

**BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR
STUDENTS THROUGH EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP IN
KANO STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This research was conducted to ascertain the influence of business education programme in building students' capacity through effective school-industry partnerships in Kano State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was used by the researchers. The study's population comprised 122 business education lecturers in two Federal Colleges of Education in Kano State, Nigeria. The whole population was considered for the study without a sample because it was not large and a structured four-point rating scale questionnaire was utilised for the collection of data. The research questions were answered with the aid of Mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were tested with z-test at 0.05 level of significance. The Findings of the study revealed that some of the available business education programmes for school-industry partnership are effective for students' capacity building while some are ineffective and there are numerous constraints to effective school-industry partnership for capacity building. Furthermore, there were no significant differences in the opinions of the lecturers in FCE(T), Bichi and those in FCE, Kano in terms of the effectiveness of the available programmes for building the capacity of the students through school-industry partnership and the constraints to effective collaboration between the industry and the school for students' capacity building. In line with the findings, the study concluded that the practical experiences acquired by students of business education from SIWES and teaching practice were not adequate to make them function effectively in the real work situation. As a way forward, the study suggested that the industry and the academic institutions should effectively collaborate to improve students' practical skills that are needed by employers of labour; schools should create liaison offices to close the communication gap between them and the industry; government should encourage partnership between the school and the industry and the Association of business educators of Nigeria (ABEN) should constantly be organising seminars, workshops and conferences for business education lecturers and the industry in order to make them know the benefits of such partnerships.

Keywords: Business education, school-Industry partnership, capacity building, SIWES, teaching practice

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Introduction

Governments of different countries of the world have been encouraging linkages between the institutions of learning and the industry. This development has recently gained ground and it is taken to be an instrument for promoting economic growth and development. Policymakers across the world also seek to encourage schools to be entrepreneurial through active engagement with the productive sectors of the economy. These interrelationships are specifically important to Nigeria because schools were established to attain the following objectives that were stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013):

- To contribute to national development through high level manpower training.
- To develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and the society.
- To develop intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), prominent among the objectives of the country's educational policy is to ensure that the learners acquire the desired mental and physical competencies, abilities and skills that are necessary for them to survive and contribute to the development of the society. This objective could be attained through numerous means. Encouragement of partnership between institutions of learning and organization (public and private) outside the school system is however seen as the surest way to realize the objective.

Business education is an element of vocational education. A deduction from Gidado, et.al (2021) shows that vocational education is a discipline that is patterned towards skills acquisition and career development that would lead to gainful employment, youth empowerment, income generation and poverty alleviation. According to Akaeze and Chukwu (2020), business education focuses on a nation's economic system, identifies and explains the rate of business contentment and experiences which enables the recipients to effectively participate as citizens, workers and consumers. Odu (2010) also states that business education is an important instrument for a nation's human resource development and utilization. Based on the aforementioned, it is obvious that the discipline is an important tool for capacity building.

Capacity-building is future oriented and a key factor for enhancing efficient and effective use of technology that would lead to sustainability of development. A successful capacity building strengthens the capability of an organization to realise her goals and objectives and enhances her capability to positively impact the lives of her members. According to Lammed and Ojeleye (2020), capacity building is a way of equipping people with skills and knowledge that are required for performing effectively and efficiently for better productivity. It therefore explains the need for a dynamic process which enables people and agencies to develop social and technical capabilities for identifying and analysing problems and proffering solutions to them. This implies that it is an attempt at enhancing the capabilities and skills of human resource which would make them more productive by exhibiting the desired level of competency.

Jules (2020) believes that critical analysis and self-reflectiveness are the major qualities which enhance effectiveness in capacity development/building. There is dire need for developing human capacity through numerous educational programmes that are offered at the various levels of education in Nigeria. Collaboration between the school and the industry which develops the capability of the students through acquisition of the skills that are needed in the real work situation is most prominent among them. As put forward by Emeasoba (2016), school-industry partnership is an extensive communication or relationship at different levels which connects different activities with the aim of exchanging knowledge and technology between the industry and the school. The author further states that school-industry partnership has to do with a

collaboration between the industrial sector and the school to create a conducive learning atmosphere for learners to acquire hands-on knowledge, skills and experience and also develop appropriate attitude to work. This implies that the school-industry partnership is a relationship involving the school and the public as well as the business sector and it comes up due to an agreement(s) between or among the parties to set goals as well as develop a plan of action for achieving the goals. School-industry partnership provides activities which include; use of facilities, students' directed projects, in-service training for staff members, mandatory research and software development. Furthermore, Emeasoba and Mmuo (2018) opine that school-industry partnership enriches the educational process through the ideas and competencies of the workers of the organisation or business that participates in the partnership. It therefore strengthens the academic skills and excellence of the participating school. A deduction from Iwuoha and Peters (2019) also indicates that school-industry partnership integrates training into relevant and productive works in order to enable the learners to get the chance of matching theoretical learning with practical skills. It is thus, a condition in which a school and another organisation come together for the purpose of attaining a goal which focuses on shaping or co-producing progress in job-specific skills that integrate formal education with employment. The implication of these is that school-industry partnership is a mutually accepted training partnership which complements the learning experience and skill of the school through industrial training experience that enables the students to acquire useful skills that are needed in the real work situation.

Relying on the incompetence exhibited by some products of business education programme, a person may be prompted to ask if business education programme in Nigerian schools is really achieving the objectives for which it was established. To buttress this, Onyemaobi, et al. (2021) state that business education seems to have failed to achieve its stated goals. Odu (2010) also states that there are serious complaints among parents/guardians and the industry that products of our schools are half-baked, without manipulative skills and cannot be employed. Considering the general poor condition of education in Nigeria, it is obvious that it may be difficult for the government to be capable of singlehandedly providing quality education to the citizens. To this end, Public Private Partnership (PPP) is supposed to be encouraged in education. Effective and efficient school-industry collaboration will bring about an affordable and qualitative education that is anchored on acquisition of competencies and skills which are required for overall transformation of society. It will also make reliable research findings and their utilization in commerce and industry to be on the increase and also make education to satisfy the needs of the citizens and requirements of employers of labour.

Effective collaboration with relevant industries that will be responsible for training the graduates is needed to make the business education programme to be functional. It is therefore imperative for the industry to play an active role in manpower development, particularly for students studying business education in order to complement classroom experience and make them to be acquainted with necessary skills for job placement in the industry after graduation. Schools that mounted business education should therefore take maximum advantage of the synergies, energies and the resources of the industry in ensuring that their students acquire the necessary skills and capabilities that will make them productive and get competitive advantage over others. A good partnership between the industry and the school would allow the industrial sector to deploy its expendable materials, equipment and expertise for making teaching and learning of students to be effective.

It is obvious that students of business education participate in Teaching Practice (TP) and Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). Olumese and Ediagbonya (2016) however lamented that the experiences acquired from these schemes are not enough for the training requirements of the students. Based on these, schools are supposed to be in partnership in the areas of curriculum planning, research assistance, infrastructural provision, and scholarships among others with relevant industries. Therefore, if the school establishes an effective partnership with the industry, students of business education would get the opportunity of getting the right training in an appropriate condition which would consequently eliminate or drastically reduce the vacuum between classroom experiences and the expectations of employers of labour. From the foregoing, it is clear that school-industry partnership/collaboration is a potent strategy for capacity building. It is thus on the basis of the aforementioned that this study looks at the effectiveness of school-industry partnership in building the capacity of students of business education in Kano State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, there are serious issues relating to provision of functional and qualitative education which are expected to make the recipients to be highly productive. This may be due to change in technology, poor funding and change in job requirements. School/industry partnership is seen as being among the surest ways of ameliorating this problem. The observation of the researchers and their interactions with lecturers and students of business education however revealed that despite the benefits that accrue to both parties, there is no effective partnership/relationship between academic institutions and employers of labour who engage or absorb their graduates after completing their studies. There is also the issue of non-curriculum harmonization to reflect real-life situations. This negatively affects the exposure, capability, efficiency and effectiveness of the students when exposed to work situations after graduation. It is therefore imperative to ascertain the measures that may be used to build the capacity of students of business education through effective school-industry collaboration in Kano State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of business education programme on capacity building of its recipients through effective school-industry partnership in Kano State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were however to:

1. Ascertain the effectiveness of available programmes in business education relating to school-industry collaboration for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria.
2. Determine the constraints to effective school-industry collaboration in business education programmes for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How effective are the available programmes in business education relating to school-industry partnership for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria?
2. What are the constraints to effective school-industry collaboration in Business education programmes for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

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

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of business educators on effectiveness of available programmes in business education relating to school-industry partnership for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of business educators regarding constraints to effective school-industry collaboration in business education programmes for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Methodology

This study made use of the descriptive survey research design. This was because the researchers believed that the design was appropriate for the study because Enyekit and Enyekit (2015) posit that it is a design that documents, describes and presents what exists or does not in what is being investigated. The population of the study consisted of 122 business education teachers at Federal College of Education (Technical), Bichi, Kano State, Nigeria and Federal College of Education, Kano, Kano State, Nigeria. The sample was not selected for the study due to smallness of the population and Umoru and Bala (2018) reported that the whole population should be used if it is not more than 250 people. A self-designed four-point rating structured questionnaire was used in collecting the data that were analysed in the study. The instrument was validated (face and content) by three specialists (two in business education and one in measurement and evaluation). The researchers made all the corrections that were suggested by the experts. The instrument was subjected to a pilot test outside the study area and its internal consistency was determine during Cronbach alpha coefficient. The co-efficient obtained for the two sections of the questionnaire were 0.83 and 0.89. These gave credence to high reliability co-efficient which implies that the instrument was appropriate for obtaining the data used in the study. This decision was taken because AbdulKadir (2017) reported that any instrument whose reliability co-efficient is not less than 0.70 is reliable for the research. The instrument was administered on the respondents and retrieved by the researchers through two research assistants. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions and z-test statistics were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. All thequestionnaire items whose mean scores were 2.50 and above weretaken to be effective or agreed, while mean scores below 2.50 were taken to be ineffective or disagreed. As for the hypotheses, the decision rule was that any null hypothesis whose calculated value was greater than the critical value stands to be rejected and vice versa.

Research Results

The collected data were analysed and presented in the following tables:

Research Question one: How effective are the available programmes in business education relating to school-industry partnership for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean ratings of Lecturers on Effectiveness of available programmes in Business Education relating to School-industry Partnership for Students’ Capacity building in Kano State, Nigeria

S/N	Items	$\bar{\chi}$	SD	Decision
1.	Cooperative work training	2.63	0.78	Effective
2.	Work study	2.57	0.81	Effective
3.	SIWES	3.62	0.86	Effective
4.	Teaching Practice (TP)	3.90	0.80	Effective

5.	Special Training/Re-training	2.32	0.83	Ineffective
6.	Research partnership & Grant	2.30	0.67	Ineffective
7.	Scholarship	2.10	0.78	Ineffective
8.	Field trips & Excursions	2.41	0.73	Ineffective
9.	Seminars/Workshop	1.63	0.92	Ineffective
10.	Skill acquisition for students	2.01	0.79	Ineffective
11.	School visit to industries	1.80	0.62	Ineffective
12.	Personnel for special lectures	2.12	0.84	Ineffective
Grand Mean		3.99		Effective

Source: Fieldwork: 2024

The results in Table 1 revealed that questionnaire items 1 to 4 had mean scores above 2.50. This showed that the respondents are of the view that the questionnaire items are effective. On the other hand, questionnaire items 5 to 12 had mean values below 2.50 which mean that most of the respondents considered those items to be ineffective. This implies that these programmes are ineffective in building the capacity of students of business education students in Kano State. The grand mean of 3.99 however revealed that all the programmes could lead to effective school-industry collaboration for developing the capacity of business education students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: What are the constraints to effective school-industry collaboration in Business education programmes for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean ratings of lecturers on constraints to effective school-industry Collaboration in business education for students' capacity building in Kano State, Nigeria

S/N	Items	$\bar{\chi}$	SD	Decision
1.	Communication gap between school and industries	2.66	0.65	Agreed
2.	Non-challant attitudes of schools to the benefit of effective school -industry partnership.	2.63	0.70	Agreed
3.	Liaison office not available for school - industry partnership	2.82	0.82	Agreed
4.	Non-cooperation of industries	3.30	0.73	Agreed
5.	Weak academic performance of Business Education students	3.52	0.40	Agreed
6.	Poor attitudes of students during SIWES	3.76	1.08	Agreed
7.	Poor attitudes of students during teaching practice	2.80	0.56	Agreed
8.	Poor attitudes of industries to SIWES	3.30	0.73	Agreed
9.	Disruption of the academic calendar due to frequent strikes	3.88	0.82	Agreed
10.	Poor attitudes of business education students during practical courses	3.00	0.63	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.19		Agreed

Source: Fieldwork: 2024

The results in Table 2 revealed that all the questionnaire items had mean values which were above the benchmark of 2.50. This implies that all the questionnaire items stated in the table were accepted as being hindrances to effective school-industry partnership for students' capacity

building in Kano State. The grand mean of 3.19 also showed that the questionnaire items stated in the table are hindrances to effective school-industry collaboration for capacity building of the recipients of business education in Kano State, Nigeria.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of business educators on the available programmes in business education relating to school–industry partnership for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Table 3: z-test analysis on effectiveness of available programmes in Business education for school-industry partnership in Kano State, Nigeria

S/N	Group	N	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	Decision
1	FCE(T) Bichi	75	2.90	120	0.031	1.96	Not rejected
2	FCE Kano	47	3.00				

Table 3 revealed that the calculated value of z which was 0.031 was not up to the table value of z which was 1.96. The null hypothesis was thus, retained. This implies that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of the business educators in FCE(T), Bichi and those in FCE, Kano in relation to the level of effectiveness of the available programmes in business education for school-industry partnership which are expected to build the capacity of the recipients in Kano State, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of business educators regarding the constraints to effective school-industry collaboration in business education programmes for capacity building of students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Table 4: z-test analysis on constraints to effective school-industry collaboration in Business education programmes in Kano State, Nigeria

S/N	Group	N	$\bar{\chi}$	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	Decision
1	FCE(T) Bichi	75	3.20	0.80	120	0.038	1.96	Not rejected
2	FCE Kano	47	3.11	0.76				

Table 4 revealed that at 0.05 level significance, the calculated value of z which was 0.038 was not up to that table z of value which was 1.96. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected. This shows that there was no significant difference in the opinions of the business educators in FCE(T), Bichi and those in FCE, Kano with regards to the constraints to effective school-industry collaboration for developing the capacity of the recipients of business education in Kano State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The outcome of the analysis of research question one showed that effective school-industry partnership could develop the capacity of business education students in Kano State,

Nigeria. The findings however revealed that some of the programmes are ineffective. The test of null hypothesis one also showed that no significant difference exists between the mean ratings of the business educators in FCE(T), Bichi and those in FCE, Kano in relation to the effectiveness of the available programmes in business education for school-industry collaboration which are expected to build the capacity of the recipients in Kano State, Nigeria. These findings were in line with those of Oladipo (2011) who stated that collaboration between academic institutions and the industry which improves the standard of training received by the students has not been given the right attention in Nigeria and there is no effective linkage between the two parties. The findings of the study also corroborate those of Nungse et al. (2020) who showed that granting scholarships, SIWES opportunities and work permits to the students, partnering in research and development, organizing workshops, seminars and field trip are among the effective ways by which school-industry collaboration for effective skills development of technical education students can be improved.

Furthermore, the outcome of the analysis of research question two indicated that there are a lot of constraints to effective partnership between the school and industry in business education for students' capacity development in Kano State, Nigeria. The test of null hypothesis two also showed that no significant difference exists between the opinions of the business educators in FCE(T), Bichi and those in FCE, Kano in relation to the hindrances to effective school-industry collaboration for developing the capacity of the recipients of business education in Kano State, Nigeria. These findings aligned with those of Onyesom and Godwin (2013) which spelt out the major obstacles to effective collaboration between school and industry in business education for developing the capacity of students to among others include poor school-industry communication and absence of cooperation by some organizations in the industrial sector. In addition to these, the findings of the study corroborated those of Onyemaobi et al. (2021) which indicated that absence of right communicational channel between business education and the industry, poor innovative leadership among the administrators of business education, variation in the opinions of administrators of business education and industry in relation to the requirements of the programme and poor infrastructure are among the factors militating against the synergy between business education and industry.

Conclusion and Implication

Business education students are made to participate in Teaching Practice (TP) and Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) but the experiences acquired from the two programmes are not enough to meet the requirements of the labour market. Schools need to partner effectively with the industry to enhance students' capacity building. Institutions of learning are constantly faced with problems of producing experienced and qualified graduates that employers of labour will find fit and appropriate to take up roles in the industry. The implications of the outcomes of this study are that effective school-industry partnership would help in curbing the identified constraints, thereby enhancing students' capacity building, promoting business education programme and accelerating the pace of economic development in Kano State and Nigeria at large.

Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusion which was drawn, the following were suggested as the way forward:

1. The industry and the school should collaborate effectively to improve the students on the practical skills needed by the employers of labour.
2. Institutions of learning should create liaison offices for industries which will go a long

- way in closing the communication gap between industries and schools.
3. All the tiers of the governments should encourage school-industry partnership through formulation and implementation of strong policies and programmes.
 4. The Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN) should constantly be organising seminars, workshops and conferences for the industry and lecturers of business education to create awareness to both parties on the benefits of the partnership between them.

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