concepts, principles and competencies for the world of work (Nwokike and Okoli, 2015). Deborah (2015) described Business Education as a broad and diverse area of education that equips the individuals with basic skill for

teaching, entrepreneurship, personal life, economic and business understanding, office occupation and vocational practices. Tunji (2022) stated that Business Education covers a wide spectrum of specialized areas or disciplines such as accounting, marketing, management, information and communication technology and entrepreneurship with the goal of preparing individuals for career in business world.

Ideally, the curriculum represents the framework or road map for the students to acquire the requisite knowledge, skills, and values needed to carry out duties. Curriculum can also be explained as a structured set of planned and appropriately sequenced learning experiences designed to facilitate the attainment of education objectives. It encompasses the content, methods, resources, assessments used to guide and support the teaching and learning processes. Enemali (2021) described curriculum design as the processes involved in planning learning opportunities intended to bring about certain desired changes in students and the assessment of the extent to which these changes have taken place. Lock wood (1986) stated that curriculum includes the topics to be presented, the teaching method to be applied, the teaching media required, the facilities to be used, and the selection, checking and testing of instruments. Emmanuel (2018) described curriculum as a plan that consist of learning opportunities for a specific time frame and place, a tool that aim to bring about behaviour changes in students as a result of planned activities. These activities involve the content available to students under the guidance of the school.

Business Education curriculum is that aspect of education designed to equip the citizens of this specialized business knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for the recipients to adjust to economic and social lives. Dike (2019) viewed Business Education curriculum as an educational process of action about opportunities for engagement of students to be educated in Business and educational related disciplines. Agbu (2016) described assessment as the process of gathering information on the attainment of the stated objectives of a course. Stabback (2016) stated that the key indicators of curriculum success is the quality of learning achieved by the students and how effectively they have used that learning in all aspects of their development.

Victor and Olarewaju (2022) described skill as the ability to apply knowledge expertly in new condition based on previous experiences. Being an expert means the delivery of quality work. Job skills are the competence that are necessary for a person to perform a specific task or job with precision. Obananya (2022) said jobs skills involve the capability of a person to execute a task with dexterity, expertise or to apply knowledge in the performance of quality job. Hornby (2015) described quality as the standard of something when it is compared to other things in terms of how good or bad something really is. Olaitan et al. (1999) stated that quality is the worth or goodness associated with the curriculum content, instructional methods, instructional facilities and resource personnel.

As stated by Stabback (2016) a good quality curriculum maximizes the potential for effective enhancement of learning. In support of this, Mohammed and Hassan (2022) carried out a study to determine the influence of Business Education curriculum content on students' acquisition of job skills in College of Education in Nigeria. The study revealed that the curriculum does not provide the students with essential skills required for employment. Odoma (2016) conducted a survey to determine employers' expectation of the work experience needed by Business Education graduates for gainful employment in organisations in Nigeria. The study reported that most employers of labour believe that Business Education graduates do not possess the desired work experience needed for them to be employed. Okoro (2013) studied the ideal quality of University Business Education curriculum required for successful graduates' employability as perceived by lecturers. The study established that the curriculum of Business Education is in-adequate in equipping the graduates for employment. Olaitan et al. (1999) said the present quality of vocational education has assumed amorphous dimension. The authors said there is a downward trend in the quality both in process and product of vocational technical education.

In spite of the well-articulated philosophy of Business Education in Nigeria, recent studies have shown that the graduates of the programme are unemployable because they do not possess the skills for entry level employment in modern business organizations. Agbule (2016) reported that the rising unemployment of Vocational Business Education in Nigeria is likely to get worse if concrete measures are not put in place to improve the current mismatch between the education programmes and labour market requirements. This situation if left unchecked will continue to further undermine the essence of Business Education and will hamper attainment of National objectives. Also, social vices such as armed robbery, kidnapping, banditry will increase. Hence, the researcher finds it necessary to assess the quality of the content of Business Education curriculum in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States, Nigeria in order to make the graduates generally more effective

Research Questions

The study was designed to provide answers to three research questions:

- 1. What is the quality of Business Education Curriculum design process to promote students' acquisition of relevant job skills?*
- 2. how appropriate are the contents of Business Education curriculum earmark for the job skills acquisitions in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States, Nigeria?*
- 3. what is the appropriateness of the resources for teaching delivery that could promote students' acquisition of relevant job skills prior to graduation?*

Literature Review

Curriculum design in the field of vocational business education has in the past been based on introspection approach. In this approach, the curriculum developer completes the document under closed doors, making few or no contacts with stakeholders (Enemali, 2014). This perhaps might have resulted in skills gap between the industries and vocational business education graduates. For example, employers have complained that new graduates are deficient in a broad range of skills. Wagner (2008), and Quinne (2013) established that students lack the knowledge, skill, values and broad competencies and capabilities needed for employment in private and public sectors. Ogbuanya and Shettima (2016) said the evolving nature of job environment places demands on vocational educators to provide the students with a broader range of content and competencies that are workplace relevant. Fouche and Kgapola (2016) established that the markets and business environments are changing almost every day and so the skills sets required by vocational business education. What do the graduating vocational business education students needs to know and be able to do in order to be prepared to meet the challenge of employment?

Markus (2014) said “curriculum must be based on the needs of stakeholders, founded on clearly defined skills and competencies”. In selecting curriculum content for inclusion Markus said the following principles should be borne in mind:

1. The content should be relevant to the programme. An effective curriculum is clearly focused on the planned competencies.
2. The content should be appropriate to the level of the programme. An efficient curriculum is progressive, leading students onwards and building on what has gone before. Material which is basic or too advanced for the student in current stage erodes motivation to learn.
3. The content should be up- to -date and should reflect current trends.

It is widely believed that today’s graduates will change their profession many time before their retirement. In considering a new type of curriculum or significant change to an existing curriculum, one might ask: is there a need for this curriculum? Diamond (1998) describe this as carrying out a “needs analysis” Diamond proposed other useful questions about the curriculum:

1. What are the needs of society in which the programme exist?
2. Is there sufficient resources for the curriculum?
3. What feedback do you have from current students and other stakeholder about existing curriculum

Task Analysis Model

The term task refers to a discrete learning item having definite starting and stopping points which can be performed or learned within a short period of time. Task analysis involves developing a list of tasks that are performed by practitioners in an occupation, validating the list and using the list in the development of a curriculum (Olaitan, Nwachukwu, Igbo, Onyemaehi and Ekong, (1999). According to Olaitan *et al* (1999), there are two stages of task analysis, namely, task listing and task detailing. Task list involves listing all the task that are included in a job according to a sequence of activities of a

job. In task detailing, the steps involved in a task are described. The description presents what the learner should do when performing the steps in the task when accomplishing the task. Olaitan *et al* offer the following steps in developing a task.

- i. Break an occupational area in various tasks
- ii. Break the tasks into specific learning activities
- iii. Validate the activities through a review of job functions to be performed
- iv. Identify materials to be used for performing each activity
- v. Implement the activities.

Morgeson (2017) described task analysis as involving comprehensive listing of tasks performed in a job; and defined task as a collection of related elements performed closely in time. Morgeson further stated that tasks have identifiable beginning and end and are directed towards the achievement of a specific job objectives. Morgeson presented four steps associated with conducting a task analysis:

1. **Develop a comprehensive listing of tasks.** According to Morgeson (2017), the sources of information for generating a task list are workers and their supervisors. This can be done through individuals and group methods. The job analyst could also observe the job and also consult existing documentation for additional insights.
2. **Take the listing of tasks and develop a job analysis survey.** Morgeson (2017) states that similar tasks are typically grouped by duty on the survey. The responses scale to use may involve the time the worker spends on the job, how difficult the task is to perform, frequency of performance of the task or how critical or important the task is to job success, depending on the purpose of the analysis.
3. **Administer a job analysis survey in order to collect quantitative data.** Morgeson (2017) pointed out that the choice has to be made between paper and pencil or web based (or computerized) survey and who should complete it. It is important to ensure that whoever completes the survey has adequate knowledge of the job in question. It is also important to sample widely and also ensure that demographic information should be collected from whoever completes the survey (e.g. age, work experience, gender, and education) so that potential differences among demographic groups can be described.
4. **Summarizing the data and developing a report.** Morgeson (2017) stressed that mean and standard deviation should be reported for each task, and also for all the tasks that a particular duty comprises. Also, it is important to report percentage of respondents who indicate a task is important or very important.

The procedure outlined in the task analysis by Morgeson (2017) and Olaitan *et al* (1999) are particularly relevant to this present study. The researcher followed the procedure in gathering a truly verified body of content for vocational business education since this approach is widely being applied in vocational training schemes. Despite the complaint by industries that the graduates of vocational business education are not well equipped for

employment, there appear to be a lack of information on the extent to which the programme is well designed and whether the implementation is successfully managed as to provide positive gains. Evidently, the literature indicates that little research has been done on the operation of business education curriculum in Nigeria.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study comprise 25 lecturers of Business Education and 171 students of Business Education from Abubaker Tafawa Balewa University [ATBU] Bauchi, and 17 lecturers of Business Education and 37 students of Business Education from Modibbo Adama University (MAU),Yola. The structured questionnaire was used data collection which was Adapted from a checklist developed by Lockwood in 1986. The title of the questionnaire is Assessment of the Quality of Business Education Questionnaire (AQBEQ). The questionnaire was structured as follows; Section A contained eight items relating to the quality of design process. Section B had 13 items that concerns the quality of curriculum content. Section C contained 12 items that relate to the appropriateness of teaching resources. The quality of the items was measured using a five-point rating scale ranging from 1= Very In-adequate, 2 =In-adequate, 3= Moderately Adequate, 4 =Adequate 5= Very Adequate. Two experts from Business Education and one expert in measurement and evaluation from A.T.B.U Bauchi validated the questionnaire. A pilot test was also conducted outside the study population and reliabilities of 0.85 for lecturers and 0.83 for students were obtained.

The structured questionnaires were administered to the lecturers and students by two research assistants. Out of 208 questionnaires distributed to students, 178, representing 85.58 percent were returned. Similarly, out of 42 questionnaires distributed to lecturers, 34, representing 80.95% were returned. Data collected were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation Sambo (2005) said that “the mean is the most frequently used measure of central tendency and most important of all numerical descriptions. The standard deviation is used to show the degrees of variation or spread in the opinions of students. Sithole (2015) showed that the nature of the data permitted the mean and standard deviation of each curriculum design content and methods to be calculated. The real upper and the real lower limits of the numbers used in interpreting the mean values are as follows; 1 represents the interval between 0.50 and 1.49; 2 represents the interval between 1.50 and 2.49; 3 represents the interval between 2.50 and 3.50, 4 represents the interval between 3.50 and 4.49 and 5 represents the interval between 4.50 and 5.49.

Results

Research Question One

What is the quality of the Business Education Curriculum design process to promote students' acquisition of relevant job skills?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviations on the Quality of Business Education Curriculum Design Processes to Promote the Acquisition of Job Skills

S/N	Items	Mean	Std	Remark
<i>Business Education curriculum design processes:</i>				
1.	Are based on training needs assessment	1.97	0.51	IA
2.	Are in line with national performance standards	3.06	1.11	MA
3.	Have course objectives that are clearly defined	3.24	1.16	MA
4.	The training needs are effectively translated into curriculum content	2.12	0.72	IA
5.	Are flexible to allow for periodic changes	2.94	1.11	MA
6.	Take account of good research practices in and beyond the country	2.35	0.84	IA
7.	Are based on proper consultation with legitimate stake holder interests	2.65	1.13	MA
8.	Are led by qualified curriculum professionals	2.09	0.82	IA
Grand mean		2.55	0.93	MA

Data on Table 1 showed that the lecturers considered the quality of items 1,4,6 and 8 as inadequate, with mean values ranging from 1.97 and 2.35 and standard deviation between 0.51 and 0.84. This shows that the lecturers' responses were close, and were not far from the mean values. The results on Table 1 indicate that the grand-mean score is 2.55 while the grand standard deviation is 0.93; hence, the quality involved in the design of business education curriculum for acquisition of job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States is moderately adequate.

Research Question Two

2. how appropriate is the content of the Business Education curriculum for the acquisition of job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States, Nigeria?

Mean and Standard Deviation on the appropriateness of the Curriculum Contents for the Acquisition of Job Skills

S/N	Items	Teachers		Students		Combined mean		Remark
		Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	

9.	<i>There is a clear allocation of course components</i>	3.53	0.88	3.28	0.99	3.32	0.98	MA
10.	<i>The curriculum prepares students through development of generic competencies or capabilities such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity skills</i>	2.47	0.88	2.46	0.92	2.46	0.91	IA
11.	<i>There is clear breakdown of topics that are appropriately sequenced and progressive</i>	3.56	0.88	3.40	0.91	3.43	0.91	MA
12.	<i>The curriculum content is identified with course and session objectives</i>	3.41	0.88	3.13	1.14	3.17	1.10	MA
13.	<i>There is appropriate balance among the descriptions of theory, practice ,and on-the-job</i>	3.74	0.85	2.66	0.98	2.83	1.04	MA
14.	<i>The curriculum is up-to-date and takes account of technological changes</i>	3.53	1.14	3.38	1.00	3.40	1.03	MA
15.	<i>The curriculum encourages the students to take interest in learning to learn</i>	2.94	0.73	3.00	0.91	2.99	0.88	MA
16.	<i>The curriculum is well organized and structured</i>	3.94	0.73	3.46	0.86	3.54	0.85	A
17.	<i>The curriculum contributes to the development of competence</i>	3.41	0.91	3.41	0.84	3.41	0.85	MA
18.	<i>The curriculum emphasizes the use of computers and latest technologies in teaching</i>	2.74	0.70	2.98	0.73	2.94	0.73	MA
19.	<i>The curriculum emphasizes the development of entrepreneurial skills and mindsets</i>	2.68	0.93	2.94	0.74	2.90	0.78	MA
20.	<i>The curriculum emphasizes the development of practical or vocational skills</i>	3.38	0.87	3.18	0.83	3.21	0.84	MA
21.	<i>The curriculum enlarges students' problem-solving skills and behavior</i>	3.59	1.14	2.85	1.00	2.97	1.06	MA
22.	<i>The curriculum prepares students to develop innovative ideas</i>	3.18	1.01	2.80	0.96	2.86	0.98	MA
	<i>Grand mean</i>	3.29	0.90	3.07	0.91	3.10	0.92	MA

Data on Table 2 reveal that the respondents for the study perceived the 14 items on quality of the curriculum content as having the mean score ranging from 2.46 to 3.54. The standard deviation of the 14 items range from 0.73 to 1.10, showing that both respondents were close in their responses. The respondents for this study unanimously considered item 10 on quality of the curriculum content as in-adequate. The standard deviation of the respondents range from 0.73 to 1.14. The results on Table 2 showed that the grand mean score is 3.10, while the grand standard deviation is 0.92; hence, the quality of the curriculum content for acquisition of job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States is moderately adequate.

Research Question Three

3. what is the appropriateness of the resources for teaching delivery that could promote students' acquisition of relevant job skills prior to graduation?

Mean and Standard Deviations on the appropriateness of the resources for teaching delivery.

S/N	Items	Teachers		Students		Combined mean		Remark
		Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	
23.	There are sufficient teaching aids	3.12	0.99	3.14	1.04	3.14	1.03	MA
24.	The teaching methods are student centered and support course content	2.91	1.22	2.87	0.72	2.87	0.82	MA
25.	There is adequate software for learning and teaching	2.35	0.72	2.77	0.85	2.70	0.84	MA
26.	Manuals are provided to provide students with clear guidance on salient points related to course content	2.71	1.07	2.80	0.60	2.78	0.70	MA
27.	Sufficient learning materials are provided to students	2.91	0.74	2.62	0.74	2.67	0.75	MA
28.	Students are given the opportunity to apply what they learnt in real life situations	2.85	0.77	2.54	0.86	2.59	0.85	MA
29.	The quality of handouts, instruction sheets are adequate	3.47	1.09	2.73	1.02	2.85	1.07	MA
30.	Practical skills development are in line with industrial practices	3.29	1.02	3.16	0.95	3.18	0.97	MA
31.	Teachers adopt new and innovative teaching methods in their teaching	3.12	1.08	2.74	1.09	2.80	1.09	MA
32.	The school authorities emphasize	3.65	0.87	3.16	0.95	3.24	0.96	MA

<i>performance</i>								
33.	<i>Theory and practice session are coordinated so that learning is reinforced</i>	3.24	1.28	2.95	1.08	3.00	1.12	MA
34.	<i>Necessary training facilities, equipment and materials are available to support course objectives</i>	3.06	1.16	3.25	1.01	3.22	1.04	MA
	<i>Grand mean</i>	3.06	1.00	2.89	0.91	2.92	0.94	MA

Data on Table 3 indicated that the mean for lecturers ranged from 2.35 to 3.65 with grand mean score of 3.06; and 2.54 to 3.25 with grand mean score of 2.89 for students. It can be seen that the lecturers rated item 25 lowest with mean scores of 2.35, while the students scored item 28 as lowest with score of 2.54. The standard deviations ranged from 0.72 to 1.28 for lecturers and 0.60 to 1.09 for students. This shows that the responses were close, and were not far from the mean values. The results on Table 3 reveal that the grand-mean score is 2.92, while the grand standard deviation is 0.94; hence, the quality of Teaching methods employed to support acquisition of Job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States, Nigeria is moderately adequate.

Summary of Findings

The following findings emerged from the study

1. The Business Education teachers perceived four out of the eight items on the quality of the design processes of Business Education curriculum for acquisition of job skills as moderately adequate and four were rated as in-adequate.

2. The Business Education teachers and students considered 12 out of 14 items on the quality of the content of Business Education curriculum for acquisition of job skills as moderately adequate and one each were rated as in-adequate and adequate respectively.

3. The Business Education teachers and students perceived the 12 items on the quality of teaching methods required to support acquisition of job skills as moderately adequate.

Discussion of Findings

The first objective of this study was to find out the quality of the design processes of Business education curriculum for acquisition of job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa State, Nigeria. The results showed that the teachers rated four out of the eight items as moderately adequate and four were adjudged as in-adequate. This result is consistent with Olaitan et al (1999) who established that the quality of the overall field of Vocational Business Education has assumed amorphous dimension. That the teachers rated identification of training needs as in-adequate is

consistent with Dzasu et al (2012) who established that 62.07 percent of the films studied do not identify the training needs of their worker before embarking on training.

The second objective of the study was to determine the quality of the content of Business Education curriculum for acquisition of job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa States, Nigeria. The results indicate that the respondents for the study considered the quality of 12 out of 14 items as moderately adequate and one each as in- adequate and adequate. The generally low mean values for the items is consistent with Hassan (2022) who established that Business Education curriculum content does not provide the students with the essential skills required for employment. This study is also in accordance with Okoro (2013) who found that the curriculum content is in-adequate for employment, since it has failed to equip the students with adequate skills for available jobs

The third objectives of the study were to ascertain the quality of the teaching methods employed to support acquisition of job skills in Federal Universities in Bauchi and Adamawa State, Nigeria. The results reveal that the respondents for this study perceived the quality of all the 12 items as moderately adequate. This result is in accord with Tafida, et al (2021) who showed that the respondents moderately agree with the teaching methods used by the teacher in the delivery of brick /block laying and concreting trade.'

Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations

- 1. Training needs assessment should precede the design of Business Education curriculum and such needs should be effectively translated into learning contents by curriculum professionals.*
- 2. Business Education curriculum content should be broad- based, utilizing diverse training facilities to enhance its ability to contribute to the development of competence.*
- 3. Innovative teaching methods should be adopted by the teachers and the federal government should devote more funds to support effective delivery of content to the students.*

Conclusion

The study has shown that the quality of the design process of Business Education curriculum design, curriculum content, and methods are moderately adequate in equipping the students with requisite job skills. It is evident from the study that Business Education will be more effective in preparing the students for employment to the extent that the curriculum is based on training needs assessment. This mean that without knowing the real needs, training cannot achieve positive results. It is necessary that the institution should up- date the content of Business Education curriculum while at the same time maintaining minimum academic standards. This is needed as it takes years before the National Universities Commission revised curriculum is out for use. The governments need to be committed to the delivery of quality Business Education curriculum by providing the needed funds to

support the programme, and by engaging the services of qualified and experienced curriculum professionals to design curriculum content for effective operation of the programme.

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