

APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BUSINESS STUDIES' CURRICULUM IN UPPER BASIC EDUCATION IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE OF ENUGU STATE

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Abstract: The major purpose of this study is to appraise the implementation of the Business Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Education in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu state. A descriptive survey research design was utilized. The population of the study comprises all 61 Business Studies instructors from the 31 Upper Basic public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Census sampling technique was adopted for the study. Instrument for data collection was Questionnaire on Appraisal of Implementation of Business Studies Curriculum which was validated by experts and Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82 was established. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results yielded answers to research questions. The study concluded, among other things, that NCE is the minimum qualification for teaching at the upper basic level; basic facilities required for implementing business studies curriculum at upper basic education level in Enugu education zone are insufficient and student-centered teaching approaches are used in implementing business studies curriculum at the upper basic education level in Enugu education zone; Inadequate facilities and low teacher enthusiasm are key implementation obstacles. Business Studies is taught at the upper basic education level in Enugu education zone. As a result, the study's key recommendation is that the government should re-strategize and strengthen efforts to provide necessary educational resources to facilitate the implementation of the Business Studies curriculum at Upper Basic Education level in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu state.

Key Words: Appraisal, Business Studies, Curriculum, Upper Basic Education.

INTRODUCTION

Education is seen as a crucial instrument for achieving national objectives such as sustained growth, equitable socioeconomic development, and poverty elimination. Hence, the drive to improve these indices in Nigeria through quality education is being given an uninterrupted momentum since the return to democracy in 1999. One of these tremendous impetuses over the decades is the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2004) expanded compulsory schooling from primary through junior secondary school levels. Universal Basic Education is a government educational reform initiative in

Nigeria that provides that all school-aged children are entitled to a free, compulsory, and continuous 9-year education, divided into two levels: 6 years of basic education and 3 years of junior secondary education. The Universal Basic Education Programme, according to Adeneye and Oludola (2013), is a Federal Government of Nigeria intervention program aimed at providing uniform and qualitative basic education for all children in elementary and junior secondary school.

Nigeria's educational system is built on the Universal Education Programme. That is, nine years of basic education (6 years of lower basic and three years of junior secondary education, known as upper basic),

three years of senior secondary education, and four years of university study. Unlike in the past, when graduates were employed, Nigeria now has a high unemployment rate. To address this, Emeasoba (2018) opined that a series of reviews of educational policies aimed at job creation, self-employment after graduation, and the acquisition of appropriate skills that could be transformed into economic, social, physical, and mental competencies and contribute to the nation's development have been conducted in order to find a long-term solution to the unemployment crisis. As a result, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) mandates that the upper basic education (junior secondary) component of the UBE be both pre-vocational and academic in nature. Prevocational studies were therefore introduced in upper basic education to provide the groundwork for national, technical and economic growth.

Every junior secondary school student is required to pursue at least one pre-vocational option under this rule. These prevocational themes provide students with basic courses that will help them get more information and talents for business and educational advancement, among other purposes. Business studies is one of the pre-vocational electives. According to Okoli and Okorie (2015), business studies is jam-packed with all of the necessary information, skills, experiences, and activities to help students achieve their junior secondary school goals. This was replicated in the Business Studies curriculum, since eliminating the previously segmented particular subjects was the apparent approach to design a curriculum that would offer a comprehensive introduction to the notion of business. (Warui, 2014).

As a result, five subjects (bookkeeping, commerce, office practice, shorthand, and typewriting) were combined to become Business Studies. The goal is to help students appreciate the five components and how they relate to one another; to improve students' knowledge and comprehension of the role of

commerce in the national economy; to improve students' knowledge and understanding of the fundamental ideas and principles underlying actual commercial operations and to help students prepare for the business world. According to Otemuyiwa and Attah (2019), business studies curriculum was specifically designed to teach learners the principles of business acumen and entrepreneurship. Business studies is also intended to prepare junior secondary students for further business studies education. It is designed to provide those who want to work right away with orientation and essential skills to start a profession. However, according to the Junior Secondary Certificate Examination (JSCE, 2004) syllabus, the goals of business studies include preparing students to: acknowledge the significance of trade in connection to other sectors of production and recognize the importance of commerce and its interconnection with other sectors of production; learn and understand the essential concepts and principles of business action using real-world circumstances, particularly in a developing economy; in current company activity, identify the types of transactions and open the relevant books of accounts; gain proficiency in office procedures or practice; learn Office/organizational ethics, as well as to type mail able letters at a constant speed/time; master the idea of precise shorthand outlines at a preset pace and duration, transcription of basic shorthand passage(s) into long hand with accurate spellings and prepare for more business, bookkeeping, office practice/procedure, typing, and shorthand work.

These objectives are aligned with UBE objectives, which include building adequate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communication, and life skills, as well as the ethical, moral, and civic principles required to build a firm foundation for life-long learning. The curriculum contains a number of activities that require students to debate issues, solve problems using application software,

participate in business simulations, think critically, collaborate collaboratively, and make business judgements in order to achieve the aims of business studies. Okorie and Okolie (2015).

The curriculum is intended to inculcate in Students information and abilities that will enable them to adapt to changes in office technology as well as build a wide awareness of business operations, the structure and functions of business organizations, and their interrelationships. "A set of planned and guided learning experiences and learning outcomes developed by the school through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences for the learners' willful growth in personal-social competence," according to the definition which is typically driven and interpreted by teachers (Udesen, 2016). As a result, Oluwalola (2019) said it should be noted that, in the context of introduction of prevocational subjects into basic education, it is widely assumed that the study of business studies will result in the development and instillation in students of the appropriate and essential business skills and competences. However, if dispassionate and routine evaluation of its implementation by the major stakeholders is not conducted on a regular basis as a quality assurance activity, the process of teaching students the business studies skills and competencies that will allow them to fit into the system whenever/wherever they are hired may fall short. Many components, such as design method, clear inspired and motivating contents, implementation, buy-in and competence of the drivers (teachers), quality of teaching, teaching pedagogy, availability of instructional materials/facilities, and learners assessment method, have been observed to be important in ensuring that a curriculum meets its purpose, according to Adesikeola (2015).

The efficient implementation of the business education curriculum at the upper basic education level in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State,

necessitates the availability of essential human and material resources for the program. In a study to determine the problems and prospects of teaching business studies in secondary schools, Santos (Nd) discovered that the problems in teaching Business Studies, like any other subject, could be attributed to a lack of teaching materials - sometimes some teachers are not qualified to teach the subject; in other cases, qualified teachers lack the necessary teaching materials. Furthermore, sometimes the student or learner is disinterested in the subject and hence performs poorly.

Because teacher characteristics are critical to the implementation of any subject curriculum, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) undertook the first serious attempt to prepare National Certificate in Education (NCE) instructors who would fulfill the curriculum framework and course goals of the National Certificate in Education (NCE) Classroom instructors' teaching approaches are connected to the teacher variable. It is common knowledge that the teacher's teaching style can make the information inefficient or unpleasant. This is because a good instructor who employs an inadequate teaching style gets poor outcomes.

Furthermore, the significance of facilities to the overall success of any educational enterprise can never be overstated. Educational scholars underline the need of offering adequate training and learning facilities on this basis. This is especially true for technical courses such as business education, thus UBE schools must have effective current office machinery, computers, multimedia technology, word processors and electronic typewriters, and office copiers are examples of training facilities and equipment. There is also a requirement for enough working and storage space. Nonetheless, the curriculum's creators were mindful of the reality that curriculum implementation does not occur in a vacuum. As a result, in order to improve the development of marketable skills and employment

opportunities, NERDC based effective curriculum implementation on appropriate human and material resources (Okorie & Okoli, 2014).

Statement of Problem

Business studies is recognized as one of the key approaches to achieve success in life and employment. It is also seen as a method of providing teenagers with the essential abilities to be inventive and self-sufficient, as opposed to relying primarily on white collar professions. Despite efforts to instill business skills and competences in students through exposure to business studies curriculum, which should result in the development of new job prospects, the researcher has found that graduates' entrepreneurial activity levels remain considerably below expectations. Given the enormous human and material resources invested by all stakeholders in establishing such entrepreneurial subjects as business studies curriculum in upper basic education, this scenario is both unsatisfactory and concerning. The answer may lie in the proper execution of the program itself. Thus, the problem of this research is to obtain an answer to the question is to what extent has Enugu Education zone to implement the business studies curriculum in upper basic education level?

Purpose of the Study

The main goal of this research was to appraise the implementation of the Business Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Education in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu state. This study specifically determined:

- ❖ The qualifications of business studies instructors implementing the curriculum in Enugu education zone at the upper basic education level.
- ❖ Available business studies facilities in the Enugu education zone at the upper basic education level for implementing business studies curriculum.
- ❖ The teaching methods used in the implementation of business studies curriculum at the upper basic education level in Enugu education zone.

- ❖ The challenges faced in implementing business studies curriculum at the upper basic education level in Enugu education zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- What are the qualifications of the business studies instructors implementing the curriculum in the Enugu education zone at upper basic education level?
- Which business studies facility at the upper basic education level in the Enugu education zone is adequate?
- What are the teaching methods employed in the Enugu education zone while implementing business studies curriculum at the upper basic level?
- What are the challenges faced in implementing business studies curriculum at the upper basic education level in Enugu education zone.

METHODS

The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The research area is Enugu Education Zone in Enugu State, Nigeria. Enugu education zone is one of six (6) education zones in Enugu state, covering the local governments of Enugu North, Enugu East, and Isi-Uzo. The Enugu Education Zone includes both urban and rural villages, with a sizable section of its working population involved in business, artisanship, and white-collar jobs in the city. The Enugu Education Zone was chosen by the researcher because the LGA s within it included public schools in both rural and urban areas. This study's population consists of all 61 Business studies instructors from Enugu's 31 upper basic public secondary schools. This includes 19 business studies instructors in Enugu North's 9 public schools, 25 in Enugu East's 10 public schools, and 17 in Isi Uzo LGA's 12 public senior secondary schools (PPSMB, 2021). The sample for this study is 61 Business studies instructors from the Enugu Education Zone. Because the population is manageable, all of the

research region's schools and teachers were used. Instrument for data collection was Questionnaire on Appraisal of Implementation of Business Studies Curriculum (QAIBSC) which was validated by experts and Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82 was established. QAIBSC has two sections: A and B. The copies were administered to and retrieved

from respondents. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What are the qualifications of the business studies instructors implementing the curriculum in the Enugu education zone at upper basic education level?

Table 1: *Qualifications of Business Studies teachers*

| LGA | NCE | B.Ed | B.Sc. | M.Ed | Total | Number Qualified (%) | Number Not Qualified (%) |
|--------------|-----|------|-------|------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Enugu North | 12 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 19 | 18 (95) | 1 (5) |
| Enugu East | 14 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 25 | 25 (100) | 0 (0) |
| Isi Uzo | 15 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 17 (100) | 0 (0) |
| Total | 41 | 14 | 1 | 5 | 61 | 60 (97) | 1(1.6) |

The table indicates that there are 61 active business studies teachers in the three LGAs at the upper basic education level, 41 of them (12 for Enugu North, 14 for Enugu East, and 15 for Isi Uzo) have NCE as a teaching certification. A total of 14 teachers hold a Bachelor of Education (4 for Enugu North, 8 for Enugu East, and 2 for Isi Uzo). Enugu North has one teacher with a B.Sc. in an associated subject, whereas Enugu East and Isi Uzo LGAs have none. The data also shows that 5 teachers (2 from Enugu North and 3 from Enugu East) hold Masters Degrees.

Research Question Two: Which business studies facility at the upper basic education level in the Enugu education zone is adequate?

Table 2: *A dequacy of Business Studies facilities*

| S/N | Facilities in higher basic schools for implementing UBE programme are | Number Required | Number Available | Decision |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------|
| 1 | Class rooms (Classroom/student Ratio) | 1:45 | 1:51 | Not Enough |
| 2 | Record material eg. Sdtbiodata folder | 1 per class | 1 per class | Adequate |
| 3 | Health materials eg. First Aid box | 1 per class | None Available | Not Enough |
| 4 | Counsellor | General | None Available | Not Enough |
| 5 | Office accommodation (Staffroom) | General | Available | Adequate |
| 6 | Play ground | Field | Available | Adequate |
| 7 | Facilities for storage | 1 per class | None Available | Not Enough |
| 8 | Library facilities/benches and stools | General | Not equipped | Not Enough |
| 9 | Tables and chairs | 1 per sdt | 1 per std | Adequate |
| 10 | Textbooks | 1 per sdt | Not sufficient | Not Enough |
| 11 | Technical workshop | General | Not equipped | Not Enough |

Table 2 The data showed that most facilities are not adequate. The result revealed that record materials such as a child bio data folder, office accommodation (Staffroom), a playground, and tables and chairs are adequate while others are not.

Research Question Three: What are the teaching methods employed in the Enugu education zone while implementing business studies curriculum at the upper basic level?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of teaching methods

| S/N | In implementing business studies curriculum at the classroom level: | X | SD | D |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| 1 | Instructional materials are used to reduce abstract conception | 2.75 | 1.21 | Accepted |
| 2 | Practical activities are organized for students | 2.18 | 1.16 | Rejected |
| 3 | Simple experiments are demonstrated | 2.27 | 1.26 | Rejected |
| 4 | Lessons are mostly not teacher centered | 3.76 | 1.22 | Accepted |
| 5 | Projects methods are used | 1.25 | 1.20 | Rejected |
| 6 | Students participate in classwork | 3.31 | 1.21 | Accepted |
| 7 | Formative evaluation are used to guide lesson progress | 1.22 | 1.14 | Rejected |
| 8 | Students are encouraged to ask questions | 2.58 | 1.26 | Accepted |
| 9 | Assignment and exercise are given at the lesson's conclusion | 2.56 | 1.16 | Accepted |
| 10 | Students are encouraged to respond to questions | 2.42 | 1.20 | Rejected |

Table 3 indicated that instructors use the techniques in items 1, 4, 6, 8, and 9 while not using the practices in items 2, 3, 5, 7, and 10 when implementing the curriculum of Business Studies in the classroom in the Enugu education zone.

Research Question Four: What are the challenges faced in implementing business studies curriculum at the upper basic education level in Enugu education zone?

Table 4: Mean ratings and standard deviation on challenges face in implementing Business Studies curriculum

| S/N | Among the difficulties in implementing business studies curriculum in schools are: | X | SD | D |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| 1 | Poor teaching method adopted by teachers | 2.21 | 1.10 | Rejected |
| 2 | Adequate qualified teachers | 1.48 | 1.28 | Rejected |
| 3 | Lack of instructional materials | 2.54 | 1.12 | Accepted |
| 4 | Over populated class size | 2.42 | 1.22 | Rejected |
| 5 | Students truant behavior | 2.15 | 1.21 | Rejected |
| 6 | Not enough time in the timetable allocated to Business studies to cover the content | 2.37 | 1.23 | Rejected |
| 7 | Low teacher motivation as a result poor working condition | 3.87 | 1.21 | Accepted |
| 8 | Poor supervision on the part of relevant Government agencies | 1.13 | 1.14 | Rejected |
| 9 | Inadequacy of Business studies curriculum in | 1.02 | 1.22 | Rejected |

meeting learners' intere

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| 10 | Lack of physical facilities, eg. Technical workshop | 2.82 | 1.11 | Accepted |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------|

Table 4 indicated that items 3, 7, and 10 posed challenges towards implementation of business studies curriculum at the upper primary level in the Enugu education zone while items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9 did not.

Discussion

The study's findings are presented in relation to the research topics that motivated the investigation.

This poll found that 97% of teachers are qualified to teach Business studies at the junior secondary level since they have at least an NCE. The NCE is the minimal certification for teaching in junior secondary schools, according to the National Policy on Education. As a result, one might infer that the NCE is still widely accepted by the government as a fundamental teaching certificate. According to data, there are 61 Business studies instructors in the 31 public junior secondary schools. This means that each of the study region's 31 junior secondary schools has at least one Business studies instructor. Statistics show that 41 of the teachers have an NCE, 14 have a B.Ed, and 5 have a Master's degree in education. This is a positive trend since it shows that the state's public schools attract and support additional studies for her instructors. There can be no doubt that such human capacity development will have a favorable influence on pupils' growth and academic achievement. When Okorie and Okoli (2014) studied the adequacy of business studies instructors for the implementation of the upper basic education business studies curriculum in Ebonyi State, they determined that the quantity and quality of business teachers were adequate. The findings contradict those of Otemuyiwa and Attah (2019), who found a scarcity of business studies instructors in all schools in a study to analyze the implementation of business studies curriculum in secondary schools in Kwali Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

On the other hand, one (3%) had a B.Sc. in a related subject. This does not qualify them to teach Business Studies since, according to the legislation, they lack the necessary abilities and pedagogical base to support teaching and learning. Encouragement of this might be a significant hindrance to the appropriate implementation of business studies curriculum in the Enugu education zone.

The information gathered in response to research question two determined the physical facilities utilized in delivering the Business studies curriculum at junior secondary schools in the study region. Findings revealed that facilities such as Record material, e.g. Students bio data folder; office accommodation (Staffroom); playground; and enough tables and chairs are supplied in the schools. These input materials are critical for meeting the requirements of students and supporting the execution of the Business studies program. The provision of these facilities is in line with the government's aims of instilling knowledge about the structure and operation of institutions for the benefit of the people. The use of these physical facilities as provided for the adoption of the Business studies curriculum in Enugu education is intended to assist the development of the competences and abilities that students would gain in order to satisfy school standards and prepare them to face the challenges of life, work, and entrepreneurship. Regrettably, availability of vital education resources such as Class rooms (Classroom/student Ratio); Health materials e.g. First Aid box; Counsellor; Facilities for storage; Library facilities/benches and stools; Textbooks and; Technical workshop were found to be inadequate at the schools. These facilities enable learners to be

open to new ideas and becoming eager to explore. This will greatly restrict the topic curriculum's successful implementation in the study site. This is important since the availability and sufficiency of human and material resources is crucial to the proper implementation of curriculum.

According to the findings of the current investigation, instructional materials are used to reduce abstract conception; classes are often not teacher-centered, and students participate in classwork. Other goals include encouraging students to ask questions and providing tasks and activities at the end of the course. These eclectic pedagogical classroom practices, in which instructors performed classroom practices by blending active (learner-based) pedagogies with a didactic teaching style, are primarily geared at students. These findings suggest that the teaching strategies employed by business professors to apply curricular information are appropriate for the program.

On the other hand, in implementing the subject curriculum, the practice of Organizing practical activities for students; Demonstrating simple experiments; Lessons being mostly teacher-centered; Use of projects methods; Use of formative evaluation to guide lesson progress and encouraging students to answer questions are not adopted. These pedagogical practices are student centered and could complement and encourage innovation and enquiry in students.

Findings show that among the challenges of implementing the Business studies curriculum are Lack of instructional materials; Low teacher motivation as a result poor working condition and; Lack of physical facilities, eg. Technical workshop. These challenges are similar to those found by Agbo, Okenjom, Nwankwo and Akoloh (2017), a research that looked at how school managers used the new senior high school curriculum to address modern concerns in Nigeria. Achimugu (2015) discovered that poor teacher motivation and an inadequate

laboratory was a research that explored the determinants impacting In Kogi State, Nigeria, the senior secondary education chemistry curriculum has been implemented well.

The study's findings, on the other hand, revealed that inadequately qualified teachers, overcrowded class sizes, student truancy, and a lack of time in the timetable allotted to Business studies to cover the content are not barriers to effective implementation of the Business studies curriculum. Respondents also criticized poor monitoring by key government officials and the insufficiency of business studies curriculum in meeting learners' interests as not creating a challenge.

Conclusions

The study concluded that teachers implementing Business Studies curriculum in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State are qualified. However, there are inadequate infrastructure for effective implementation of the curriculum.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided in light of the research findings to enhance the implementation of the Business studies curriculum in the study region:

1. Schools should prioritize basic infrastructure such as libraries, which are crucial to the execution of the subject curriculum, so that they are adequately equipped for successful Business studies teaching and learning. As a result, the provision of instructional materials should remain a critical component of the government's efforts to guarantee the effective implementation of educational initiatives.
2. The government should continue to recruit talented teachers as a direct effort to increase human capital at the secondary education level. Teachers should also be encouraged to improve their teaching skills by attending seminars and workshops and engaging in in-service training.

3. Governments should devote enough finances to the education sector in order to address overcrowding in classrooms and raise the teacher-to-student ratio.

4. Government should build and invest in her teachers and educational facilities as a panacea to incessant crises in the educational sector

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