

Promoting Sustainable Development in the 21st Century: The Role of Marketing Education

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Abstract

The relevance of acquiring viable skills capable of placing an individual compliant to contemporary societal dynamics and expectations prompted an investigation into promoting sustainable development in the 21st century: The role of marketing education. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study was all the 105 marketing students (the 75 2017/2018 final year and 30 Postgraduates) in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt. A sample of 60 (43 final years and 17 Postgraduates students) respondents were selected for the study using proportional stratified sampling technique. A self-structured instrument titled "Promoting Sustainable Development Role of Marketing Education Questionnaire" (PSDROMEQ) was used for study. Data were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The study revealed that the acquisition of: sales promotion skills statistically and significantly enhanced graduate's poverty reduction ($F_{5, 54}=3.474, p<05$) and managerial skills statistically and significantly enhanced graduate's wealth creation ($F_{9, 50}=42.016, p<05$) in 21st century Rivers State. The study recommended among others, that: adequate human capital development be provided to enhance Business Education graduate's poverty reduction. Alongside, graduates should acquire the managerial skills that will help them place value and use ICT skills during financial and marketing transactions in their self-employment ventures.

Keywords: *Sustainable development, 21st Century, Role, Marketing education*

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Background to the Study

Marketing Education which is one among the other components that make up Business Education; an element of vocational education designed for tertiary and post primary institutions and has received international and domestic attentions from both scholars and policy makers since the past decade; this is due to growing concerns in many countries for skill acquisition for self-reliance, economic growth and national development. Wagbara (2016) posited that the development and economic growth depends on the acquisition of marketable skills for sustainable development as well equipping undergraduates in the institutions with technological based knowledge. For such skill to be sustainable it needs to serve the present and future generation.

Due to the dynamic nature of every society, Business Education is constantly prominent on the driver seat to force that change in the students, workplaces and society in general; this is because, it has the potentials of preparing the students for immediate and future survival even the face of meager resources. It is on this basis that, Ozoemena (2013) maintained that Business Education is very pivotal and has significant in the sustainability of the economic and industrial growth, create jobs for the unemployed and by implication, eradicate poverty, which one of the cardinal principles of sustainable development goals. It is a programme of study that prepares its recipients to acquire viable skills that will enable them fit into various business organizations or be self-employed in the absence of paid job (Oladunjoye, 2016). Aliyu (2013) posited that Business Education is the education for the acquisition and development of skills and competencies, attitude and attributes which are essential for the efficiency of the economic sustainable and development. The concept of sustainable development simply implies utilizing economic tools for the benefit of human race and also, to protect the environment for present and future generation, the result of this could also promote innovation and turn a profit for national growth.

The path to economic sustainability and national development from the current state of the nation demand numerous efforts more in particularly education and training of our teeming youth, consequently, the nation education curriculum need to be addressed as to truly embrace the olive opportunities in Business Education that is aimed at the preparation of students toward self-sustaining and employability skill as an escape route from idleness, poverty, economic frustration and prostitution which breed crime. In support of this, Ofei-Manu and Shimano (2012) argued that the veritable instrument for achieving sustainable development includes: promoting existing education programme in order to address sustainable development; improving the quality of basic education, as to prepare the students on how to survive through innovative skills and environmental friendliness even in the face of dwindling economic realities; re-orienting developing public awareness and understanding; and providing training to all sectors of private and civic society.

The confluence of technological advancement, globalization and economic expansion in recent years has prompted the need for nations to prioritize skills development as a key strategy to promote innovative skills and cushion the effect of unemployment, unfortunately the promotion of innovative skills for national growth is nearly becoming a mirage as every

indicator revealed that the country seem to be consumed by high rate of unemployment and poverty which is predicated on three reasons: (1) the graduates are not enterprising inclined due to the lack of the prerequisite skills to discharge their duties even when employed (2) the parents feelings about Business Education and (3) the government does not understand the potentials or do not give Business Education the attention it deserves. Business Education as enterprise education is designed to prepare students for engaging in a self-directed economic future such as seeking opportunities, taking risks and having the tenacity to push an idea through to reality combined into a special perspective that permeates entrepreneurs (Adenipekun, 2004). Okorie (2001) asserts that vocational education can be conceived as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of educational process involving the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. The enterprising skill as a sub-set of marketing skills also, includes sales promotion skill, distributive skill, public relation skills, managerial skill, advertising skill, and so on.

Statement of the Problem

Promoting sustaining development be it economic, environment, social or political in Nigeria is predicated on the nature of graduates the nation tertiary institutions turns out yearly, which implies that, education and training has enormous part to play in the projection and preparations of a better and healthy nation. It therefore, hold that education and training is a breeding ground for the production of graduates with sound knowledge and skills that can make them gain employment, be independent in the face of lack of paid job and contribute to economic growth and even pass on to the future generation such skills for survival. Regrettably, the problem of unemployed graduates appears worsened as millions of graduates (Business Education) marketing inclusive are not gainfully employed or even provide for themselves, this reason could be adduced to the fact that they lack the necessary occupational skills such as distributive skill, promotion skills, innovative skills and public relation skills that will enable them to be self-employed and effectively function in today's enterprise world.

Eweniyi (2018) posited that the Nigeria economic report released by the World Bank indicated that 80 million of its citizens representing 42.4% of the population currently live below the poverty line. Corroborating this, the United Nation blue print as a sustainable development goal particularly on how to recover nations from hunger and starvation centered on the eradication of extreme poverty for all human races over the globe. In extreme contradiction Eweniyi (2018) noted that the case in Nigeria about 7 people go into poverty every minute. This situation is what being worried for, as its negative consequences on the sustainable development of the country leads to endless questions without any reasonable answer except high level of unemployment, hunger, crime, local and international migrations, prostitutions, frustrations and civil unrest. It is on the afore-mentioned problems that this study tends to investigate how the acquisition of viable skills through marketing Education can lead to sustainable economic development in the 21st century Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

Generally, the study aimed at determining the role of marketing education in the promotion of sustainable development in 21st century Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. How the acquisition of sales promotion skills by Business Education students will lead to poverty reduction among graduate in 21st century Rivers State.
2. How the acquisition of innovative skills by Business Education students will lead to unemployment reduction among graduate in 21st century Rivers State.
3. How the acquisition of production skills by Business Education students will lead to self-reliant skills among graduate in 21st century Rivers State.
4. How the acquisition of managerial skills by Business Education students will lead to wealth creation among graduate in 21st century Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were stated to guide the study:

1. To what extent does acquisition of sales promotion skills by Business Education students enhance graduates poverty reduction in 21st century Rivers State?
2. To what extent does acquisition of innovative skills by Business Education students enhance graduates unemployment reduction in 21st century in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does acquisition of production skills by Business Education students enhance graduates self-reliant skills in 21st century Rivers State?
4. To what extent does acquisition of managerial skills by Business Education students enhance graduates wealth creation in 21st century Rivers State?

Review of Literature

According to Nwaigburu and Eneogwe (2013), Business Education denotes a wide range of course of study that is taught across all levels of our educational system; be it tertiary, secondary and elementary institutions. Principally, Business Education is led on two discrete dimensions: training for regulatory employment in the public and private industry, and university instruction for business organization and training for teachers to teach vocational and business related subjects and courses in high schools and tertiary institutions respectively. Business Education is one of the professional and skill-oriented program that prepare student to a creative thinker, technological-driven, industrialist and season entrepreneur for purpose revolutionising the business environment for benefit of the society (Sanusi, 2015). Business education is in many cases portrayed as training for and about business whose main role is to get people ready for productive work in business occupations and self-employment (Nwosu, 2003; Izedonmi & Okafor, 2010).

The term self-reliance means being capable to fend or provide for one self with limited resources rather than depending on others. It has to do with what one can do for himself/herself. Additionally, self-reliance implies depending without anyone else capacities and endeavors to be free towards individual sustenance (Nwaigburu and Eneogwe, 2013). Babalola (2010) stressed that development is growth plus positive change or better future. Sustainable development therefore, implies increasing wellbeing over a very long time. Also, it could be described as a state of economical stability by an individual or society without any

prevalence of element of poverty. It encompasses both personal well-being and strong (economic) nation building which goes into generations. Qian-Qian, Yu, and Xiao-Lin (2016) stated that people are at the epic centre of sustainable development and must be achieved on the purpose of ending poverty through frantic confrontation of human challenges which will automatically bring about economic growth, reducing unfair phenomena and sustainable utilization of resources.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design since it was essentially an investigation into the need for the acquisition of marketing education skills for sustainable development among Business Education graduate in Rivers State. This is in consistence with Nwankwo (2013) who noted that a descriptive research survey is that in which a researcher collect data from a given population and describe certain features of the sample as they are at the time of the study, provided it is of interest of the researcher. The population of this study consists of one hundred and five (105) respondents, comprising of seventy-five final year marketing students in the 2017/2018 academic session and thirty Postgraduates students of the faculty of business studies, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt.

A sample size of sixty (60)consisting of 43 final year and 17 Postgraduates students of marketing departments) served as respondents in the study. A 60 item self-structured instrument titled “Promoting Sustainable Development Role of Marketing Education Questionnaire” (PSDROMEQ) was used for data collection. The PSDROMEQ instrument was patterned after a four point modified rating scale of “Strongly Agree (SA), 4 points”, “Agree (A), 3 points”, “Disagree (D), 2 points” and “Strongly Disagree (SD), 1 point”.

The PSDROMEQ instrument consists of three sections. Section A contained the demographic information of the respondents, Section B contained the items eliciting information on the sales promotion skills, innovative skills, production skills and managerial skills, while Section C contained items eliciting information on sustainable development (via causes of unemployment, poverty reduction, self-reliant and wealth creation).The PSDROME Q instrument was validated by two Business Education experts from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt and one Science Education expert from Ebonyi State University Abakaliki. The reliability of the PSDROMEQ was determined using Cronbach Alpha (r_c) method to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.841.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does acquisition of sales promotion skills by Business Education students enhance graduates poverty reduction in 21st century in Rivers State?

Table 1: Summary of Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the extent acquisition of sales promotion skills by Business Education students enhance graduate poverty reduction in 21st century in Rivers State

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	122.641	5	24.528	3.474	.009	S
Within Groups	381.293	54	7.061			
Total	503.933	59				

Decision rule: *S*= significant, $p < .05$ and *NS*= Not Significant, $p > .05$,

Table 1 shows that the acquisition of sales promotion skills statistically and significantly enhanced graduates poverty reduction in 21st century Rivers State ($F_{5, 54} = 3.474, p < .05$). This indicated that the acquisition of sales promotion skills greatly improved graduates poverty reduction in 21st century in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: To what extent does acquisition of innovative skills by Business Education students enhance graduates unemployment reduction in 21st century in Rivers State?

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the Extent of Acquisition of Innovative skills by Business Education Students enhance Graduates Unemployment Reduction in 21st Century in Rivers State

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	71.343	9	7.927	3.312	.003	S
Within Groups	119.657	50	2.393			
Total	191.000	59				

Decision rule: *S*= significant, $p < .05$ and *NS*= Not Significant, $p > .05$,

Table 2 shows that the acquisition of innovative skills statistically and significantly enhanced graduates unemployment reduction in the 21st century in Rivers State ($F_{9, 50} = 3.312, p < .05$). This indicated that the acquisition of innovative skills greatly improved graduates unemployment reduction in 21st century in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: To what extent does acquisition of production skills by Business Education students enhance graduates self-reliant skills in the 21st century in Rivers State?

Table 3: Summary of Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the extent Acquisition of Productive skills by Business Education students Enhance Graduates Self-reliant Skills in 21st century Rivers State

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	667.668	7	95.381	34.863	.000	S
Within Groups	142.265	52	2.736			
Total	809.933	59				

Decision rule: *S*= significant, $p < .05$ and *NS*= Not Significant, $p > .05$,

Table 3 shows that the acquisition of productive skills statistically and significantly enhanced graduates self-reliant skills in 21st century in Rivers State ($F_{7, 52} = 34.863$, $p < .05$). This indicated that the acquisition of productive skills greatly improved graduates self-reliant skills in the 21st century in Rivers State.

Research Question 4: To what extent does acquisition of managerial skills by Business Education students enhance graduates wealth creation in the 21st century Rivers State?

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Extent Acquisition of Managerial Skills by Business Education Students Enhance Graduates Wealth Creation in 21st century in Rivers State

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	882.907	9	98.101	42.016	.000	S
Within Groups	116.743	50	2.335			
Total	999.650	59				

Decision rule: *S*= significant, $p < .05$ and *NS*= Not Significant, $p > .05$,

Table 4 shows that the acquisition of managerial skills statistically and significantly enhanced graduates wealth creation in 21st century Rivers State ($F_{9, 50} = 42.016$, $p < .05$). This indicated that the acquisition of managerial skills greatly improved graduates wealth creation in the 21st century in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The result in Table 1 revealed that the acquisition of sales promotion skills greatly improved graduates poverty reduction in 21st century Rivers State. This finding is in agreement with previous finding by Ozoemena (2013) that Business Education has an important role to play in poverty alleviation by equipping graduates with necessary and meaningful skills. Bimiyo (2014) stated that these meaningful skills would enhance poverty reduction when hinged on effective targeting of the poor, adequate human capital development, adequate funding of social programmes, consistency in government policy and coordinated sectional policy initiatives.

The result in Table 2 revealed that the acquisition of innovative skills greatly improved graduates unemployment reduction in 21st century Rivers State. This finding is consistent with Ofei-Manu and Shimano (2012) who emphasized that innovative skills are vital tools for preparing and improving students' quality and survival in all sectors of private and civic society in the face of dwindling economic realities. This will help curb the unemployment triggers or causes like neglect of agriculture, neglect of indigenous technology, inadequate patronage of local industries, over concentration on oil revenue and over dependence on purchase of foreign goods, as articulated or canvassed by Chudi-Oji (2018)

The result in Table 3 revealed that the acquisition of productive skills greatly improved graduates self-reliant skills in 21st century Rivers State. This finding aligns with the position of Nwaigburu and Eneogwe (2013) that self-reliance skills enables individuals to rely on one's own abilities, resources and means which is productively put into use to enhance independence, sustenance and ably to fend for one self.

The result in Table 4 revealed that the acquisition of managerial skills greatly improved graduates wealth creation in 21st century Rivers State. This finding is consistent with the view of Oladunjoye (2016) who reiterates that Business Education affords students with training programmes that prepares and equips recipients with viable managerial skills that will enable them become wealth creators, self-employed and capable of fitting into various business prospects and organizations. Possessing wealth creation knowledge or skills according to Philip (2000) enable individuals place value on Business Education studies, get the right employment, engage in self-employment and prudently save their income channeled to the right investment.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Business Education afforded students with skills like sales promotion, innovative, productive and managerial skills which upon graduation endow or bequeath on recipients the ability to engage in sustainable development practices that will greatly improve graduates poverty reduction, employability, self-reliance skills and wealth creation capacity respectively in 21st century Rivers State.

Furthermore, Business Education provides graduate with adequate human capital development programmes and initiatives like reliance on agriculture, indigenous technology, and patronage of local industries. That will increase opportunities for prudently saving and reinvesting the income generated from the right and self-employment.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Efforts should be intensified in helping Business Education students acquire sales promotion skills that will enhance their understanding and familiarity with the deeds to improve their future business diversification for sustainable development.
2. Adequate human capital development should be provided to enhance Business Education graduates poverty reduction in the 21st century in Rivers State.

3. Business Education graduates should acquire innovative skills that will improve their employability in agriculture and indigenous technology for sustainable development in the 21st century in Rivers State.
4. Business Education graduates should acquire productive skills that will improve their business transaction/proposal skills and self-reliant for sustainable development in the 21st century in Rivers State.
5. Business Education graduates should be provided with skills that will enhance their effectiveness in managing and prudently reinvesting incomes from businesses as a means for sustainable development in the 21st century Rivers State.
6. Graduates should acquire the managerial skills that will help them place value and use ICT skills during financial and marketing transactions in their self-employment ventures for sustainable development in the 21st century Rivers State.

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