
**PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF BUSINESS STUDIES TEACHERS FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF UPPER BASIC EDUCATION BUSINESS STUDIES
CURRICULUM IN NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT: *The study surveys the adequacy of business studies teachers for the implementation of the upper basic education business studies curriculum in Ebonyi State. Two research questions and one null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. A four point structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was administered on the two hundred and forty-one(241) business studies teachers in Ebonyi State. Two hundred and twenty-eight (228) copies of the questionnaire were correctly filled and returned thereby stabilizing the sample at 228. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. It was found that the quantity and quality of business teachers is adequate. It was however recommended, among others, that in-service training and study leave opportunities should be given to business studies teachers since this will serve as a motivation that will increase the service delivery of teachers and also reduce their attrition.*

KEYWORDS: Business Studies Teachers, Upper Basic Education, Business Studies Curriculum, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was introduced in 1999 by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a reform programme aimed at providing greater access to and ensuring better quality of basic education throughout the country. The UBE is one of the targets of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). The UBE also transcends the frontiers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria because it is one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Universal Basic Education commission (UBEC, 2011) lists the objectives of UBE to include:

- * Ensuring an uninterrupted access to 9-year formal education by providing free and compulsory basic education for every child of school going age under:
 - (i) Six years of primary education,
 - (ii) Three years of junior secondary education and

- (iii) Providing early childhood care development and education (ECCDE).
 - * Reducing school drop-outs and improving relevance, quality and efficiency.
 - * Acquisition of literacy, life skills and values for lifelong education and useful living.

UBEC (2006) explains that UBE is not a new educational policy but a reform programme introduced to reinforce the 6-3-3 National Policy on Education. UBEC further explains that UBE programme Constitutes Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) for child age 3-5 years, 6 years Primary Education for children aged 6-11 years, and 3 years junior secondary School (JSS) Education for children aged 12-14⁺. The ECCDE is not compulsory but parents are strongly encouraged to register their children in ECCDE centres, while the government is expected to provide ECCDE centres of good quality.

The 9-year continuous basic education becomes necessary because, according to UBEC (2006), completion of primary school does not equip a child with the necessary life skills to become self reliant at the moment. Thus, for the Nigeria child to be considered functionally literate and numerate, he or she must successfully complete 9 years of schooling. In order to implement the UBE programme, UBEC (2005) explains that the existing curriculum has been changed. This implies that a new 9-year basic education curriculum is now in place. The implementation of the new curriculum was scheduled to start in 2007 with primary 1 and JS 1 so that the old curricula would be phased out in 2013 and 2010 respectively.

The curriculum according to Onwuka in Onwe and Opa (2012), can be seen as a process that embraces the total experiences by which the school educates the young and inexperienced members of the society. This implies that the needs of the society are met through the curriculum introduced by the school for the interest of the learners in line with the functional needs of the society, taking into account the socio-cultural and technological changes over time. On this premise, Onwe and Opa (2013) assert that for any type of education to thrive, it must evolve a corresponding curriculum. Hence the universal basic education curriculum was premised on bridging the doubts and lacuna inherent in the former education system in Nigeria.

The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) in Igboke (2002) identifies curriculum deficiencies as one of the factors responsible for the failure of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Programme which was tried two decades ago. The first Policy document on Technical and Vocational Education, according to FRN in Ukor (2008) emphasizes the need to widen and enrich the curriculum in a way that it will help the youth prepare for the world of work, develop skills and interest, and be able to contribute more to the life of the community. Olaitan (1996) asserts that Business studies can help the graduates of JSS to be self-employed if the curriculum is reviewed to include enough entrepreneurial training in the content. He believes that this will lead to reduction in unemployment rates, improved standard of living and a decrease in poverty level. In agreement with the above assertion, Nwachokor and Akiti (2008) opine that the laudable objectives of the UBE programme will not be achieved except the barriers of inadequate and un-updated curricula are looked into.

NERDC (2007) explains that the National Council on Education (NCE) mandated the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) to restructure and realign the existing primary and JSS curricula to meet the targets of the 9-year basic education in the context of NEEDS and the MDGs. NERDC then restructured basic education to have Lower Basic Education (Primary 1-Primary 3), Middle Basic Education (Primary 4-primary 6), and Upper Basic Education (JSS1-3). Based on this structure the NERDC came up with the 9-year basic education curricula, the lower basic education curriculum, the middle basic education curriculum, and the upper basic education curriculum.

The upper basic education business studies curriculum is therefore a curriculum on Business Studies meant for JSS1-3. Commenting on this curriculum, Obioma in NERDC (2007) opines that it reflects depth, appropriateness and interrelatedness of the contents. Similarly, Ezekwesili in NERDC (2007) recommends the curriculum for the purpose of producing the best textual materials, the best in teaching performance and the best learning outcome.

The planners of this curriculum did not lose sight of the fact that curriculum implementations is not done in a vacuum. Hence NERDC (2007) premises the successful implementation of the curriculum on adequate provision of human and material resources in order to promote acquisition of saleable skills and employment generation possibilities. Mkandawire (2010) opines that teachers are the most important human resource in curriculum implementation. This implies that a sufficient supply of qualified teachers is needed if the curriculum is to be effectively implemented. Esene and Okoro (2008) insist that for students to acquire the necessary skills and abilities, business studies teachers should be academically and professionally qualified. Supporting this view, Anyaduba in Ogbaekingwe (2010) posits that a business studies teacher without the general knowledge of all the business subjects will be considered incompetent.

Alumode (2005) posits that declaration of free and compulsory Primary and secondary education in Ebonyi State in 1999 led to a phenomenal increase in enrolment that the number of qualified teachers on ground becomes inadequate to march with the enrolment. Supporting this view, Ocho (2007) states that staffing in Ebonyi State secondary schools is nothing to write home about both in quantity and quality. Ogba (2008) reports that Parents Teachers Associating (PTA) employ auxiliary teachers in order to augment deficiency of teachers. In another dimension, Okonkwo (2004) finds that there is dearth of qualified vocational technical teachers for the implementation of the modular curriculum. Similarly, Adeyemi (2007) finds that there are still many unqualified teachers in secondary schools.

In his own observation, Emenanjo (1992) opines that teachers are poorly motivated and unevenly distributed in Nigerian schools. In agreement, Mkandawire (2010) points out that the education system lacks adequately trained and motivated teachers. Pattison and Berkas (2000) hold that shortages of qualified teachers are most prevalent in rural areas. Similarly, Obi and Chukwuemeka (2006) explain that rural areas are characterized by poor schools with inadequate facilities and unqualified teachers.

Alumode (2002) asserts that teachers have always continued to be fundamental assets in all forms of education process. In the same vein, FRN (2004) states that no education may rise above the quality of its teachers. Furthermore adeshina (2005) affirms that the quality of business studies teachers is a very good determining factor for how far the programme will go. On the strength of the above, it is imperative to ensure the adequacy of business studies teachers for the implementation of the upper basic education business studies curriculum.

The curriculum which has been described as deep, appropriate and interrelated could be marred by poor implementation which has remained the perennial gap between educational polices and goal attainment. Planned implementation may be constrained by inadequate teaching staff amid other factors. Effective Implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the 3-3 aspects of the National Policy on Education were hindered mainly by inadequacy of teachers. In order to prevent this ugly part of history from repeating itself, it became imperative to survey the adequacy of business studies teachers for the effective implementation of this curriculum.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the adequacy of business studies teachers for the implementation of upper basic education business studies curriculum in Ebonyi state, the study specifically intends to:

1. determine the adequacy of the quantity of business studies teachers at the upper basic education level in Ebonyi State;
2. determine the adequacy of the quality of business studies teachers at the upper basic education level in Ebonyi State.

Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How adequate is the quantity of business studies teachers in upper basic education schools in Ebonyi State?
2. How adequate is the quality of business studies teachers in upper basic education schools in Ebonyi State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the adequacy of the quantity of business studies teachers in urban and rural upper basic education schools.

METHODOLOGY

The population of the study comprised of the two hundred and forty-one(241) business studies teachers in Ebonyi State. The whole population was used for the study, there was no sampling. The researcher distributed 241 copies of the questionnaire but only 228 were correctly filled and returned for analysis.

The study made use of structured questionnaire which was validated by three (3) experts was used for data collection. Using cronbach alpha, the four (4) scale instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81 and was considered reliable for the study.

Mean(x), standard deviation and t-test were used to analyse the data collected. Mean (x), and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Any item that had a mean score ranging from 0.1 to 1.0 was interpreted as very lowly adequate, 1.1 to 2.0 was interpreted as lowly adequate, 2.1 to 3.0 as highly adequate, and 3.1 to 4.0 as very highly adequate. The bench mark was to interpret any grand mean greater than or equal to 2.1 ($x \geq 2.1$) as adequate, and any grand mean less than or equal to 2.0 ($x \leq 2.0$) as inadequate. The t-test was used to test the null hypothesis.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Ebonyi Stte, Nigeria.

Data Analysis

The findings of this study are presented in tables 1 to 3 below.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation result on the quantity of business studies teachers in upper basic education schools in Ebonyi State.

S/N	Item	VHA	HA	LA	VL A	X	S.D	Interpretation
1	Number of qualified business studies teachers in your school	37	64	75	52	238	1.01	HA
2.	Number of business studies teacher specializing in secretarial studies	13	51	109	5	2.09	0.83	LA
3.	Number of business studies teachers specializing in accounting	31	54	109	34	2.36	0.89	HA
4.	Number of business studies teachers specializing in office education	21	57	102	48	2.22	0.89	HA
5.	Number of business studies teachers specializing in marketing education	21	43	113	51	2.15	0.87	HA
Grand mean						2.24	0.89	Adequate

Table 1 shows that four of the five items meant to determine the adequacy of the quantity of business studies teachers, that is items 1,3,4 and 5 fell between 2.1 and 3.0 mean scores and were interpreted as highly adequate. One item (number 2) was lowly adequate. None of the items was either very high adequate or very lowly adequate. The grand mean of 2.24 implies that the quantity of business studies teachers is adequate. The standard deviations show that the individual mean score do not vary widely from the grand mean.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation results based on the quality of business studies teachers in upper basic education schools in Ebonyi State.

S/N	Item	VHA	HA	LA	VL A	X	S.D	Interpretation
6	Level of physical competency of business studies teacher	117	77	23	11	3.32	0.84	VHA
7	Level of emotional stability of business studies teachers	64	129	24	11	3.08	0.76	HA
8	Level of psychological balance of business studies teachers	62	133	23	10	3.08	0.74	HA
9	Business studies teachers knowledge of commerce	49	133	29	17	2.94	0.80	HA
10	Business studies teachers knowledge of bookkeeping	41	120	51	16	2.82	0.81	HA
11	Business studies teachers knowledge of shorthand	38	68	91	31	2.49	0.93	HA
Table 2: Mean and standard deviation results								
12	Business studies teachers knowledge of typewriting	43	79	80	26	2.61	0.92	HA
13	Knowledge of methodology of instruction	75	94	44	15	3.0	0.89	HA
14	Competency in the use of available facilities	71	70	74	13	2.87	0.92	HA
15	Attendance seminar/workshops	7	29	51	141	1.57	0.83	LA
16	Relevance of seminar. workshops to the teaching of business studies	24	48	59	97	1.99	1.03	LA
17	In-service training for business studies teachers	8	26	32	162	1.47	0.83	LA
18	General motivation of business studies teachers commensurate salary	7	29	58	134	1.60	0.83	LA
Grand Mean						2.53	0.86	Adequate

Table 2 shows that items 6 meant to determine the physical competency of business studies teachers had a mean score of 3.32 to be interpreted as very highly adequate. Items 7 to 14 had

mean scores falling between 2.1 and 3.0 to be highly adequate. Items 15 to 18 relating to training and motivation of business studies teachers fell between 1.1 and 2.0 mean scores to be interpreted as lowly adequate. The grand mean of 2.53 implies that the quality of business studies teachers is adequate. The standard deviations show that the individual mean scores do not vary significantly from the grand mean.

Table 3: t-test results on adequacy of the quantity of business studies teachers.

S/N	Variable	No	X	S.D	DF	T. Cal	T Crit	Decision
1	Urban	85	2.48	1.08	226	1.21	1.960	Accept H0
	Rural	143	2.31	0.96				
2	Urban	85	2.14	0.94	226	0.63	1.960	Accept H0
	Rural	143	2.06	0.75				
3	Urban	85	2.38	0.95	226	0.37	1.960	Accept H0
	Rural	143	2.34	0.86				
4	Urban	85	2.21	1.00	226	0.16	1.960	Accept H0
	Rural	143	2.23	0.81				
5	Urban	85	2.27	1.00	226	0.63	1.960	Accept H0
	Rural	143	2.07	0.77				
	t-test value					0.08	1.960	Accept HO ₁

Table 3 shows that all the items were accepted because their t-calculated values were less than the t-critical. In the same view, the t-test value shows that the t-calculated value of 0.80 is less than the t-critical. Hence the null hypothesis (HO₁) is accepted, implying that there is no significant difference between the adequacy of the quantity of business studies teachers in urban and rural upper basic education schools in Ebonyi State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study finds that the quantity of business studies teachers is adequate in Ebonyi State upper basic education schools. This finding contradicts Alumode (2005) who opined that UBE led to phenomenal increase in enrolment that the number of qualified teachers on ground became inadequate. It contradicts Ocho (2007) who affirmed that staffing in Ebonyi State secondary schools is nothing to write home about both in quantity and quality. This is a positive departure from the findings of other researchers as an improvement rather than a contradiction. It is believed that the key players in the education sector took the steps that led to this improvement. The viable business education departments in Ebonyi State University and Ebonyi State College of Education, and the waiver to employ teachers granted to UBEB from time to time are, probably, steps in that direction.

The study finds that the quality of business studies teachers is adequate in Ebonyi State upper basic education schools. This finding contradicts the findings of Ocho (2007) and Pattison and Berkas (2000) that the education system lacks adequately trained and motivated teachers. A breakdown of this finding showed that training and motivation were lowly adequate. This agrees with Mkanadwire (2010) that the education system lacks motivated teachers. This finding is critical

because poorly motivated teacher labour under stressful condition that may be counter productive to curriculum implementation.

They study also finds that there is no significant difference in the adequacy of the quantity of business studies teachers in urban and rural upper basic education schools in Ebonyi State. This finding contradicts the findings of Pattison and Berkas (2000) and Obi and Chukwuemeka (2006) that shortage of teachers are more prevalent in rural areas.

CONCLUSION

Business studies teachers are adequate both in quantity and quality for the implementation of the upper basic education business studies curriculum in Ebonyi state, Nigeria. This is not a guarantee of the effective implementation of the curriculum because poor motivation may incapacitate the teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Workshops, seminars and conferences should be organized periodically for business studies teachers to keep them informed of the current issues in the subject.
2. In-service training and study leave opportunities should be given to business studies teachers. This will serve as a motivation that will increase the service delivery of these teachers and also reduce their attrition.
3. Needs assessment should be extended to UBE so that funds should be allocated judiciously.
4. More emphasis should be placed on UBE and money should be injected into it to enable all sectors get a fair share.
5. Application of UBE fund should be monitored in order to avoid misappropriation and diversion.

Implications of the study

Since the quantity and quality of business studies teachers are found to be adequate, it is expected that there will be effective delivery of business studies instructions in secondary schools in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. However, there is need for continuous improvement in teaching skills through in service training and workshops to ensure sustained optimal implementation of the curriculum.

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