

Evaluation of Business Education Programme in Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated undergraduate Business Education degree programs of the Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt. The evaluation research design was adopted for the study. A sample size of 150 respondents was purposively adopted to represent the sample size. The data collection techniques employed in this survey are observation and questionnaire techniques. The instruments were Business Education Programme Evaluation Checklist (BEPEC) and Business Education Objectives Questionnaire (BEOQ). Mean and standard deviation scores were used to answer the research questions, non-parametric statistics (Kruskal Wallis test) to test the normality of the instrument. The results revealed that the objectives for the Business Education undergraduate program at Rivers State University are adequately effective and useful, while the few areas of deficiencies recorded were not in the philosophy and objectives of Business Education, but in the provision of facilities and equipment. It was recommended that the institution should engage the services of experts in educational evaluation to constantly evaluate its undergraduate programs to ensure all components of the programs are updated regularly to meet the required minimum academic standards established by the National Universities Commission. Also, with the proliferation of the latest development of technological hardware and software; the Head of the department should internally source for funds to provide the lacking equipment and facilities for the teaching and learning of Business Education.

Keywords: Business Education, Evaluation, Objectives, Curriculum, Facilities.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of a curriculum that will help to reform the Business Education program in Rivers state University and Nigerian Universities, in general, is to develop individuals that will contribute meaningfully to economic growth and development of the nation cannot be underestimated. With the uncontrolled rate of unemployment and poverty that has brought about the dire need to carry out some modifications in the curriculum of Business Education program in Nigerian universities so that the students will not only be exposed to skills but also to be creative thinkers that can establish and manage business enterprise at least on small scale level.

The Business Education program was originally designed to offer students the opportunity to develop the desire abilities, skills, and understanding of the vocational opportunities available in the world of works. However, with the increasing complexity of the contemporary Nigeria

economic and business environment today. It is observed that the nation is experiencing economic problems, which have resulted in the rise in unemployment and poverty in the society. The objectives of Business Education are to enable graduates of the program to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of business and to professionally acquire additional skills, resources, and methodologies to Business Education graduates to transform their ideas into the visible and viable business enterprise after graduating from the university. To understand the concept of Business Education, it would be necessary to look at the definitions of Business Education in the past and present time. This is because technology has helped to change definitions of certain things. It, therefore, implies that Business Education, as a course of study has to move with time.

Business Education is a course that prepares students for entry into and advancement on jobs in business and it is equally important because it prepares students to handle their business affairs to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy (Popham, 1975). According to Osuala (1989), defined Business Education as an essential part of the preparation of youths for life and living. In 2004, Osuala, re-modified Business Education to be a program of instruction that consists of two parts:

- i. Office education – a vocational program of office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education and;
- ii. General Business Education – a program to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business.

It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by; the definitions of Business Education continue to change. *Business Education* is a term that encompasses several methods used to teach students the fundamentals of *business* operations and practices for self-reliance.

Management as a component of Business Education that seeks to instill in students the principles and strategies to manage the business establishment, plan and formulate business policies for greater efficiency and productivity (Shaibu, Ameh & Barinem, 2016). Business Education program covers all aspects of accounting, teaching business methods, office and information management, administration, marketing, and economics. From the above assertion, it is evident to note that Business Education covers a wide spectrum of courses to guide students to acquire economics, marketable and innovative skills for self-reliance (Amesi, 2016, Akpomi & Amesi, 2013).

Educational programs are constantly being evaluated regularly and informally by the state, federal, and other agencies of government directly assigned with the responsibility for the provision and supervising the process of education (Akpomi, 2018; Okoro, 2015). Agencies with such responsibility to evaluate Business Education are the National Board of Technical Education, the National council of colleges of education, and the National University Commission. This exercise is known as the accreditation of a program. An accreditation team does not evaluate any program that is considering for accreditation, as well the team visit cannot take the place of complete and comprehensive program evaluation. In the evaluation of the Business Education program, there are certain issues (questions) surrounding the regular visits of the accreditation team to tertiary institutions:

- i. Do most educational programs at the primary, secondary, and tertiary received accreditation and if they do, can they be evaluated through accreditation visits?

ii. Once accreditation is given, can they be easily revoked when standards fall drastically? The accreditation bodies as approved by the government always ensure that all institutions and their programs meet standards set by the body. But, the objectives, aims, and needs of the individual institutions are not often considered or care to evaluate them periodically to determine if the program is realistic, reasonable, and adequate to satisfy the objectives of the established program (Okoro, 2005). This suggests to us that the Business Education program is dynamic in nature and it should match with the trend in technological innovation of contemporary society.

Some studies carried out to evaluate certain educational programs are reviewed to present the existing gap in the literature. To find out the adequacy of the curriculum of guidance and counseling program of the college of education in Nigeria. Izundu and Uwakwe (1986) as cited in Ubulom (2016) discovered deficiency of the course content on counseling theory, absence of content in appraisal instruments and information services and limited scope of coverage placement follow up. Nazifi (2016) found out that the adequacy in allotting to practical as well as inappropriateness in sequence courses integration of learning experiences in the chemistry of the university of Dutsima certificate program. In analyzing the physical health competent of physical education students from three states of Nigeria, Ahuagua discovered the absence of five health essential content areas in the entire five colleges' curricula.

From this, there is no study so far carrying out on the evaluation of the management option of the Business Education program known to the evaluator, numerous views about the program exist. For instance, some feel that the Business Education undergraduate program of Rivers state University is more adequate than that of the colleges of education. This assumption is in favour of the argument that the program is of more quality in the university than those of colleges of education or whether the modern trends need and aspiration of the contemporary times are put into consideration.

Purpose of the Evaluation

There are considerable concerns by Business Education students, their lecturers, employers of Business Education graduates, and curriculum experts that the objectives of an undergraduate Business Education degree program of Rivers State University are not being implemented (Ubulom & Dambo, 2016). This condition has grossly been argued by those concerned that the outlined objectives of the program do not commensurate with the quality of its product turned out, making one believe that undergraduate Business Education degree program might not have meeting the expectations and needs of the contemporary society due to technological advancement in education globally. However, there is no current empirical evidence to show that the program is adequately or effectively being implemented in line with the National Universities commission minimum academic standard to conform to the above assertions. These divisive views prompted the evaluators to evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of the Business Education program in the faculty of Education of Rivers State University, Port Harcourt. Specifically, to assess the program if whether it has served the needs of contemporary society and also, whether it has brought about desirable changes in the behaviour, character, skill level, and social life of students that have passed through the program. Every data related to the program sourced from students, postgraduates students (graduates), teaching staff, and other technical and supportive personnel are used in judging the effectiveness of the program to identify areas of deficiencies in the program.

Objectives of the Evaluation

This study is intended to evaluate the Business Education (management) program in the faculty of education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt. The following areas of Business Education program are examined; these areas are objectives and goals of the program, space and physical facilities, curriculum, course content, students' qualification for admission and admission procedure, administrative, instructional, and other support personnel and evaluation of students learning.

Research Questions

The following questions from the six different perspectives of the Business Education program guided the study.

1. How adequate is the content of the program suitable, bearing in mind the program objectives of Business Education in Rivers State University?
2. To what extent are space, facilities, and equipment adequate for effective teaching of the course content?
3. How is the curriculum and course content of the Business Education program at Rivers State University structured in compliance with NUC-BMAS and ABEN-BMAS?
4. To what extent are instructional and other support personnel qualified to teach Business Education courses?
5. To what extent do the procedures and methods of teaching desirable for achieving program objectives and appropriate for certificating students?

Evaluation Models

An evaluation model may be regarded as a set of steps that if followed or implemented will result in the generation of information that can be used in improving the educational program. The evaluation model discussed below is of great help to the evaluator because it provides a general guide to suit the program being evaluated. The CIPP model is employed in the evaluation studies because of its prominent and adaptability in providing data for decision making about the program. The CIPP model developed by Shufflebeam and his colleagues in 1971. Shufflebeam regarded evaluation to mean the process of obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. Shufflebeam describes the four types of evaluation; context, input, process, and product evaluation concerning four types of decisions; planning, structuring, implementing, and recycling decisions. The four types of evaluation mentioned above support the four types of decisions. Planning decision require context evaluation, structuring decision requires input evaluation, implementing decision require process evaluation and recycling decisions require product evaluation. This study anchored on the CIPP model as it forms the basis for this evaluation, in that it provides; the description of the prevailing environment and needs, problems and conditions in the environment, information on resources available and how resources may be used to achieve desires end, period feedback on the quality of implementation and to determine the effectiveness of the program in achieving the objectives and goals of the program. Generally, the CIPP model requires its user to operate in a naturalistic situation. According to Ubulom (2012),

the main task of the evaluator is to attempt to identify and describe areas of agreement among the major interest groups involved in a program. This enables the evaluator to assess to what extent the program is operational, whether achieving its objectives or not, is achieved when all interest groups in a program unanimously assign a negative or positive quality to any aspect of a program. Such an assigned quality would, therefore, be taken as a valid attribute or demerit of the program. The successful utilization of this methodology for the evaluation of Business Education programs, however requires the evaluator to have a thorough knowledge of the programs to be evaluated. Such in-depth knowledge will help in the areas of major concern about the program on which information is needed for decision making. The first essential, preliminary activity of an evaluator is to acquaint himself with the reading of available information on the program to be evaluated.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation research design was adopted for the study. Nwankwo (2013), explained that wherever an investigation is carried out on any issue or case to assess the value and worth of that issue under investigation, such a study is an evaluation survey. This research design provides a connection between the model, qualitative and quantitative judgment of the objectives of the undergraduate Business Education programs currently offered in the faculty of Education, Rivers State University. The particular model of evaluation used in this study is Context, input, and product component of the CIPP Evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam in 1971. This is paramount in the sense, it requires the evaluators to operate in a naturalistic situation. The main task of the evaluators is to identify and describe areas of agreement among the major interest groups involved in a program. This enables the evaluators to assess the extent to which the programme is operational, whether it has achieved its objectives or not. The target population for this study consists of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents comprised of (undergraduate students, postgraduate students, academic staff, and supportive personnel) of the department of Business Education for the 2018/2019 academic session.

Table 1: Population for the Study

Respondents/Category	Total No	Total Used
Academic staff	17	17
Non-Teaching staff	4	4
Post graduate students		
Ph.D.	24	24
Masters	26	26
Students(final only)	352	79
Grand Total	423	150

A sample size of 150 respondents was adopted to represent the sample size. There was no need for sampling as the size is manageable. The use of postgraduate students in the survey is that they are the product of the department. The data collection techniques employed in this survey are observation and questionnaire techniques. The techniques developed with the aid of NUCBmas and ABENmas gave rise to the Business Education program Evaluation Checklist (BEPEC) and Business Education Objectives Questionnaire (BEOQ). Evaluation Checklist (BEPEC) is designed

for on-site observation, while BEPEC, a 12-item modified four-point Likert-type of scale with the response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). Statements on the BEOQ are positively and negatively skewed. Items of these research instruments are structured such that the evaluators as well as the respondents were able to use them to elicit information on the objectives of the undergraduate Business Education degree program of the investigated university. To score the BEPEC, the positively framed statements are weighted Strongly Agreed (SA) - 4 points, Agreed (A) - 3 points, Disagreed (D) - 2 points and Strongly Disagreed (SD) - 1 point while the negatively framed statements are weighted Strongly Agreed (SA) - 1 point, Agreed (A) - 2 points, Disagreed (D) - 3 points and Strongly Disagreed (SD) - 4 points. The criteria that were used as the index of evaluator's observation of the objectives of undergraduate Business Education degree programs of the university were the NUCBmas and ABENmas.

The data generated were analyzed based on an item-by-item basis to show frequencies and response means of the various categories of respondents as well as that of the evaluators (that is, the observers). The frequency counts as well as the mean and standard deviation scores were extracted and used to answer the research questions while the non-parametric statistics (**Kruskal Wallis test**) because of the mixed method adopted in the investigation. The method of weighting was used to analyze the collected data and transforming data from the interview (qualitative data) into quantitative data.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: How adequate is the content of the programme suitable, bearing in mind the programme objectives of Business Education in Rivers State University?

Table 2: Response Mean score on the adequacy Business Education programme content

Stakeholders	No	Responses	Mean	S.D	Cut off	Remark
Academic staff	17	56	3.29	0.48		Adequate
Non-Teaching staff	4	13	3.25	0.62		Adequate
Postgraduate students	50	181	3.62	0.75	2.50	Adequate
Undergraduate Students(final only)	79	217	2.75	0.78		Adequate
Total	150	467	3.22	0.65		Adequate

Table 2 shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents' responses from the stakeholders; academic staff, non-teaching, postgraduate and undergraduate students with 3.29 (0.48), 3.25 (0.62), 3.623 (0.72), 2.75 (0.78) and 3.22 (0.65) respectively on the adequacy of Business Education program content in line with objectives of undergraduate Business Education degree programs of the Rivers State University. This statistical evidence shows that the mean scores are above the cut-off point of 2.5. To this end therefore, the objectives of undergraduate Business Education degree programs are adequate in content.

Research Question 2: To what extent are the space, facilities and equipment adequate for effective teaching of the course content of Business Education programme?

Table 3: Response mean score on the extent space, facilities and equipment are adequate for effective teaching of the course content of Business Education programme.

S/n	Statement	Respondents				Avg. Mean	Remark		
		Teaching staff		Post graduates				Under Graduates	
o		Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.		
Spaces									
1	Professor's Office measures up to 18.50 m ²	3.49	0.74	3.77	0.58	2.28	0.78	3.18	HE
2	Professor's Office does not measures up to 18.50 m ²	1.54	0.82	2.10	0.64	2.58	0.82	2.07	LE
3	Head of Department's Office is in line NUC recommended space of 18.50 m ²	3.02	0.78	3.72	0.51	3.42	0.51	3.38	HE
4	Head of Department's Office is not up to the recommended space of 18.50 m ²	1.09	0.97	1.51	0.73	2.50	0.52	1.70	VLE
5	Tutorial Teaching Staff's Office meets recommended - 13.50 m ²	3.67	0.61	3.49	0.90	3.09	1.02	3.42	HE
6	Tutorial Teaching Staff's Office falls short of the recommended - 13.50 m ²	3.14	0.84	3.39	0.69	3.50	0.52	3.34	HE
7	Other Teaching Staff Space, Technical Staff Space and Secretarial Space is up to the required of space 7.00 m ²	2.11	0.75	2.35	1.01	1.33	0.92	1.93	VLE
8	Seminar Space/per student of 1.85 m ²	1.58	0.78	2.71	0.55	2.91	0.79	2.40	LE

9	Have the recommended space Laboratory/ studio	1.17	1.05	2.01	0.69	2.11	0.54	1.76	VLE
	Facilities and Equipment								
10	Have a least one large and reasonably equipped central workshop/studio for teaching and research	1.92	0.51	1.58	0.55	2.92	0.75	2.14	LE
11	electronic/digital library and information resources are in use	2.32	0.71	3.62	1.02	2.75	0.70	2.89	LE
12	library and information resources are well stock and current hardcopies of reference and other textual materials	1.75	0.54	2.43	0.77	2.12	0.89	2.10	LE
13	internet ready workstations available in the library for least 25% of the total student enrolled	1.06	0.89	2.50	0.82	1.05	0.71	1.53	VLE
14	Business studio equipped with Guillotine, facsimiles, scanning, photocopying, duplicating, laminating, collating, franking machines, etc.	3.25	0.70	3.33	0.62	3.70	0.65	3.43	VLE
15	Well-equipped computer laboratories	3.08	0.87	2.67	0.92	2.58	0.51	2.77	LE
	Grand Mean							2.54	LE

Table 3; shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents' responses from a different category (stakeholders) about the extent to which they regard the adequacy of the space, facilities, and equipment for effective teaching of the course content of Business Education program. The

average mean values of the respondents' group (academic staff, postgraduates, and undergraduates students) indicate that the mean scores of item 1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 14 and 15 are above the average point of 2.50, indicating that the respondents ranking is of high adequate to the statements while, item 2,4,7,8,9,10, 12 and 13 were rated inadequate for effective teaching of the course content of Business Education program in Rivers State University. However, with a grand mean of **2.54**, this indicated that the respondents are of the view that space, facilities, and equipment are adequate for effective teaching of the course content of the Business Education program.

Research Question 3: To what extent do the curriculum and course content of Business Education programme in Rivers State University structured in compliance with NUC-BMAS and ABEN-BMAS?

Table 4: Respondents mean scores on the extent curriculum and course contents compliance with NUC-BMAS and ABEN-BMAS.

No	Statement	Respondents Teaching staff		Post graduates		Undergraduate		Avg. Mean	Remark
		Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.		
16	curriculum and course contents are structured in accordance with BMAS	3.83	1.19	3.55	0.63	3.50	1.13	3.62	HE
17	Inculcate the right kind of values and the right kind of attitudes for the survival of the recipients	3.62	0.95	3.41	0.69	3.67	0.75	3.56	HE
18	train the minds of the recipients in order for them to understand the world around them	3.68	0.50	3.38	1.14	3.25	1.04	3.56	HE
19	acquire the appropriate kind of skills, abilities as well as, competencies for self-reliance	3.51	1.16	3.07	1.10	3.58	1.12	3.89	HE
20	Provide graduate teachers for the purpose of	3.29	1.06	3.61	1.03	3.67	0.65		

	teaching Business Education courses in Nigerian schools.							3.52	HE
21	Ensure that recipients researches into as well, introduces innovative ideas in the teaching of Business Education in all the schools.	3.11	0.57	3.48	0.84	3.50	0.74	3.36	HE
22	Provision of opportunities recipients to improve and update their professional competencies	3.09	1.03	3.31	0.42	3.67	0.92	3.57	HE
23	Helps in furthering the spirit of acquisition and the spirit of creativity in Business Education teachers	3.41	0.69	3.58	0.67	3.42	0.61	3.49	HE
	Grand Mean							3.13	HE

Table 4; shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents' responses from a different category (stakeholders about the extent to which they regard the curriculum and course content of Business Education program structured in compliance with NUC-BMAS and ABEN-BMAS. The average mean values of the respondents' group (academic staff, postgraduates, and undergraduates students) indicate that the mean scores of item 16,17,18,19,20,21,22 and 23 are above the average point of 2.50, indicating that the respondents ranking is of high extent to all the statements listed as curriculum and course content of Business Education program in Rivers State University. This indicated that the respondents were not very far from each other in their responses on the extent to which curriculum and course content of the Business Education program at Rivers State University is structured in compliance with NUC-BMAS and ABEN-BMAS.

Research Question 4: To what extent are instructional and other support personnel qualified to teach Business Education courses?

Table 5: Response Mean score on the adequacy Business Education programme content

Stakeholders	No	Responses	Mean	S.D	Cut off	Remark
Academic staff	17	66	3.88	0.49	2.50	High Extent
Non-Teaching staff	4	14	3.5	0.66		High Extent
Post graduate students	50	183	3.66	0.79		High Extent
Undergraduate Students(final only)	79	298	3.77	0.68		High Extent
Total	150	571	3.70	0.71		High Extent

Table 5; shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents' responses from the stakeholders; academic staff, non-teaching, postgraduate and undergraduate students with 3.88 (0.49), 3.50 (0.66), 3.66 (0.79), 3.77 (0.68) and 3.70 (0.71) respectively on the extent to which instructional and other support personnel qualified to teach Business Education courses. This statistical evidence shows that the mean scores are above the cut-off point of 2.5. To this end therefore, are instructional and other support personnel engaged are qualified to teach Business Education courses in Rivers State University.

Research Question 5: To what extent do the procedures and methods of teaching desirable for achieving programme objectives and appropriate for certificating students?

Table 6: Response Mean score on the adequacy Business Education programme content

Stakeholders	No	Responses	Mean	S.D	Cut off	Remark
Academic staff	17	55	3.23	0.51	2.50	Adequate
Non-Teaching staff	4	15	3.75	0.73		Adequate
Post graduate students	50	131	2.62	0.77		Adequate
Undergraduate Students(final only)	79	216	2.73	0.88		Adequate
Total	150	417	2.78	0.73		Adequate

Table 6 shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents' responses from the stakeholders; academic staff, non-teaching, postgraduate and undergraduate students with 3.29 (0.48), 3.23 (0.51), 3.75 (0.73), 2.62 (0.77) and 2.78 (0.73) respectively on the desirability of procedures and methods of teaching programme that is capable for achieving objectives and its appropriateness for certification in Rivers State University. This statistical evidence shows that the mean scores are above the cut-off point of 2.5. To this end therefore, procedures and methods of teaching programme are desirable for achieving programme' objectives and its appropriateness for certification in Rivers State University.

Table 7: The result of normality test of criterions according to view of Respondents

Respo ndents	Acade mic	N	Criterions	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis test		
					Chi.sq	Df	Asymp. Sig.

	NON Teaching	17	How adequate is the content of the programme suitable, bearing in mind the programme objectives of Business Education in Rivers State University?	62.71	.531	3	.912
		4	To what extent are the space, facilities and equipment adequate for effective teaching of the course content?	140.5			
	POST GRAD	50	How is the curriculum, course content and course outline of Business Education programme in Rivers State University structured in compliance with NUC-BMAS and ABEN-BMAS?	87.02			
		79	To what extent are instructional and other support personnel qualified to teach Business Education courses?	67.67			
	UNDERGRA D	150	To what extent do the procedures and methods of teaching desirable for achieving programme objectives and appropriate for certificating students?				

Table 7, shows the mean rank for the four category of respondents; academic staff, Non-teaching (other support personnel), post graduate and undergraduate students with their respective scores of 62.71, 140.5, 87.02 and 67.67. The Kruskal wallis Chi Square to 0.531 for 3 degree of freedom, which is not statistically significant as the actual level at which the Kruskal wallis Chi Square is (.912) is less than 0.05 choose level of significance.

DISCUSSION

This finding is in agreement with Kemgbara and Ubulom (2017), NUC (2014) and Ubulom and Dambo (2016) which observed that the statement of objectives for the Business Education undergraduate program in Rivers State University is adequate for achieving the objectives of Business Education program and few areas of deficiencies were recorded not in the philosophy and objectives of Business Education, but in the provision of facilities and equipment. Also, teaching other administrative and technical support personnel available for effective implementation of the Business Education program at Rivers State University.

CONCLUSION

Since, no deficiencies were discovered in the course of evaluating the objectives of the undergraduate Business Education program at Rivers state University, apart from the inadequacy

in the provision of facilities and equipment. There is a need for regular engagement of both internal and external evaluators periodically to maintain the required minimum academic standards stipulated by the National Universities Commission. The evaluators noted from this assessment that apart from the periodic visit of the accreditation team carried out by the National Universities Commission on the academic programs, the university hardly engages the services of experts to carry out evaluation exercise on academic programs in the university.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The institution (Rivers State University) should engage the services of experts in educational evaluation to constantly evaluate its undergraduate programs to ensure all components of the programs are updated regularly to meet the required minimum academic standards established by the National Universities Commission.
2. Also, with the proliferation of the latest development of technological hardware and software; the Head of Department should internally source for funds to provide the lacking equipment and facilities for the teaching and learning of Business Education.

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