TRAINING NEEDS OF BUSINESS EDUCATORS IN THE UNIVERSITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Business education is relevant for human growth, development and sustainability. This study is aimed at determining the training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State. The researchers adopted descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in Rivers State. The population of the study comprised 53 lecturers of business education in universities in Rivers State. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Mean with standard deviation was used to analyze data related to the research questions. The z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that business education teachers need ICT and cash management skills for successful operation of small scale business for sustainable development in Rivers State of Nigeria. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended among others that business educators should be trained and re-trained on cash management skills for sustainable development in Rivers State of Nigeria.*

KEYWORDS: Training Needs, Business Education, Business Educators and Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION

Business education is seen as a discipline meant to prepare individuals; economically, politically, socially and technologically in transforming human resources and enhancing economic empowerment. According to Osuala (2009), business education implies education for and about business. In recognition of the importance of business education to a country's growth and development, the Nigeria government included business education programme in tertiary education curricular. In order to implement the business education curriculum to enhance national development, qualified and experienced persons are needed in universities to teach courses in business education programme. According to Osuala (2009), business education courses must be handled by well trained and motivated persons with academic and professional competencies which will match the industrial expectations. These business courses are taught by business educators. Business educators are well trained professional teacher of business education who is competent in teaching all the components that make up business education in universities. Business education is one of the keys that open the door for sustainable development in any country it is embraced.

Development involves the interest of individual and the society at large to adopt scientific and technological knowledge to achieve desired objectives. As life is complex so is development itself. Osuala (2004) defined development as state of general improvement or growth. Development is the expansion, or growth of people in an area or environment and structural transformation of the society, politics, social and culture that involves a change in technological development (Ezeani, 2008). Development is the ability of a country or state to improve the

social welfare of the citizenry which include construction of good roads, bridges, portable water, quality education, good health services (Nworgu, 2016). Hence, development has to be in all aspects of human endeavors. However, development has to be sustained in order to make impact in the citizens of a nation like Nigeria. Sustainability occurs when natural system is merged with social, political and economic challenges faced by the individuals. Udo (2017) defines sustainable development as that development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generation to meets their own needs. Sustainable development is needed in business education programme and business educators to sustain development. There is need to train business educators to improve the quality of human factor in order to enhance knowledge and bring in new ideology to embrace economic development for self-efficacy and global sustainable achievement and development. Business educators need to be trained to meet the expectations of the present society.

Business education equips individuals for skills, knowledge, attitude and values that will assist him/her in the labour market. As a discipline, business education embraces Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skill, accounting, marketing and cash management competencies. It is an indispensable tool for national development hence; it prepares individuals as entrepreneurs, employers, employees, etc. For business educators to function optimally as entrepreneurs, they need ICT skills and cash management skills for managing small scale business for sustainable development in Rivers States of Nigeria. Rivers State is one of the six geo-political zones in Nigeria.

In this present computer age, a good application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) competencies are needed for a successful business education programme and sustainable development. Nwosu (2003), identified the benefits of ICT competencies to business education graduates to include: development of multiple sensory delivery, increased self expression, active and co-operative learning, critical thinking, communication skills, multiple cultural learning through teleconferencing, internet and telecommunication utilization. In most tertiary institutions today, large amount of data and information are created, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated due to improved and advanced information technology. The application of these new technology gadgets in educational institutions have resulted in the development of cheaper, accurate, and more flexible method of handling information. Research revealed that most business educators possess little or no useful ICT skills to be used in the world of work. Furthermore, Ezeani (2008), identified the following areas in which training should be given to business educators: Accounting knowledge, ICT skills, cash management competencies, marketing knowledge and Risk management skills.

In another development, cash is the life blood of every small business. But cash is unique. It is often said that cash is the most important yet, least productive asset of business owners. Proper cash management permits the business owners to adequately meet the cash demands of the business, to avoid retaining unnecessarily large cash balances and to stretch the profit generating power of naira they own (Ozoani, 2011). Cash balance is the most important in the entire forecast of a business and should guide directly or indirectly, practically every management decision (Jim & Okafor, 2015).

Despite the benefits of information and communication technology competencies, business education graduates are still jobless looking for white collar jobs after their graduation, thereby, affecting the economic growth and hindering sustainable development in Rivers State. It should be noted that business educators must be competent to provide quality services needed by the society hence, the need for possession of ICT skills. Equally, they need cash management

competencies because cash constitute the major part of the working capital which is needed in fulfilling the daily obligation of the business.without them, the objective of developing individuals who shall be able and competent enough to enhance sustainable development in Rivers State will not be achieved. This study therefore, intends to determine the training needs of business educators in universities on ICT and cash management for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Statement of the problem

Research findings such as to Udo (2017) found that most business educators in Nigerian Universities lack the required skills and competencies, such as; ICT skills, accounting and managerial competencies which resulted from inadequate training of business educators in acquiring the necessary skills and competencies. These negativities lead to poor performance of business educators in ICT and cash management skills in their private businesses. The researchers were worried that if business educators were not trained on ICT and cash management skills that will help them to manage their small scale business, it will lead to slow sustainable development in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

1.   ICT training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State.

2.   Cash management training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1.   What are the ICT training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State?

2.   What are the cash management training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses tested at .05 level of significance guided the study:

Ho_1:   There is no significance difference between the opinions of male and female lecturers on the ICT training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Ho_2:   A significant difference does not exist between the opinions of male and female lecturers on the cash management training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State.

METHOD

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Nworgu, (2006), a survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or entire group. The researchers considered the design appropriate for the study since it involves exploring people's opinions by the use of questionnaire for collection and analysis. This study was carried out in Rivers State of Nigeria. The population for the study comprised 53 lecturers of business education in two universities offering Business Education Programme in Rivers State. There was no sample because of the manageable size of the population. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was face validated by three experts, two in business education department and one from measurement and evaluation department, all from Rivers State University. Necessary corrections and suggestions by the experts were effected. The instrument was trial tested using twenty two business educators from Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State. Reliability coefficients of the two sections of the questionnaire obtained are 0.84 and 0.79, and grand coefficient value of 0.81, giving credence to a high reliability, which can be used to obtain data for the study.

The instrument was distributed to the respondents and retrieved completely by the researchers with two assistants. Mean with standard deviation was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. A mean value of 2.50 and above was considered as agreed while, mean scores below 2.50 were considered as disagreed. Where calculated z-value at .05 level of significance was less than the z-table value for a given degree of freedom, the null hypothesis was not rejected, otherwise it was rejected.

RESULTS

The data collected were analyzed and presented in the following tables according to research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What the ICT training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State?

Table 1: **Mean ratings of Male and Female lecturers on the ICT training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State.**

S/N	Items on ICT training needs. Ability to:	$\overline{X}_1$	SD 1	$\overline{X}_2$	SD 2	$\overline{X}$ G	SD G	Decision
1.	Understanding basic computer knowledge.	2.80	0.84	2.64	0.97	2.72	0.81	Agree
2.	Operate the computer.	2.57	0.80	2.51	0.86	2.54	0.83	Agree
3.	Use scanning machine.	2.90	0.66	2.70	0.60	2.80	0.69	Agree
4.	Browse and download accounting information from the internet.	2.50	0.91	2.76	0.95	2.63	0.93	Agree
5.	Use Database Microsoft access for storage.	2.60	0.71	3.16	0.69	2.88	0.70	Agree

S/N		$\overline{x}_1$	SD	$\overline{x}_2$	SD	$\overline{x}$ G	SD G	Decision
6.	Spreadsheets like-Microsoft Excel to manage the business budget.	3.16	0.78	2.70	0.70	2.93	0.74	Agree
7.	Create a website.	3.14	0.76	3.06	0.60	3.10	0.68	Agree
8.	Access the internet by the use of mobile phone.	3.00	0.60	3.44	0.66	3.22	0.63	Agree
9.	Create an email address.	2.98	0.68	2.70	0.76	2.84	0.72	Agree
10.	Access email address.	3.50	0.62	3.30	0.60	3.40	0.61	Agree
11.	Use photocopying machine.	2.90	0.63	3.50	0.61	3.20	0.622	Agree
12.	Use skills to protect document with password.	2.63	0.78	2.51	0.84	2.57	0.81	Agree
13.	Create document.	2.50	0.72	2.76	0.84	2.63	0.78	Agree
14.	Use software that adapts to customers' needs.	3.90	0.75	3.90	0.71	3.90	0.73	Agree
	Grand mean/standard deviation	**2.93**	**0.73**	**2.97**	**0.66**	**2.95**	**0.72**	**Agree**

The results in Table 1 shows that items 1 to 14 had mean scores above 2.50. This indicated that respondents agreed with all the items as ICT training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable developments in Rivers State. Hence, the pull means scores of 2.93 and 2.97. The grand mean of 2.95 is a confirmation of that. The table also shows the pull standard deviation ranging from 0.60 and 0.91 and the grand standard deviation as 0.72, indicating homogeneity of opinions.

Table 2: **Z-test analysis on the ICT training needs of business educators in Universities for sustainable development.**

S/N	Group	N	X	SD	df	Z-cal	Z-tal	Decision
1.	Male lecturers	38	2.93	0.73	52	0.041	1.96	Not rejected
2.	Female lecturers	15	2.97	0.66				

Data in Table 3 reveal that the Z-calculated value of 0.041 is less than z-table value of 1.96 at 52 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis is not rejected, meaning that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents with respect to ICT training needs of business educators for sustainable development in universities in Rivers State.

Table 3: **Mean ratings of male and female business education lecturers on the cash management training needs of business educators in universities for sustainable development.**

S/N	Items on cash management training needs. Ability to:	$\overline{x}_1$	SD 1	$\overline{x}_2$	SD 2	$\overline{x}$ G	SD G	Decision
1.	Keep financial records.	2.77	0.67	2.55	0.63	2.66	0.65	Agree
2.	Prepare financial data for forecasting and budget.	2.60	0.75	2.66	0.63	2.63	0.70	Agree
3.	Record into books of accounts.	2.94	0.52	2.70	0.50	2.82	0.51	Agree

4.	Manage cash flow.	3.39	0.70	3.21	0.74	3.30	0.73	Agree
5.	Reduce cost.	3.85	0.80	3.91	0.84	3.88	0.82	Agree
6.	Budget cash.	3.20	0.65	2.80	0.61	3.00	0.63	Agree
7.	Analyse and interpret accounting information relating to cash transactions.	3.06	0.59	2.54	0.53	2.80	0.56	Agree
8.	Prepare cash flow statement.	3.75	1.16	3.74	1.00	3.76	1.08	
9.	Prepare payroll.	3.50	0.55	3.54	0.25	3.52	0.40	Agree
10.	Invest cash balance.	3.72	0.75	3.50	0.61	3.61	0.68	Agree
	Grand mean/Standard deviation	**3.28**	**0.71**	**3.12**	**0.64**	**3.19**	**0.67**	**Agree**

Data in Table 2 reveal that all the items had mean scores above 2.50, thus they have means scores of 3.28 and 3.12. This means that all the respondents agreed to the items as cash management training needs of business educators for sustainable development in Rivers State. The grand mean of 3.19 confirms that. The table also shows the pull standard deviations ranging from 0.25 to 1.16 and grand standard as 0.67, indicating that the opinions of the respondents are not divergent.

Table 4:   Z-test analysis on the cash management needs of business educators for sustainable development.

S/N	Group	N	X	SD	df	Z-cal	Z-tal	Decision
1.	Male lecturers	38	3.28	0.71	52	0.035	1.96	Not rejected
2.	Female lecturers	15	3.12	0.64				

Data in Table 4 reveal that at .05 level of significance, the z-calculated of 0.035 is less than z-table value of 1.96 at 52 degree of freedom. The hypothesis therefore, is not rejected. This means that, a significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of the male and female respondents with respect to cash management training needs of business educators for sustainable development in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the analysis of the first research questions showed that there were needs for ICT training of business educators in universities for sustainable development in Rivers State. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Nwosu (2003) which stated, that business education graduates required ICT skills to enable them to meet the challenges in the world of work after completion of their programme. The author further stated such skills as; the needs to operate computer, ability to create, format, save and print document and ability to use photocopying machine. The result of the analysis of the second research question revealed that there were needs for cash management training of business educators as future business owners for sustainable development in Rivers State. This finding is in consonant with the findings of Jim & Okarfor (2015) which showed that business educators needed to manage available cash effectively and equally control cash flow with cost effectiveness. Further, the null hypotheses

were not rejected. This indicated that there were no significant differences in the opinions of the lecturers regarding all the research hypotheses.

Implication of the Study

Since business educators need ICT and a cash management skill for successful operation of small scale business for sustainable development in Rivers State, their training in those skills becomes obvious. Training will help to improve the competencies of business educators in cash management as well as their ICT skills.

CONCLUSION

Business education graduates were exposed to ICT training and other skills acquisition programmes to acquire needed skills and competences. Studies have shown that yet there is need to retrain business educators in our universities to acquire sufficient ICT skills and cash management competencies needed for performance in the world of work and to meet up with technological innovations in the present world.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1.   Universities should retrain business educators on ICT programmes to enhance their efficiency for sustainable development.

2.   Universities should organize special training programmes on cash management for business educators as future business owners for enhancement of sustainable development.

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