

Rebranding vocational business education towards acquisition of skills for self-reliance to the Nigerian child

UDU, Chikwuo Sussan

School of Business Education
Department of Commerce/Cooperative Education
Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze
email: uduchikwuo@gmail.com

IKEANYIONWU Chioma Lovethmary

School of Business Education
Department of Accounting Education
Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze

UMEIFEKWEM Chinyere Mariatta

School of Business Education
Department of Commerce/Cooperative Education
Federal College Of Education (Technical), Umunze

&

Ngozi Grace KELECHI-EJIKE

School of Business Education
Department of Office Technology Management (OTM) Education
Federal College Of Education (Technical), Umunze

Abstract

Business Education is an integral aspect of Vocational Education. Graduates of business education are unemployed because they lack entrepreneurial knowledge required for self-reliance. This paper examines the importance of rebranding vocational business education towards skill acquisition so as to impart into Nigerian child the skills that will enable him to be self-employed if not employed. The paper recommends among -others that much emphasis should be placed on entrepreneurial education so as to impart these skills early in Nigerian child. The paper also recommends that National Policy on Education should be reviewed at least once every two years so as to be relevant in this fast changing world of technology.

Introduction

Every human society, whether traditional or modern has its own system for training and educating its people. Education in Nigeria is an instrument "par excellence" for effective national development and self-reliance (Ikegbu, 2015). Khaled (2000) holds the view that education prepares the individual for effective and efficient living within his/her community. Education equips individuals with skills, knowledge and competencies required for successful integration and

earning a living in the society in which they live. Vocational Business education, likewise, stresses the need for individuals to acquire appropriate skills, abilities and competencies to live and contribute to the development of the society (National Policy on Education, 2004).

Business education is one of the major occupational areas of vocational education that is highly utilitarian in content and scope. Ibe (2009) defined Business Vocational Education in its broad sense as of instruction that consists of two parts:

- a) Office Education, for office careers through initial, refresher and upgrading education leading to employability and advancement in occupations.
- b) General Business Education. This is a programme that provides students with information and competencies, which are needed by all in managing personal business world.

Acquisition of skill is very crucial for the overall development of any nation. The need for skill acquisition programme cannot be over emphasized. Acquisition of new skills and improvement of old ones enable people to direct their efforts towards increasing the quality and quantity of their products. Otolu (2011), notes that acquisition of relevant skills can help Nigerian child to perform better roles as a citizen through the cultivation of better attitudes to work and life.

Nature and Scope of Vocational Business Education

Vocational Business Education is part of total education programme that imparts knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudinal and problem-solving competencies which one requires in order to perform in the business world as a producer and consumer of goods and services. Porreca (2016) states that business education equips students with entry level skills in the various business and office occupation. Vocational business education found its roof on the following mission of business vocational education identified the Policies Commission for Business at Economic Education (2010).

1. To educate individuals for and about business;
2. to provide continuous programmes of planned learning experiences designed to equip individuals to fulfill effectively, three roles;
 - a) to produce and distribute goods and services as workers;
 - b) use the results of production as consumers/and
 - c) to make judicious socio- economic decision as citizens.
3. to provide career information that helps students relate their interests, needs and

abilities to occupational opportunities in business;

4. to provide educational opportunities for students preparing for careers in field other than business, to acquire knowledge and skills needed to function effectively in those careers

Vocational business education is competence - based. Nanassy, Malsbary and Tone (2011) noted that success in vocational business education is measured in terms of learner's ability to perform certain tasks at a given level of efficiency and effectiveness. Based on this, vocational business education aims at imparting education for business so as to enable Nigerian child to develop occupational skills, self-reliance, self realization, human relations, economic efficiency and civic responsibility.

Vocational business education produces the manpower that possesses the requisite knowledge, skills and attitude for harnessing other resources and bringing them into a co-operative relationship in order to yield the goods and services demanded by members of the public. Abegunde (1990) reports that vocational business education equips people with skills and knowledge needed to occupy job positions in the office. Business offices are passing through revolution. Vocational business education is needed to play the role of imparting an up-to-date knowledge to office personnel and future office workers.

The scope of vocational and technical education portrays the occupational areas of this aspect of education and the sections (departments) located under each area. The various areas and sections of vocational business education include:

- Accounting education
- Secretarial education

Accounting Education

This means imparting the skills and competencies in Accounting to the present generation of students and teachers for their uses in the world of work. Accounting education can lead one to open up business centers during typing, photocopying, binding etc Ijeoma (2015).

Secretarial Education

This is designed to equip students with secretarial skills for employment in various fields of endeavours. Students of this programme are exposed to courses in their special areas as well as in general education.

Objectives of Vocational Business Education

Vocational business education at NCE level has the following set objectives:

1. To produce well qualified and competent N C E g r a d u a t e s in business subjects who will be able to t e a c h b u s i n e s s subjects in our secondary schools and o t h e r r e l a t e d educational institutions.
2. To produce NCE Business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of business education into the society.
3. To produce NCE business Teachers who will be involved in the much desired revolution of vocational development right from the primary and secondary schools.
4. To equip students with necessary competencies so as to qualify them for a post-NCE degree programme in business education.
5. To equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the office as well as for self-employment. Osuala (2017) also identifies the objectives of business education at any level to include:
 - To provide guidance for each individual in solving problems of personal living, educational choice, occupational choice, and adjustment. Business education is tailored towards providing the individual with requisite skills and attitudes for effective performance in a business profession in addition to equipping individual with the ability to adapt to work situation. Ike (2013).
 - To provide the entrepreneurship education. Business education curriculum regardless of the level which it is offered aims at developing some understanding of the free enterprise system and encouraging the individuals to ultimately own, manage and administer their own businesses, Ibe (2012).
 - Developing basic awareness of the contribution which business and office employees make to the Nigeria economic system, Igwe (2010).
 - Improving personal qualities and building attitudes necessary for adjustment to personal and employment situations. Uwaezuoke, (2012)

- Developing the abilities of the students to their maximum.
- Guiding individuals for suitable placement in business and office employment.

Business Education for Skills Acquisition and Self-Reliance

Skill acquisition ensures that people possess specific saleable skills thus the chances and opportunity of getting jobs or becoming self-reliant becomes higher. Olaitan (2016) states that skill acquisition is concerned with the learning and developing skills for a gainful occupation. In other words, the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies are equipment for the individual to have and contribute to the development of his/her society.

Self-reliance is the degree to which somebody's entrepreneurial skill can sustain him / her for purposes of profit maximization (Nwosu, 2002). One of the national goals of primary education is to give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity (NPE, 2004). Odenuga (2015) opines that for one to contribute to national development one has' to be self-employed in a small scale industry sector.

Skill acquisitions have a number of implications for individual as well as the nation, Okocha (2014) states that people with skills become better and more useful human beings at home and in the society at large. Uzoigwe (2010) opines that vocational education provides skills aimed at improving the welfare of individuals, families and society at large through the cultivation of basic scientific approach and developing skills necessary for survival. Improved conditions and opportunities for individuals through functional skill acquisition programmes will ensure that a good proportion of individuals are armed with survival skills.

With adequate skills for self reliance, people will be able to enjoy good health and live up to ripe old age, bring up generation of useful and healthy citizens as they transfer these skills to their children. Vocational business education will play the role of developing the manpower that will help the country attain her development objectives. Vocational business education has the potentials for helping Nigeria to attain her objectives and solve the problems militating against the development of the economy. Self-reliant economy cannot be attained in an environment where individuals do not possess employable skills for both paid and self-employment. For a country to be adjudged economically strong the economy should be diversified. Skill acquisition gives room for this diversification. Vocational business education will help to produce the crop

of Nigerians that will be able to set up their own businesses in the private sector so as to produce goods and services and create jobs for others.

Vocational business education will help in no small measure in imparting the knowledge of modern technology to future managers, administrators, and office personnel. It will equally help in reducing crime rate in Nigeria by imparting saleable skills to the worthwhile ventures other than crime.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Vocational business education can play an enviable role to Nigerian child which will lead to the development of Nigerian economy. Essentially, vocational business education will produce managers, entrepreneurs, administrators and office personnel. It will impart skills and knowledge necessary for Nigerian child to set up and manage his own businesses.

From the foregoing, this paper recommends the following:-

- The National Policy on Education should be reviewed at least every two years so as to be relevant in the fast changing world, and also to give vocational business education the desired emphasis. This should be done to embrace the modern technological changes in the technological world so that when these skills are imparted on the individuals, they can contribute meaningfully towards the development of the economy and work towards being self-reliant.
- Qualified teachers should be made available for teaching business subjects. Preparing Nigerian child for work would be better done by teachers that are qualified for the job for which the students are prepared. Emphasis should be placed on recruitment of teachers that have industrial experience and not merely academic qualification.
- Schools should be provided with equipment necessary for teaching and learning of business subjects. Such should resemble the ones used in business and industry in the occupations for which students are prepared.
- As the Nigerian children are prepared to work in the industry, the cooperation of the industry should be sought in the planning and implementation of vocational business education curriculum.
- Business skills should be made compulsory at all levels of education because every aspect of human endeavours is business inclined.

- Curriculum Planners should be experts in their various disciplines so as to be able to address problems related to their areas particularly in this era of technology.
- Government should ensure that when policies are made, their implementation should not take too long to commence.
- Emphasis should be placed on Information Communication Technology in school curriculum which will enable individuals to be better informed with current trends in the Society and in world at large.
- Entrepreneurial education which is the main brain behind skills acquisition should be introduced at all levels of education so that Nigerian child can acquire skills early in life that will make him self-reliant.

References

- Abegunde, M.B. (1990). Opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship in office education, *business Education Journal*, 2(4). 93-100
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). National Policy on Education (4th ed). NERDC.
- Ibe, E.G. (2012). Foundation of Vocational Education 3rd edition Nsukka, Fullabu Publishing Co.
- Ike, D. (2013). Higher perspective in entrepreneurship development Abakaliki: Glajoh and company limited.
- Igwe, O. (2010). Promoting innovation in teaching and learning problems, processes and instructional mechanism.
- Khaled, I. (2000) Education problems in the North: what role for Zumunta Association USA Inc. Panel discussion at Zumunta national convention, October 14.
- Nanassy, L.C., Malsbany, D.lk., and Tone, H.A. (2011) Principles and trends in business education. Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing.
- Nwosu, D.C (2002) "Re- envisioning Teacher Education models through developmentalism and the quest for innovation teacher education in a new century" In P.O. Nwokolo and G.C. Igborghor. Eds. ***Reinforcing Education in Nigeria*** Benin City. Sylva Influence.
- Odenuga, V.O. (2015) Strategies for Technological Development. Princely Publishers Nig. Ltd.
- Okocha, C.C. (2014) Manpower Development in Nigeria. *Vocational and Technical Education Journal*. 3, 1 .
- Olaitan, V. (2016) Training for Effective Management of Vocational Education and Self-reliance. *Vocational Technical Education*. Nigerian Vocational Association Publication.

Osuala, E.G. (2017) A Handbook of Vocational and Technical Education Obosi: Pacific Publishers. The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1774.

Otoli, A.D (2011) Education and Empowerment. Fullabu Publishing Co.

Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education (1973). This we believe about the role of business education in consumer education. *Business Education Forum*, 27 (8), 14 -15.

Porreca, A.G. (2016) Decision ahead for office education administrators and supervisors. *Business Education Forum*, 30 (8), 29-31.

Uzoigwe, P.O. (2010) Education For All A Philosophy for Nigerian Education. Heinemann.

Uwaezuoke, H. (2012). *Educational policy and co-operation in Africa*: Paper presented at the conference of Minister of Education and Economic planning Abuja.