

An Assessment of Community Participation in the Implementation of Business Education Curriculum in Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools in Onicha LGA of Ebonyi State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 236,828 and a sample size of 399 respondents obtained using Yaro Yamene's model. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. A questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated and tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha coefficient which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Collected data was analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using t-test. It was found that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female in the areas in which communities participate, and in the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in secondary schools. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and community members on hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum. The implication of the study is that, community participation in curriculum implementation of business education programme is a welcome development in assisting schools to function and perform better. It was concluded that more participation in education should be done by the communities. It was recommended that communities should participate more actively beyond making donations to schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a human resource development programme that provides an individual with the ability for self-realization, development and actualization. Education enables a person to become relevant to oneself, the nation and the world as a whole. The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) study in Academia (2019) noted that the physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of the individual into a complete man or woman is the fundamental aim of education. More so, there is no nation that has attained remarkable development without the education of its citizens. It is education that provides the manpower needed in national development. As a matter of fact, the quality of education of a country reflects the quality manpower required for developing the country. In affirmation, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) posited that education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society. One

aspect of education where skill is often emphasized is Business Education.

Okute and Chukwurah (2011) described Business Education as an educational programme for the total development of an individual through initial training for entry level employment, upgrading programme for advancement in any business career in the public and private sectors as well as the development of professionally competent business educators for the teaching profession. Business Education is a field of study which provides relevant training 'for and about' business. Business Education provides knowledge, experiences and skills for the recipient to utilize opportunities in business to satisfy ones need as well as creating opportunities for others to benefit from the business world. Others benefit from economic activities such as employment generation, and provision of goods and services.

Vocational Business Education, according to Azuka, Nwosu, Kanu and Agomuo (2006), started with apprenticeship. The apprentice-

ship system of learning requires an apprentice to learn a particular trade from a master who is already established in the business with wealth of experience to share. In the formal education setting, Business Education began in the commercial schools established by some private proprietors to train individuals on skills needed in business and business subjects such as Bookkeeping, Shorthand and Typewriting. In the opinion of Kising'u (2012), Business Education was introduced into the public high schools in the USA during the last part of 19th century. This was as a result of the demand by parents that their children should be taught commercial subjects.

The importance of Business Education cannot be over emphasized. Igboke in Ezeani (2013:29) noted that Business Education at all levels of education enables the recipients to:

Develop basic skills for personal use in future; relate the knowledge and skills acquired to national development; acquire skills and knowledge of business; develop basic skills for office occupations; prepare students for further training in business studies and to provide orientation and basic skills with which to start a life of work for those who may not undergo further training.

Business Education at the senior secondary school level is taught as separate subjects. The subjects include Salesmanship, Marketing, Financial Accounting, Commerce, Economic, Office Practice, Keyboarding/Typewriting and Shorthand.

Education in general and Business Education in particular require huge funding for the implementation of programmes. The government alone cannot provide education for all its citizens at all levels. FRN (2013) stated that education is a capital-intensive social service, which requires adequate financial provisions from all tiers of government for successful implementation of educational programmes. FRN added that the financing of education is a joint responsibility of the Federal, States and the Federal Capital Territory, Local Governments and the private sector.

The private sector includes the community, and by implication, the involvement of the community in the implementation of educational programmes is imperative. As viewed by Preston (2013), community involvement is a student-focused school-

community connection that directly or indirectly supports the students' physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs. In the assertion of International Survey Associates (ISA, 2016), consistent community involvement and engagement at all levels of education have been shown time and time again to have significant short and long term benefits. Education is for the community members, and it is logical that the community takes active participation in the implementation of the educational programmes; especially in the implementation of Business Education Curriculum in Secondary Schools, which is the focus of this study.

Community participation in education may be perceived in terms of the various complementary roles that members of the immediate locality, in which a school is located, should play as contribution to educational development of their wards (Kanau and Haruna, 2013). Ejieh (2005) observed that many communities in Nigeria have been playing very useful roles in their local schools. These roles according to Emenalo and Ibekwe (2013), dates back to the colonial period when the administrators made use of the local communities in the provision and furtherance of western education. Emenalo and Ibekwe added that local communities gave out their lands with labour for the development of educational facilities, provided guards for the safety of materials in use, and free accommodation for the missionaries in the community.

Further more, Kanau and Haruna (2013) opined that community participation in education did not end with the Christian missionaries, as some other efforts were also directly coming from the local communities. Such efforts, according to Taiwo in Kanau and Haruna (2013), included financial contributions which came as special contribution from the local community cutting across religious boundaries. There were contributions from business organizations in the community. The contribution of communities in education can be seen in the implementation of the curriculum.

The term curriculum is not easy to define and there is no universally acceptable definition for the concept. However, Egan (2003) defined curriculum as the study of any and all educational phenomena. A less ambiguous definition was given by Marsha and Willis in

Oteh and Akuma (2011) as the totality of learning experiences provided to students so that they can attain general skills and knowledge at a variety of learning. Similarly, Nwakpa (2017) defined curriculum as the sum total of all learning experiences and the intended learning outcomes that are offered to the learners in the auspices of a school.

It is not enough to have a curriculum document. Dike in Igbokwe (2015) noted that it is even more important to put in place machinery that will ensure that its ideals are realizable through effective classroom practices. Implementation is the most vital stage of the curriculum. Nwakpa (2017) considered curriculum implementation as that stage of the curriculum process where the learner through the guide of a teacher interacts with learning activities so as to maximize learning as will be noticed in the learners' new behaviour or new approach to issues. In a more simple term, Amadioha (2016) defined implementation as the act of taking action towards the realization of the intention of a curriculum plan. Implementation of the curriculum implies bringing to reality planned objectives of the curriculum, which is about inculcating the right competencies in the students.

Curriculum implementation is often seen as an activity carried out solely by the teacher. However, other stakeholders have significant role to play in the implementation of the curriculum. The stakeholder's role is more innovative and supportive to that of the teacher in the implementation process. The community as a stakeholder, by extension, is involved fully in the educational system. According to Ewelum, Mbara and Ugochukwu (2016), government policies on community involvement in educational system is informed by the creative and innovative attributes of the private sector in the planning, organization, funding, supervision, maintenance and evaluation of development programmes. Though the policy lay more emphasis on the funding of education as a joint responsibility of the government at all levels and the private sector, Ejieh (2005) is of the view that the involvement of the community (as part of the private sector) in the life of their schools has recently gone beyond mere financial contributions.

Curriculum implementation, especially in Business Education, can no longer be

considered as a responsibility solely reserved for professional educators. There are many areas the community can participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. The community can do this by providing human resources locally available to make inputs to curriculum implementation. Nasib (2018) noted that communities have a legitimate role to play in implementing some aspects of the curriculum, and they can do so socially, financially, culturally, and intellectually. The community can also provide direct assistance for curriculum implementation in the form of resource persons, school volunteers, and any other personal forms of contributions to the effort of the school. Key areas the communities can participate in curriculum implementation include: financial contribution, donation of land, provision of security to guard school properties, building of classrooms, procurement of necessary instructional materials and equipment for the schools, evaluation of students' performance, creating an enabling environment for schools to operate, allowing access to community resources during field trips, promoting the value of hard work among the students and staff and integration of teachers and students into the community.

The participation of the community members alongside with the school teachers have been seen to have influence on curriculum implementation. Ndede (2018) found that it influences accountability, quality of education and maximization of limited resources in schools secondary schools. In a similar vein, Ajah (2020) found no significant difference in the mean rating of the respondents on the influence of community participation in school administration.

Community participation is not always a smooth process. There are some hindrances in the process such as: lack of appreciation of the overall objectives of education, mismatch between what parents expect of education and what the school provides, the belief that education is essentially the responsibility of the government, ignorance of the structure, functions and constraints of the school and poverty among members of the community. More so, in the assertion of Sango (2016), the challenges hindering community participation centred on parents' low standard of living,

community attitude towards education, family income level, and school-community relations.

Strategies that may enhance community participation in curriculum implementation include: inclusive decision making process, community mentoring programmes, combined supervision of school, utilizing the parent-teacher-association structure and establishing community sponsorship programmes. Other strategies identified by Linde (2021:2) include to:

- a) Invite community members to attend school functions
- b) Host community involvement days specifically designed to establish relationships
- c) Set up regular meetings with community members
- d) Attend neighborhood association meetings
- e) Acknowledge and thank partners publicly in newsletters, posters, and signs
- f) Involve families in the process of getting community involved
- g) Ask community members for feedback on their involvement and how else they may help
- h) Involve students in the process by writing thank-you notes or letters of request

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is considered by many that the provision of social services is the exclusive responsibility of the government. There is much expectation on the government to provide quality and affordable education (if not completely free) at all levels for all its citizens in line with the world conference on education for all held in Jomiten, Thailand in 1990 (Uemura, 1999). In line with this expectation that it is the government responsibility to provide education for all, many do not see the need to support educational programmes in any form. Rather, the government is almost constantly blamed for any failure in the education system.

In addition, the cost of education is very high, and it would be difficult for only the government to take full responsibility of providing education in the country. As observed by Ogundele in Ewelum and Mbara (2016), high growth in population coupled

with the world economic crises has made matters worse.

An alternative source of implementing educational programmes must be sought to complement government efforts. To this end the government has extended the financing of education to the private sector. As part of the private sector, the community in which the school is supposed to serve has a role to play in this. It is on this note that this study is carried out, to assess community participation in the implementation of Business Education Curriculum in the Secondary Schools.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to assess community participation in the implementation of Business Education Curriculum in Secondary. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

- 1) Areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in secondary schools.
- 2) Hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in secondary schools.
- 3) Strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in secondary schools.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- 1) What are the areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools?
- 2) What are the hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools?
- 3) What are the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses guided the study:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female

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respondents on the areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and community members on hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female respondents on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to enable the collection of data from a small sample of a large population; and to interpret

Table1. *Distribution of the population sample.*

District	Towns	Comm. Members	Teachers	Proportion		Total
				Males	Females	
Isu	10	49	21	40	30	70
Oshiri	16	79	33	60	52	112
Onicha	25	122	53	100	75	175
Abaomege	6	29	13	22	20	42
Total	57	279	120	222	177	399

A questionnaire with a 4-point rating scale was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was validated and tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Data collected was analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Similarly t-test was used for testing the null hypotheses.

RESULTS

Table2. *Mean responses on areas the community could participate in curriculum implementation in Business Education*

S/N	Areas the community participates in the implementation of curriculum	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Financial contribution	3.60	.491	Strongly Agree
2	Donation of land	3.40	.491	Agree
3	Provision of security to guard school properties	3.30	.460	Agree
4	Building of classrooms	3.20	.401	Agree
5	Procurement of necessary instructional materials and equipment for the schools	3.30	.459	Agree
6	Evaluation of students' performance	3.50	.501	Strongly Agree
7	Creating an enabling environment for schools to operate	3.50	.501	Strongly Agree
8	Allowing access to community resources during field trips	3.30	.459	Agree
9	Promoting the value of hard work among the students and staff	3.50	.501	Strongly Agree
10	Integration of teachers and students into the community	3.60	.491	Strongly Agree
	Grand Mean	3.42		Agree

the characteristic features and facts on community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. The study was carried out using senior secondary schools in Onicha Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The population for the study comprised 236,828(National Population Commission, 2006). The sample size used was determined using Yaro Yamane's model as applied below:

$$\text{Sample Size (n)} = \frac{N}{1 + (e)^2}$$

Where N = Total Population and (e)² is error level allowed

To ensure equal representation of respondents in the four (4) districts, a proportionate stratified sampling technique was used. The distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 1. However, out of the sample of 399, one hundred and twenty (120) were teachers and 279 were community members.

The results from the analysis of data were presented as follows:

Research Question 1: What are the areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools?

Data collected to answer research question 1 is presented in Table 2.

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In Table 2, the grand mean of 3.42 is an indication that the respondents agreed that financial contribution, evaluation of students' performance, creating an enabling environment for schools to operate, allowing access to community resources during field trips, promoting the value of hard work among the students and staff and integration of teachers and students into the community, donation of land, provision of security to guard school properties, building of classrooms and procurement of necessary materials and equipment for schools constitute the areas in

Table3. Mean responses on the hindrances to community participation in the curriculum implementation

S/N	Hindrances to community participation in the implementation of curriculum	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
11	Lack of appreciation of the overall objectives of education	3.70	.459	Strongly Agree
12	Mismatch between what parents expect of education and what the school provides	3.20	.401	Agree
13	The belief that education is essentially the responsibility of the government	3.50	.501	Strongly Agree
14	Ignorance of the structure, functions and constrains of the school	3.70	.459	Strongly Agree
15	Poverty among members of the community	3.60	.491	Strongly Agree
	Grand Mean	3.54		Strongly Agree

In Table 3, the grand mean of 3.54 reveal that both the teachers and community members agreed that lack of appreciation of the overall objectives of education; the belief that education is essentially the responsibility of the government; ignorance of the structure, functions and constrains of the school; and poverty among members of the community; mismatch between what parents expect of education and what the school provides are hindrances to community participation in the

Table4. Mean responses on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum

S/N	Strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of business education curriculum	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
16	Inclusive decision making process	3.70	.460	Strongly Agree
17	Community mentoring programmes	3.20	.401	Agree
18	Combined supervision of school	3.60	.491	Strongly Agree
19	Utilizing the Parent-Teacher-Association structure	3.20	.403	Agree
20	Establishing community sponsorship programmes	3.40	.490	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.42		Agree

From Table 4, the grand mean of 3.42 shows that the respondents agreed that inclusive decision making process; combined supervision of school; community mentoring programmes; utilizing the Parents-Teachers-Association structure and establishing community sponsorship programmes are strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of

which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Research Question 2: What are the hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools?

The mean responses on the hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum is presented in Table 3

implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Research Question 3: What are strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools?

The mean responses on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of curriculum are presented in Table 4.

Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female respondents in the areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business

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Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

The data collected to test the hypothesis is presented on Table 5

Table5. t-test results of the areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools

ITEM	Gender	N	Mean	Std.	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
1	Male	222	3.60	0.490	0.21	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.59	0.493			
2	Male	222	3.40	0.491	0.01	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.40	0.492			
3	Male	222	3.30	0.458	0.28	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.31	0.464			
4	Male	222	3.20	0.400	0.12	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.20	0.404			
5	Male	222	3.30	0.460	0.51	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.30	0.459			
6	Male	222	3.50	0.501	0.26	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.49	0.501			
7	Male	222	3.50	0.501	0.25	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.49	0.501			
8	Male	222	3.30	0.458	0.16	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.31	0.462			
9	Male	222	3.50	0.501	0.36	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.49	0.501			
10	Male	222	3.60	0.491	0.12	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.59	0.493			
					0.23	1.96	Accept

DF = 397

The calculated t-value presented in Table 5 was 0.23, while the critical t-value was 1.96. The null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female respondents concerning areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and community members on the hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

The data collected to test the hypothesis is presented on Table 6

Table6. T-test results on hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum

ITEM	Teacher/Member	N	Mean	Std.	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
11	Teacher	120	3.70	.458	0.168	1.96	Accept
	Member	279	3.69	.462			
12	Teacher	120	3.20	.400	0.128	1.96	Accept
	Member	279	3.20	.404			
13	Teacher	120	3.50	.501	0.056	1.96	Accept
	Member	279	3.50	.501			
14	Teacher	120	3.70	.458	0.168	1.96	Accept
	Member	279	3.69	.462			
15	Teacher	120	3.60	.491	0.005	1.96	Accept
	Member	279	3.60	.492			
					0.11	1.96	Accept

Df = 397

In Table 6, t-calculated value of 0.11 was greater than the t-critical value of 1.96. Based on the decision rule, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and community members on the

hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female

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respondents on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

Analysis of data on Ho3 was done using t-test and the result was presented in Table 7

Table 7. *t-test result of male and female on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum*

ITEM	Gender	N	Mean	Std.	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
16	Male	222	3.70	.458	0.565	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.69	.464			
17	Male	222	3.20	.403	0.123	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.20	.399			
18	Male	222	3.60	.490	0.210	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.59	.493			
19	Male	222	3.20	.400	0.266	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.21	.408			
20	Male	222	3.40	.491	0.110	1.96	Accept
	Female	177	3.40	.490			
					0.25	1.96	Accept

$Df = 397$

From Table 8, it was found that the calculated t-value of 0.25 was less than the critical t-value of 1.96. Based on the decision rule, it was accepted that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female respondents on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

It was found that financial contribution, evaluation of students' performance, creating an enabling environment for schools to operate, allowing access to community resources during field trips, promoting the value of hard work among the students and staff, integration of teachers and students into the community and donation of land, provision of security to guard school properties, building of classrooms and procurement of necessary materials and equipment for schools are areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. This finding agreed with Nasib (2018), that communities have a legitimate role to play in implementing some aspects of the curriculum, and they can do so socially, financially, culturally, and intellectually. Similarly, it was also found that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female respondents on the areas in which the community could participate in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. This finding aligned with Ajah (2020), who found

no significant difference in the mean rating of the respondents on the influence of community participation in schools.

On hindrances to effective community participation in secondary school Business Education curriculum implementation, it was found that lack of appreciation of the overall objectives of education; the belief that education is essentially the responsibility of the government; ignorance of the structure, functions and constrains of the school; poverty among members of the community; mismatch between what parents expect of education and what the school provides are hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. These findings are in line with Sango (2016) that the challenges against community participation centred on parents' low standard of living; community attitude towards education; family income level and school-community relations. Furthermore, the testing of null hypothesis 2 revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and community members on hindrances to community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. This finding did not vary from that of Idike (2011) that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the teachers and community representatives on hindrances facing community participation in curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Inclusive decision making process; combined supervision of school; community mentoring programmes; utilizing the Parents-Teachers-Association (PTA) structure and establishing community sponsorship programmes are strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. It was also found that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female respondents on the strategies for enhancing community participation in the implementation of Business Education curriculum in the secondary schools. By extension, the strategies were found suitable by both male and female respondents to enhance community participation in curriculum implementation. The findings agreed with Linde (2021), on the strategies that enhance community participation in the curriculum implementation of Business Education programmes in secondary schools. The findings of Idike (2011) were also agreeable with the findings of the present study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that effective community participation is very essential for effective curriculum implementation of secondary school Business Education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, it was recommended that:

1. The managers of the secondary school system should encourage community participation in the implementation of secondary school Business Education Curriculum in Nigeria and elsewhere.
2. The strategies for enhancing school community relations in curriculum implementation found in this study should be applied by both government and private school proprietors to enhance community involvement in the implementation of secondary school Business Education curriculum.
3. As much as possible, the hindrances to effective community participation in secondary school curriculum implementation in Business Education and other subject areas should be minimized.

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