

Assessment of Business Educators' Perception of the Adequacy of Business Education Curriculum Content in Universities in Cross River State

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Abstract

The study sought to assess business educators' perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State. To achieve this purpose, three research questions and three hypotheses were raised. The study adopted a survey research design with a census and purposive sampling technique in selecting an area sample. The sample is made up of 39 lecturers at two major universities in the area where business education is offered. The study adopted a questionnaire titled "Business Educators' Perception of Business Education Curriculum Content Adequacy Scale (BEPBECCAS)." The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A was designed to elicit responses on the demographics of the respondents, such as gender, age, professional area, and academic rank, while Section B was designed to elicit information on the perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content. Section B was made up of 20 items. The instrument was validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation, and the reliability of the scale was established using the Cronbach alpha technique. The coefficient of the subscale was 0.82, which showed that the instrument is reliable. Data were collected by the researchers, and the data were analyzed using population t-tests, independent t-tests, and one-way analyses of variance. The results presented showed that the extent of business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content is significantly high, that male business educators do not differ significantly from female business educators in terms of their perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content, and that there is a significant influence of professional area on business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content. Based on the study's findings, it was suggested that all professionals in the field of business education convene to discuss the new curriculum content of business education in order to reflect the demand of the new labor market and the skills required for functioning.

Keywords: *Assessment, Business Educators', Perception, Adequacy, Business Education and Curriculum Content*

Introduction

In the Nigerian system of education, business education is a component of vocational education. A business education program is designed with the mandate of training students to be knowledgeable in accounting education, management education, marketing education, and office education, depending on the various tertiary institutions. However, there are still institutions in Nigeria that train students in business education to acquire general business knowledge without any area of specialization. That is to say, students are not given the opportunity to choose any option before the end of the program (Atah, Bessong, and Ogbuji, 2018).

Interestingly, the university of Cross River curriculum is designed to give students options in accounting, marketing, office management, and management, whereas the University of Calabar's curriculum has no options at the undergraduate level but options in accounting, marketing, office management, and management at the master's level (Atah and Ukah, 2019). Furthermore, there are various universities in Nigeria that offer different options than others. Some universities provide options in OTM office technology and management, while others only provide training for teachers. In a critical observation of the above curriculum in the study area, the researchers are of the opinion that the business education curriculum in undergraduate and postgraduate Nigerian universities should be designed in such a way that when students graduate, they will have a specific area of specialization (Chukwurah and Atah, 2019). Notably, when a student has an area of specialty, it gives them room to focus on that special area at the end of the day. Of course, there are students that may be interested in the accounting option, the marketing option, the office option, or the management option, as the case may be (Edet and Atah, 2018).

The business education program started late in the Nigerian educational system around 1930, vocational business education began as commercial education in Oshogbo, then in the Western Region, now in Osun State, with the establishment of clerical training centers that were required in the office. By 1955, both government and privately owned day and evening business schools were established in various parts of the country. According to Osuala (2005), business education content has not been popular in Nigerian universities because of the bias against vocational education. The public perception of business education is that it is for school dropouts. This is further reinforced by the attitude of Nigerian parents, who prefer the conventional grammar schools to business schools, whose curricula are directed towards the training of secretarial and clerical personnel (Okon, 2016).

Interestingly, this erroneous impression was corrected by the release of the National Policy on Education. The policy, which recommended the 6-3-3-4 educational systems, was instrumental to the inclusion of business education content in the tertiary institution curriculum (Otum and Atah 2021). This matter is of great concern to all, particularly teachers (lecturers) of business education in colleges. All business educators have a greater role to play in the success of the newly introduced system of education as it affects the content (courses) of business

education in our colleges and institutions in Nigeria (Atah, Bessong, and Ititim, 2022).

Business education as a course, according to the national curriculum for universities, is comprehensive in nature. It is made up of many interrelated areas, such as bookkeeping, shorthand, typing, office practice, accounting, and computers. Business education is a practical course that should be taught practically by making the teaching as effective as possible for both teachers and learners to benefit from the work. In this response, it becomes very necessary that essential equipment and materials be made available to our universities in order to facilitate teaching interactions and create the desired enduring effects. Business education requires a number of skills that can only be taught and developed systematically; in this case, shorthand, typing, and accounting are examples of such skills (Agim, Ochui, and Atah, 2022).

For shorthand to be taught successfully, a teacher should have a good command of the English language as well as a good communication skill that embraces a wide vocabulary and a power for sound and listening. It is true that there are issues and opportunities associated with teaching business education curriculum content in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, as these issues and opportunities are created by policymakers or recipients of this type of education. The truth remains that many educators hold different perceptions of what the curriculum should be. Most of the educators' belief is that it should be more practically oriented. Others see it from the vocational perspective, while others see it from the theoretical, vocational, and practical perspective (Atsu, Ateb, and Atah, 2021). The question that triggers the heart of the researcher is: What is the perception of business educators generally about the curriculum content, the adequacy of materials, and the topics in the content that can facilitate the production of graduates and students with the requested skills? Do male and female educators differ in their perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content? Does their area of profession provide the reason for different perceptions of the adequacy of the curriculum content? It is an attempt to answer this question that this research work is carried out

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to carry out an assessment of business educators' perceptions of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. The level of business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State
2. Whether there is any difference in gender among business educators in terms of their perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State
3. Whether there are any professional differences among business educators in terms of their perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in Cross River State universities.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. What is the level of business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State?

2. To what extent do male and female business educators differ in their assessment of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in Cross River State universities?
3. How does the professional area of business educators influence perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State?

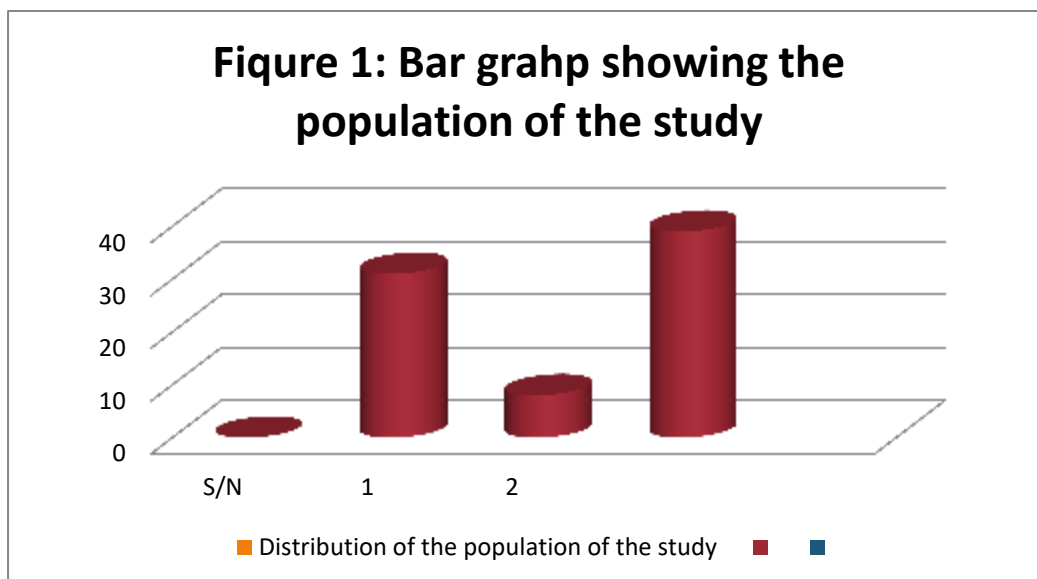
Statement of hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were stated for the study:

1. There is no significant influence on business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State.
2. Gender has no significant influence on business educators' perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in Cross River State universities.
3. Gender has no significant influence on business educators' perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in Cross River State universities.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design with a census and purposive sampling technique in selecting the sample. The sample is made up of 39 lecturers in universities in the area where business education is offered. The study adopted a questionnaire titled "Business Educators' Perception of Business Education Curriculum Content Adequacy Scale (BEPBECCAS)." The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A was designed to elicit responses on the demographics of the respondents, such as gender, age, professional area, and academic rank, while Section B was designed to elicit information on the perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content. Section B was made up of 20 items. The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation, and the reliability of the scale was established using the Cronbach alpha technique. The coefficient of the subscale was 0.82, which showed that the instrument is reliable. Data were collected by the researcher, and the data were analyzed using a population t-test, an independent t-test, and a one-way analysis of variance. The population of the study is shown in figure 1.



Presentation of result

There is no significant influence on Business Educators perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State.

To test this hypothesis, one sample t-test was used and the result as presented in Table 1 showed that ($t=43.67$, $p<.05$). Since $p(.000)$ is less than $p(.05)$, this implies that the Business Educators perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content is significantly high. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 1

Population t-test of Business Educators perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State

Variable	N	X	S.D	df	t-cal	p-val
perception of adequacy of business education curriculum	234	23.98	4.78	233	43.67	.000

Hypothesis two

There is no significant influence of gender on business educator's perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State

The independent variable is gender categorize as male and female lecturers while the dependent variable is perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content. To test this hypothesis, independent t-test was used and the result as presented in Table 2 showed that ($t=1.34$, $p<.05$). Since $p(.532)$ is greater than $p(.05)$, this implies that there is no significant influence of gender on business educator's perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained.

Table 2

Independent t-test analysis on the influence of gender on business educator's perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content

Variable	N	X	S.D	Df	t-cal	p-val
Male	145	12.54	3.89	233	1.34	.532
Female	89	12.48	3.76			

Hypothesis three

There is no significant influence of professional area on business educator's perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State.

The independent variable is professional area categorized as accounting option, Office option, marketing option and management option while the dependent variable is adequacy of business education curriculum content. To test the hypothesis, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and the result showed that ($F= 4.32$, $p<.05$). Since $p(.012)$ is less than $p(.05)$, this implies that there is a significant influence of professional area on business

educator's perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State.. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) result on the influence of professional area on business educator's perception of adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State

Variable	N	X	S.D		
Office option	78	13.23	2.54		
Mgt. option	66	14.22	2.10		
Accounting option	90	14.12	2.90		
Marketing option					
Total	234	21.09	4.89		
Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F	p-val
Between	906	2	453		
Within	33660.06	231	104.86	4.32	.012
Total	34566.06	234			

Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one, which stated that there is no significant influence on business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content in universities in Cross River State, was rejected. This implies that the extent of business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content is significantly high. This could be due to the fact that most of the business educators may not have seen what they expected to see in the curriculum. The area they envisaged would provide the requisite skills and competence needed in the 21st century by a business education graduate may not be available, and this accounts for the high perception. The findings were in line with those of Gange (2018), which assessed the extent of curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Cross River State. The findings of the study showed that business education curricula have not been implemented as expected in the area.

Hypothesis 2 was retained, which sought to determine whether male and female business educators differ significantly in their perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content. This implies that male and female business educators have similar perceptions of the adequacy of business education curriculum content. This could be due to the fact that male and female lecturers are dissatisfied with the content of the curriculum as they perceive a lot of lapses and gaps that cannot help the learner develop the skills needed to function well in the labor market. The findings of the study were in line with those of Young (2016), who carried out a study on factors that influence the acquisition of vocational skills among students in tertiary institutions. The findings of the study showed that gender differences and the age of the students influence the acquisition of vocational skills.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the extent of business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content is significantly high and that male business educators do not significantly differ from female business educators in terms of their perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content, while there is a significant influence of professional area on business educators' perception of the adequacy of business education curriculum content.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that

1. The curriculum of business education should reflect the demands of the new labor market.
2. The curriculum of business education should incorporate the 21st century's new technologies.
3. The curriculum of business education should pursue the acquisition of 21st century skills.

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