

## ROLE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN STIMULATING CREATIVITY IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

Creativity leads to societal progress because it is a process of coming up with new ways of doing things. Education stimulates creativity and Business Education equips its recipients with professional business and teaching skills which could make them to be creative. This paper therefore sees Business Education as a stimulant to creativity in Nigeria because it could lead to development of management, marketing, accounting; office procedure, competitive and teaching skills. Finally, as a way forward, the paper suggests that Business Education should be made to be more functional, discovery, simulation and role play methods should be emphasized in teaching Business Education, Business Education teachers should be motivated to put in their best in order to enhance creativity and all creative minded students should be rewarded for academic excellence.

**Key words:** Role, Business Education, stimulating and creativity.

Creativity which is the process of coming up with new ideas leading to inventions and new methods of doing things is a tool for societal progress.

Creativity is enhanced by education which is seen as a tool for the acquisition of requisite skills and ability, as well as mental and physical

competences which would enable an individual to live and contribute to the development of his society and the world at large. To achieve these, education should be made to be relevant and practical. It is based on this that Yeats in Aina (2009) states that “education is not filling bucket but lighting fire.” This implies that a functional education could lead to creativity which could aid towards ameliorating the developmental challenges in Nigeria and also improve the quality of the country’s education. In the same vein, Kofi Anan, the former Secretary-General of The United Nations Organisation (UNO) in Olawale (2010) is of the opinion that assuring the right education is beneficial to the whole world. It could therefore be seen that Business Education which makes it possible for students to experience practical application of practical skills for real world and real work situations in the areas of accounting, management, marketing, office procedure and teaching is not an exception to the realization of goals of education. Finally, it could be seen from the foregoing that Business Education could lead to creativity and it is against this background that this paper looks at the role of Business Education in stimulating creativity in Nigeria.

### **Concept of Business Education**

Business Education is viewed differently by scholars in the field. According to Anao in Olusola (2002), Business Education could be seen as the

total sum of the knowledge, skills and aptitudes which are needed for successful promotion and administration of a Business enterprise. This implies that Business Education has an objective of producing manpower which would be well equipped with competences that would encourage entrepreneurship and turn around the enterprises for better performance. As deduced from Njoku and Nwosu (2002), Business Education is a kind of education which focuses on acquisition of practical skills, knowledge and values which would enable a person to effectively function in the society and be able to teach subjects such as Book keeping, Office practice, Business Communication, Business Mathematics, Secretarial duties, Marketing, Typewriting and Shorthand. This shows that Business Education equips its recipients with skills in general education and ability to effectively and efficiently teach business subjects. Finally, The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) (2008) states that Business Education is an aspect of vocational education which equips people with necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in business world either for job occupation or self employment. The implication of this is that Business Education could make its recipients to perform effectively and efficiently as employees, self employed or employers of labour.

It could be deduced from these definitions that Business Education is categorized into professional Business

Education which equips the recipients with professional business skills and Teacher Business Education which in relation to the professional business skills, equips the recipients with professional skills for teaching business subjects. Finally, Business Education has objectives such as:

- i) Stimulation of entrepreneurship.
- ii) Production of qualified and competent business teachers.
- iii) Provision of general education which would make the recipients to become functional members of their societies.
- iv) Provision of practical skills in business related activities.
- v) Stimulation of economic development.
- vi) Production of manpower who could work in industry and offices.

#### **Concept of Creativity**

Creativity is a process which leads to innovation in the sense that it is a way of coming up with something new. As put forward by Naiman (2014), Creativity involves the processes of thinking and production. This is because, if a person has ideas, but do not act on them, he is only an imaginative but certainly not a creative person. According to Franken in California State University, Northridge (n.d) a person is motivated to be creative because of the need for novel, varied and complex stimulation, need to communicate ideas and values and need to solve problems. Creativity could be seen as an ability to

generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with people and entertaining ourselves and other people. (Franken in California State University, Northridge (n.d) ).This implies that a person is only taken to be creative if he is able to come up with new ways of solving problems, communicating with people and creating comfort for himself and others, thereby bringing about progress in the society. Similarly, Naiman (2014) is of the notion that Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality and it is characterised by the ability of a person to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate solutions. This shows that creativity brings to the fore, something previously known and that which is hidden for the betterment of mankind. Furthermore, *The Vancouver Sun* in Naiman (2014) reported that research has shown that contrary to the widespread belief that creativity is an innate tendency, no one attains a high level of achievement without devotion of time for rigorous training and thus, all human beings have creative tendencies. The study concludes that excellence is determined by opportunities, encouragement, training, motivation and above all, practice. Finally, Walas in Mullins (2007) states that the stages in creative thinking process are:

i. **Preparation Stage:** this is a stage of conscious attempt to understand and absorb information.

ii. **Incubation Stage:** at this stage, the conscious mind is focused elsewhere, but below the level of consciousness, the ideas are continually combined.

iii. **Illumination:** this is a flash of insight. This is because solution(s) suddenly appear(s).

iv. **Verification:** At this stage, the solution is consciously and deliberately tested.

### **Role of Business Education in Stimulating Creativity**

Based on the conclusion of the study reported by Naiman (2014) that excellence is determined by opportunities, encouragement, training, motivation and practice, it is expected that functional Business Education can stimulate creativity in the following areas:

#### **Development of Management Skills**

Business Education equips the recipients with skills in economics and management which are necessary for proper utilization of available scarce resources. According to Oliver in Aliyu (2013), the aim of sound management technique is achievement of the best use of human and material resources and controlled quality at reduced cost in order to enhance higher productivity.

Therefore, based on the nature of Business Education, it could stimulate creativity in management which would lead to the realization of goals of sound management technique pointed out by Oliver in Aliyu (2013). Business Education could also make its recipients to creatively analyze their SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) which would make them to creatively utilize their strengths and opportunities to their advantage and minimize their weaknesses and opportunities in order to be successful. Finally, sound leadership is instrumental to organizational success. It is thus expected that a functional Business Education programme could lead to creativity on the part of its recipients which could in turn lead to development of dedicated and selfless leaders who could overhaul the entire system for the betterment of the society.

#### **Development of Marketing Skills**

Marketing focuses on skills used in identifying the needs and wants of a target market and providing products which could meet or exceed the expectation of the target market. Business Education could therefore make its recipients to be able to creatively come up with a unique product, price it appropriately, select the right channel for its distribution and adopt the right method of promoting it. Good examples include the introduction of different bundle plans and facilities for borrowing of airtime adopted by telecommunication service providers in

Nigeria. Marketing skills also enhance creativity in building customer relationship and the success of a marketer to a greater extent depends on his ability to relate well with his customers. For example, the introduction of customer care units, use of toll - free lines in order to allow customers to lay their complains, provision of fast and friendly services such as before, during and after sales services, are products of creativity for the purpose of maintaining profitable customer relationships.

#### **Development of Office Procedure Skills**

Business Education has the potentials of enabling the recipients to be creative in office procedures. Through this, they would be able to come up with better ways of receiving visitors due to the fact that Business Education enables them to develop skills which are essential for inter-personal relations. The recipients also have the potentials for better discharging of secretarial duties which could lead to success in their organizations. This is because Business Education could make them to devise simple and faster ways of discharging their duties to the advantage of their organizations.

#### **Development of Accounting Skills**

Accounting is an integral part of Business Education. This could therefore help in coming up with creative methods of maintaining financial records, financial management,

detection and avoidance of fraud in organizations. For example, the introduction of e-payment and Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information system (IPPIS) in the public sector in Nigeria in order to check corruption are products of creativity.

#### **Development of Competitive Skills**

The knowledge of Business Education could make its recipients to creatively come up with proper ways of withstanding competition and outsmarting their competitors in the market. This could make them to have competitive advantage over their competitors in the market and as such become highly successful.

#### **Development of Teaching Skills**

The Business Teacher education leads to the production of competent and qualified teachers. This therefore implies that Business Education could make the recipients to creatively come up with better ways of presenting their lessons. It also makes them to be able to improvise when there are no ready-made materials that could be used to make the lesson more interesting and meaningful.

#### **Conclusion**

Creativity is a tool for societal progress and it is enhanced by education. Business Education provides skills in the areas of management, marketing, accounting, office procedures and teaching. This paper therefore sees Business Education as a stimulant to creativity in the sense that it could make

its recipients to creatively develop useful management, marketing, accounting; office procedure, competitive and teaching skills. The implication of this is that Business Education should be made to be more functional, otherwise, Nigeria may not be able to achieve her Vision 20:2020 which is expected to make her to be among the top twenty economies by the year 2020. This owes to the fact that societal progress is tied to creativity.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the above stated points which were raised to show that Business Education could stimulate creativity, and the fact that Nigeria still wallows in underdevelopment, coupled with the level of Nigeria's standard of education, the following recommendations are suggested as the way forward:

### **Business Education Should be made to be more Functional**

Business Education programme should be made to be more functional through enriching the curriculum in line with the global best practices. The programme should also be properly funded thereby ensuring that necessary resources, both human and material are provided in the right quantity and quality. The required funds could be provided by the government (Federal, States and Local governments), philanthropic individuals, corporate organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the Parents-Teacher's Associations (PTA).

### **Discovery, Simulation and Role Play methods should be Emphasized in Teaching Business Education**

The aforementioned methods of teaching should be frequently used in teaching Business Education. The discovery method could through the process of brainstorming stimulate creativity on the part of the students when given a particular problem to solve. This thus, becomes internalized and as such makes the recipients of the discipline to be creative. Similarly, when the students are charged with responsibility of simulating a situation or given roles to play, they could be motivated to be creative.

### **Business Education Teachers should be Motivated to put in their Best**

Business Education teachers should be stimulated to put in their maximum best in guiding their students to be highly creative. This could be achieved through giving the teachers opportunities for study leave, in-service trainings, attending workshops and conferences, enjoyment of fringe benefits, prompt payment of salaries, regular promotion and other non-material benefits. Provision of these is necessary because Gidado (2014) is of the view that gone are the days when teachers were deceived that their rewards are in heaven and should therefore, be allowed to start enjoying the rewards right from this world.

**All Creative Minded Students should be rewarded for Academic Excellence**

All students who distinguish themselves academically should be given rewards which could range from scholarship awards to automatic employment. This would go a long way in encouraging all students to be creative to the advantage of Nigeria.

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