

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE INFLUENCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON ACQUISITION OF MARKETING AND OTM SKILLS

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Abstract

This study examined college of education students' perception on the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing and OTM skills. The study had two research questions and two null hypotheses. The population was made up of the entire 216 students who registered in Business Education Programme in FCT College of Education, Zuba-Abuja in 2023/2024 academic session. The entire population was used because the scope was not too large to cover. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed, 21-items, structured, four-point rating scale questionnaire tagged "Students' Perception of Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Acquisition of Marketing and OTM Skills Questionnaire" (SPIBECAMOTMSQ). The instrument was validated by three experts and pilot-tested using the split-half method. The result of the pilot study was calculated with the aid of Cronbach alpha, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.87. The instrument was distributed to all the respondents and 188 (87%) were returned and used for data analysis. The research questions were answered using the mean scores and standard deviation. The null hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that students perceived business education curriculum as having influence on the acquisition of marketing and OTM skills. The findings also revealed that significant differences do not exist between the mean perceptions of male and female students regarding the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing and OTM skills. The study concluded that the acquisition of marketing and OTM skills would make students to become functional members of the society. The skills also enhance increase in productivity, income and job generation which would consequently reduce the social problems in our society. Finally, the author of the study recommended, among others, that Nigerian youths should be encouraged to study marketing and OTM as potential courses.

Keywords: *Colleges of Education, Perceptions, Students, Business Education Curriculum, Acquisition, Marketing skills, OTM skills.*

Introduction

The crave for white collar jobs and unwillingness of some Nigerian youths to empower themselves have given birth to persistent unemployment and its attendant problems including but not limited to looting of public and private property in the name of protest, vandalism, youth restiveness, banditry, terrorism and kidnapping. This implies that these problems could be ameliorated or eradicated if our youths choose to be self-empowered. To encourage Nigerians to be self-reliant, the current and previous Nigerian governments developed policies and programmes that will lead to self-empowerment in the society. In line with the aforementioned, Okolie and Ogheneakpoje (2021) opined that both the civilian and military administrations in Nigeria have developed policies and programmes whose goals are to bring about economic self-reliance and national development. Some of these programmes include Mass Mobilization for Self-reliance, Social justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), Family

Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Youth Entrepreneurship Support (YES), Youth Enterprise With Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN), Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P), N-POWER, poverty alleviation programmes and the FADAMA III Additional Financing, Graduate Unemployed Youths and Women Support Programme (FADAMA III AF GUYS) which was a product of a Collaboration between the United Nations and Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, NYSC Foundation, trade money and anchor borrowers.

It is important to note that education is also a viable instrument for making people to be self-reliant. This explains why schools, disciplines and curriculums were put on ground. One of the front line disciplines that could make people to be self-empowered is business education, defined by Oduma (2021) as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude required for office, distribution and marketing occupations, business management, economic understanding and teaching of business with the aim of preparing the recipients for both paid-employment and self-employment. Umezulike (2021) also states that business education is a body of knowledge whose aim is to prepare the recipients for positive roles such as employee, entrepreneur and self-employed. In the same vein, a study from Okeke-Ezeanyanwu and Okpala (2021) reveals that business education equips the learners with skills and knowledge needed for setting up and running a business venture as well as preparing them for employment and advancement in office occupation, teaching profession and entrepreneurship. Ebeogu and Ojo (2020) are also of the view that business education aims at equipping the learners with knowledge and skills that will enable them to be economically self-reliant, beneficial and functional. Learners are therefore required to possess capability for combining technical knowledge and business skills, innovation and creativity for effective job performance. A look at these views shows that business education aims at making people to acquire functional skills that will make them to be enterprising, contribute to human capital development, employable and self-employed thereby enabling them to generate jobs for themselves and others. The end product of these includes increase in productivity, enhancement of economic growth and development and reduction of the skyrocketing level of unemployment and the social problems it has begotten.

The skills exemplified above leads to effective job performance. According to Ikelebe (2020), a skill is the ability to carry out a task with determined result using a given amount of time, energy or both. In line with this, Oluwafemi and Adeagbo (2020) reported that a skill deals with the possession of power, authority and competency for executing the needed task in a job or profession. It is based on this that Olupayima and Ademiluyi (2022) pointed out that skills deal with expert knowledge as well as competencies, aptitude and expertness that are proper for a given job. Kwajafa (2016) asserted that a skill acquisition on the hand is a determinant of personal, national and international greatness in the sense that the skills possessed by an individual or a society have influence on their behaviour. According to Onwuzo and Nwakwo (2014), skill acquisition has to do with the formation of useful knowledge that facilitates correct thinking leading to the right ways of doing things. To Chikwuo and Oguegbulu (2016), skill acquisition focuses on learning and development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies that will make an individual to live in and contribute to the development of their society. In the same vein, Oluwalola and Ogundele (2017) are of the view that skill acquisition is a practical way of developing knowledge and ability in the recipient which makes them to contribute to the growth and development of the society. It could be deduced from the views of these authors that skills acquisition leads to knowledge, competency and expertise that will make an individual to contribute positively to societal growth and development. It is also worthy of note that business education curriculum is crafted in such a way that these attributes of skills acquisition will be realized. The discipline also provides the learners with arrays of skills among which are marketing and office technology and management skills.

Marketing lays emphasis on numerous activities that result into determination of needs and wants of the target markets as well as the provision of the products that will satisfy them (Gidado, 2020). Based on this, it could be deduced from Akaeze and Chukwu (2020) that marketing is the process of identifying the goods and services consumers needed and wanted as well as communicating, offering and delivering the product(s) to them at the right place, price and time. As for the marketing skills, Shaibu et.al (2020) pointed out that they make it possible for marketing students to acquire skills for salesmanship and

maintaining good relationship with the customers. In addition to these, Gidado (2020), is of the view that marketing skills include skills for determining customers' needs and wants, product development and improvement, branding, packaging, determining the right price for a product, advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, customer service/relation, customer retention, market segmentation and effective distribution. It is important to note that these skills could lead to self-reliance. In line with this, a deduction from Gidado and Babakura (2014) shows that products of marketing education can become self-reliant through engaging in buying and selling, advertising agency, private tutoring, publication of books and organizing seminar, workshops and symposium in marketing. The findings of Ugwuanyi et.al (2015) also revealed that entrepreneurial employment (self-reliance) opportunities in marketing education include selling of different items, rental and leasing services as well as provision of advisory services in marketing. Furthermore, Abubakar and Yahya (2018) are of the opinion that marketing/distributive education skills could make it possible for the recipients to be getting their daily bread by serving as independent wholesalers and distributors.

Office Technology and Management (OTM) was at one time referred to as secretarial education, secretarial studies, office education and office option. According to Oyinloye and Asonibare (2020), the change in the nomenclature was aimed at making the secretarial programme to be Information and Communication Technology (ICT) compliant. The essence is to equip the recipients with skills for managing office technologies in line with ICT. According to Onajaife (2019), OTM is an activity-based educational programme whose focus is the acquisition of office technology and management skills, understandings, attitudes, work habits and competencies which are needed for success in secretarial and office management occupations. Ezeorukwe and Ameh in Umoru and Zakka (2019) is of the view that OTM is an efficient, effective and productive functional education that leads to self-employment, self-reliance, paid employment and consequently self-actualization.

In addition to aforementioned discussions, Okoli (2020) posited that OTM is an academic programme which aims at equipping the trainee office managers, confidential secretaries, computer operators, typist and stenographers with knowledge and skills that will make them to be efficient and effective in the world of work. To bring the skills in OTM to the fore, Amoor and Ado (2019) are of the view that office technology and management skills include; skills for planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling and coordinating office activities and the use of modern office technology and information system. Others are skills for webpage design, data management, record management, desktop publishing, career counseling and effective communication. In addition to these, Oyinloye and Asonibare (2020) argued that the discipline has the goal of providing the recipients with secretarial skills. They further state that the skills include reprographic skills which deal with the abilities for reproducing copies of a document from the master copy through the use of duplicating, photocopying, scanning, printing and faxing machines; keyboarding skills with focus on ability for producing mailable letters through keyboard dexterity, typewriting skills and knowledge of word accuracy; record management skills (filing and indexing); computer and ICT skills (ability to operate computer and surf the internet for email and other internet resources); skills for effective use of telephone service and manner as well as the capability for discharging office functions. It is worthy of note that these skills are instrumental in making the recipients to become self-reliant. This was corroborated by findings of Ugwuanyi et al. (2015) which revealed that establishment of computer training centres as well as provision of reprographic; computer and ICT services are among the entrepreneurial employment (self-reliance) opportunities in OTM. To buttress these, it was concluded in a research conducted by Nnaji (2019) that OTM programme has made it possible for students at Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State to acquire skills for self-reliance.

Self-reliance has to do with doing things that will lead to profit and self-sustenance without external influence. In line with this, Bala and Abdulgafar (2014) perceived self-reliance as an act of doing or deciding things by oneself rather than relying on another person for help. Osagiede (2014) pointed out that self-reliance is an attempt at making life better for people by making them to optimally utilize more confidence in personal ingenuity and reducing dependence on international organizations and foreign countries. Furthermore, Tony-Okeme and Umoru (2021) also pointed out that self-reliance is

to depend on one's capabilities, knowledge, skills and competencies to improve life or the reliance of an individual on their personal resources, skills, competencies and knowledge for economic gains as opposed to being someone's employee. Taking a close look at these definitions, it could be concluded that self-reliance has to do with ability of an individual to control their own fortune without being influenced by anyone, leading to self-employment through the use of resources in order to get economic gains. This condition is expected to lead to empowerment, independence, job creation, revenue generation and significant contribution to the growth and development of the society.

The students are the recipients of business education curriculum. This shows that the curriculum contents were designed to make them to be able to cope with the issues in the society. They are also designed to give them the chance for contributing to societal progress through the skills that are embedded in it. The fact that the students are exposed to the skills in business education puts them in better positions of expressing their views in relation to the curriculum. In the same vein, the colleges of education sub-sector play prominent role in training the pre-service business educators at the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) level. It is therefore, based on these that this study focuses on the perception of colleges of education students of influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing and OTM skills.

Purpose of the Study

The aims of the study were to determine:

- i. the perceptions of colleges of education students on the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills.
- ii. the perceptions of colleges of education students on the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

Research Questions 1: What are the perceptions of colleges of education students on the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills?

Research Questions 2: What are the perceptions of colleges of education students on influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills?

Research Hypotheses

Research Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference between the mean perceptions of male and female students of influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills.

Research Hypotheses 2: There is no significant difference between the mean perceptions of male and female students of influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills.

Methods

Research Design

A survey research design was adopted for this study. A survey research is seen as appropriate for the study because a deduction from Buba and Hamman (2020) showed that it studies people by collecting and analyzing data from a group that is considered a representative of a population. The study was delimited to FCT College of Education, Zuba-Abuja.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study was made up of all the 216 students who registered in the Department of Business education, FCT College of Education, Zuba-Abuja in 2023/2024 academic session. The entire population was considered for the study. This was because entire population was not too large to cover.

Research Instrument

The data was collected using a four-point rating scale 21-items structured questionnaire titled “Students’ Perception of Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Acquisition of Marketing and OTM skills Questionnaire” (SPIBECAMOTMSQ). The instrument was validated by three experts (two in business education and one in measurement and evaluation).

Instrument Reliability

The instrument for data collection was subjected to a pilot test at Niger State College of Education, Minna, using a split-half method. The result of the pilot study was analyzed using Cronbach’s alpha method which yielded a co-efficient value of 0.87.

Data Collection Procedure

The instrument was distributed by the author and some research assistants and the respondents were given three weeks to return the questionnaire. Only 188 (87%) copies of the questionnaire were however retrieved and used for the data analysis.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire items and the grand means were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. The benchmark for accepting or rejecting an item and the grand mean was a mean score of 2.50. Furthermore, the null hypotheses were tested using the z-test at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was that any item or grand mean whose mean score was not less than 2.50 would be accepted and vice versa. In the same vein, any null hypothesis whose calculated value of z was greater than the table value be would be rejected and vice versa.

Result

Answering Research Questions

Research Questions 1: What are the perceptions of colleges of education students on the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills?

The data collected for answering this research question was presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceptions of Colleges of Education Students on the Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Acquisition of Marketing Skills.

S/N	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	be providing advertising services	3.04	0.99	Agreed
2	engage is buying and selling of goods and services	3.02	0.94	Agreed
3	be providing branding and packaging services	3.22	0.99	Agreed
4	engage in leasing of property	3.10	1.01	Agreed
5	become marketing consultants	3.07	0.98	Agreed
6	be producing quality marketing textbooks	3.12	1.00	Agreed
7	be organizing marketing seminar and workshops	3.19	1.03	Agreed
8	be engaging in private tutoring/extra mural lessons in marketing	3.32	0.91	Agreed
9	be providing retail services	3.20	0.85	Agreed
10	be providing wholesale services	3.29	0.88	Agreed
11	set up marketing training institutes	3.22	0.94	Agreed
	Grand mean	3.16	0.10	Agreed

Note. \bar{x} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 1 presents the mean perceptions of business education students in relation to the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills. The table revealed that the respondents were of the view that the curriculum of business education could make the students to acquire marketing skills. This owes to the fact that the mean scores for all the items (3.04, 3.02, 3.22, 3.10, 3.07, 3.12, 3.19, 3.32, 3.20, 3.29 and 3.22) and the grand mean (3.16) were not below the benchmark mean of 2.50.

Research Questions 2: What are the perceptions of colleges of education students on influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills?

The data collected for answering this research question was presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceptions of Colleges of Education Students on the Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Acquisition of OTM Skills.

S/N	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	set up internet cafés	3.27	0.91	Agreed
2	set up computer based test (CBT) centres	3.13	1.01	Agreed
3	engage in photocopying business	3.30	0.91	Agreed
4	set up business centres	3.20	0.91	Agreed
5	become consultants in OTM	3.18	0.84	Agreed
6	set up computer training institutes	3.20	1.03	Agreed
7	be producing OTM textbooks	3.16	0.85	Agreed
8	be organizing conferences, seminar and workshops in the field of OTM	3.27	0.98	Agreed
9	set up record management firms	3.11	1.04	Agreed
10	Set up schools for producing OTM specialists	3.37	0.72	Agreed
	Grand mean	3.23	0.08	Agreed

Note. \bar{x} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 2 shows the perceptions of business education students in relation to the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills. The table revealed that the entire mean scores (3.27, 3.13, 3.30, 3.20, 3.18, 3.20, 3.16, 3.27, 3.11 and 3.37) and the grand mean (3.23) were not below the benchmark mean of 2.50. This implies that the respondents were of the view that business education curriculum could lead to acquisition of OTM skills.

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference between the mean perceptions of male and female students of influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills.

Table 3: Summary of z-test Analysis on the Perceptions of Male and Female Students on the Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Acquisition of Marketing Skills.

S/N	Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	z-cal	z-tab	Decision
1	Male	49	3.16	0.09	186	0.00	1.96	Retained
2	Female	139	3.16	0.09				

Note. \bar{x} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 3 presents the z-test analysis of the differences in mean perceptions of male and female students of influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills. The table

revealed that the calculated value of z was 0.000 while, the table value was 1.96. Since $0.000 < 1.96$, the hypothesis of no significant difference was retained and we concluded that the difference between the means of the groups was not statistically significant at 0.05 level.

Research Hypotheses 2: There is no significant difference between the mean perceptions of male and female students of influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills.

Table 4: Summary of z-test Analysis on the Perceptions of Male and Female Students on the Influence of Business Education Curriculum on Acquisition of OTM Skills.

S/N	Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	z-cal	z-tab	Decision
1	Male	49	3.21	0.08	186	1.5504	1.96	Retained
2	Female	139	3.23	0.07				

Note. \bar{x} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 4 shows the z-test analysis of the differences in the mean perceptions of male and female students regarding the influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of OTM skills. The table shows that the calculated value of z was 1.5504 and the table value was 1.96. Therefore, since $1.5504 < 1.96$, the hypothesis of no significant difference was retained and we concluded that the difference between the means of the groups was not statistically significant at 0.05 level.

Discussions

The findings in relation to research question one revealed that business education students in colleges of education are of the perception that the discipline leads to acquisition of marketing skills. The test of null hypothesis one also showed that the difference between the mean perceptions of male and female students with regards to influence of business education curriculum on acquisition of marketing skills was not significant. The findings therefore, confirmed the views expressed in Oguejiofor (2020), Umoru (2020) and Mahmoud (2020) which implied that the aims of business education skills are to make the recipients to become self-employed and self-reliant. The findings are also in line with the opinion of Gidado and Babakura (2014), which pointed out that graduates of marketing education can become self-reliant by venturing into buying and selling, advertising agency, private tutoring, book publications and organizing seminar, workshops and symposium in marketing. The findings also supported those of Ugwuanyi et.al (2015) which revealed that the self-reliance opportunities in marketing education include taking up career in selling of goods, rental and leasing services and provision of advisory services in marketing. Finally, the findings are in consonance with the view of Abubakar and Yahya (2018) which stated that products of marketing education can independently engage in wholesaling and distributing services in order to earn a living

In the case of the research question two, the analysis revealed that business education students in colleges of education are of the perception that business education curriculum leads to acquisition of OTM skills. The test of null hypothesis two also showed that there was no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female students regarding the influence of business education on acquisition of OTM skills. The findings supported the views of Ebeogu and Ojo (2020) which stated that the focus of business education (the umbrella discipline) is to equip the recipients with the skills that would make them to be economically self-reliant and Ezeorukwe and Ameh in Umoru and Zakka (2019) that specifically pointed out that OTM is a functional education which among others leads to self-employment and self-reliance. The findings also confirmed the findings of Ugwuanyi et.al (2015) which established that setting up computer training centres and provision of reprographic; computer and ICT services are among the entrepreneurial employment (self-reliance) opportunities in OTM.

Conclusion

Business education curriculum leads to acquisition of functional skills that will lead to self-reliance and solve some of our societal problems. Notably among these skills are marketing and office technology and management skills. The findings of this study showed that the business education students who are the consumers of the curriculum are of the perception that acquisition of marketing and OTM skills are potent tools for making them to become self-reliant both during and after their academic pursuits. The implications of this, is that the skills would make the recipients to become functional members of the society. They would also lead to increase in productivity, employment generation, income/revenue generation and ultimately reduce poverty and other social problems in the society.

Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Nigerian youths should be encouraged to study Marketing and OTM education. This can be achieved through career counseling.
2. Marketing firms and marketing departments of organization should be the only places to be approved for students of marketing education who are going out for Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES).
3. Students who specialize in Office Technology and Management (OTM) should only be permitted to do their Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in organisations where there is availability of modern office technologies.
4. Interlopers should not be allowed to teach marketing education and Office Technology and Management (OTM) education. This implies that only professionally trained marketing educators and OTM specialists should be respectively employed to teach the disciplines.
5. There should be adequate funding of marketing education and Office Technology and Management (OTM) education.
6. Alumni associations, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and philanthropists should assist in providing facilities for teaching and learning of marketing education and Office Technology and Management (OTM) education.
7. The available equipments for teaching and learning of marketing education and Office Technology and Management (OTM) education should be optimally utilized.
8. Emphasis should be laid on acquisition of practical skills in both marketing and office technology and management education
9. Students should be encouraged to become student members of professional organisations. This will make them to be more exposed and skillful which will lead to self-reliance.

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