Business Education: A Critical Factor for Peace and Sustainable Development

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Abstract
For Nigeria to remain the giant of Africa and be consequential, peace and stability must be the order of the day. When there is insecurity in the nation’s polity such as poverty, unemployment, unrest and crisis, ignorance and corruption, the country is looked down upon as a deplorable state. To curb these vices, the nation requires functional business education. Functional business education possesses all it takes to tackle these ugly menaces since it meets the need of individuals and the society. It is purposive and usable, job oriented, and performance based that promotes peace. This paper discussed business education as a critical tool or factor for peace and sustainable development. The paper explored the concept of peace, sustainable development and business education. It also examined merits and the challenges of business education. The paper therefore, argues that nation’s peace could only be sustained and achieved through functional business education. This paper concluded that non-peace environment and heterogeneity among the ethnic and religious groups, election violence and instability of the regimes are mostly made by politicians who serve as leaders of nations. Developing countries should evade and terminate conflict and war, create peaceful environment and as a matter of urgency make necessary economic policy environment to attain economic growth.

Keywords: Peace, Education, Business Education, Sustainable Development

Introduction
Nigeria is a consequential country in Africa region because of her natural endowment but still faced with some challenges ranging from regional size to security. If it were not ethnic conflicts, it will be political murder, ethnic crises, villagers rising up against villagers, agitation for oil and revenue allocation, kidnapping, religious intolerance, rising militants all these leading to destruction of peace and property. Destruction of property is seen when burning of churches and mosques and even different bomb explosions in various parts of the country. When all these negative vices are being perpetrated there can never be any meaningful development as when there is perpetual peace. Recent events in Nigeria have shown that government performed below expectation, especially in the area of national peace and security of lives and property. Okolie-Osemene (2012), noted that, the new wave of threats to national peace and stability in Nigeria has taken an unusual dimension to the extent
that people are now compelled to abandon their places of work and business in the name of bomb scares. With the current upsurge in kidnapping, ethno-religious, and identified-based conflicts, both intro and inter-violence in various parts of the country makes it a point of necessity for stakeholders in the security sector of the economy to give proper attention to peace and security education. The government and the entire nation are in great danger if adequate steps are not taken to arrest these ugly situations. In the light of this, there is the need for peace education if the nation is to attain sustainable peace and national development. Arase and Iwuofor, in Nwaosa, Oru, & Egbule (2014) observed that peace is the basis for achieving sustainability and economic development in all aspects of her economy, therefore, peace education must be given paramount concern.

Concepts of Peace, Sustainable Development and Business Education:

Peace
Different conceptual frameworks have been used to explain and define peace. These frameworks can be partitioned into two: idealistic framework and process framework. As an ideal state of living, peace is seen as a condition of social, political, religious and economic order that guarantees and maintains a balance between the desired and the obtained state of living. From this definition, it is certain that any condition or state in which the individual or group observes or imagines that a negative disequilibrium has occurred or will occur between the desired and the obtained state/condition leads to non peaceful experience. This implies that a positive disequilibrium may also occur. It means that the obtained condition or state of living is better than what is expected. Individual or groups are usually tolerance of a positive disequilibrium than a negative one. Orah and Odei (2011) defined peace as a perceived equilibrium between the desired and the obtained state in the environmental, economic, religious, social, political or psychological condition of an individual or group that is brought about by the direct or indirect thoughts and actions of the stakeholders. This state of equilibrium promotes development and reduces conflict. Peace also means a state of harmony characterized by absence of war, suffering, anxiety and the freedom from fear of violence.

Sustainable Development
Development must involve two basic processes. The first has to do with improving and refining what is already in existence and adapting it to contemporary requirements. The second process involves finding solutions to new problems or new form of solutions to old problems. Both imply creative responses to social, political and economic affairs. Specifically sustainable development suggests an enduring remarkable, non-terminal quality of life, standard of living and life chances of the people. Such development must be capable of surviving generations over a prolonged period of time. It favours a progressive curve in human development encompassing enhanced creativity for increased productivity. Sustainable development can therefore be defined as a deliberate and systematic policy of ensuring the survival of a state in such condition that the social, economic and political necessities that are imperative for the enjoyment of the good life and ensuring the greatest numbers are available now without this constituting a denial of the capacity of being able to enjoy the same benefits to generation yet unborn in the foreseeable future. Another way to understand the concept of sustainable development is to say that the society should be managed in an effective and efficient manner such that it benefits all and sundry, with enough resources (Orah and Odei, 2011).
Nigeria has been a perennial victim of the devious manipulation of ethnicity region and religion. Colonialism and its multidimensional impacts remain one major factor of socio-cultural, economic and political significance in Nigerian history that accounts partly for this twist of fate. The centrality of this epoch was informed more by the supposed artificiality of the Nigerian of the Nigerian Federal system which has left a heritage of “ethnocentricity and divisiveness” as against desirable spirit of cooperation and cohesion as a precondition for sustainable development in federal context (Orah and Odei, 2011).

**Business Education**

Business education is the sum total of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required for successful promotion and administering of a business enterprise (Aina, 2002). Fafunwa (1969) defined business education as a programme of studies, which aim at creating awareness in business occupations; preparing people to become better citizens and consumers of goods, services and preparing business teachers. Business education consists of that group of related, occupationally focused and general education subjects, systematically arranged, which are prescribed for possible certification in a field. Osuala (2004) described business education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: office education, a vocational education programme for office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education, and general business education, a programme to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business world. Business education could simply mean an educational process or context which has its primary aim the preparation of the people for roles in enterprises: such could be as employee, entrepreneur, and employer or simply as self-employed. It is education for vocation. Olaitan (1993) opined that it is a training system that encourages the beneficiary to acquire skills that fits into the world of work. It is an embodiment of vocational knowledge and skill needed for entry into employment and advancement in a broad range of business careers (Igwe in Dikeocha & Onwukwe, 2011). By its programmes and activities, therefore, business education is robust enough to equip individuals for self-reliance, thereby combating unemployment and poverty and enhancing national peace.

**Achieving National Peace through Business Education**

Business education can make enormous contributions toward achieving peace and security in Nigeria. Education has the capacity to eradicate poverty and unemployment which in turn will reduce the level of crime and violence in our society. Business education equips youths with necessary skills to operate as rational beings. It opens employment opportunities to recipients both in the private and public sectors; it also gives recipients the opportunity to be self-reliant which will help to curb unemployment and reduce poverty level. Opportunities in business education are versed. Business education produces job creators and not job seekers. This is because it equips the recipients with skills, knowledge and attitude that can empower them to identify problem plaguing the society thereby creating employment opportunities through such means.

Business education produces entrepreneurs, managers, investors, secretaries and business merchants of various categories. As a branch of vocational education it provides marketable skills for its recipients. The numbers of entrepreneurs produced by business education has contributed a lot towards the nation’s economic development. Entrepreneurs enhance employment generation which is a major factor for peace and security enhancement in Nigeria. They develop indigenous and local industries, modern technologies, establish small
and medium scale businesses that encourage rural production and the use of local raw materials. Today many business education graduates have established small scale business, such as business centres, cyber café, small and large scale retail trading. Some have equally established consultancy firms where many youths were employed. Others have established business schools and skill acquisition centres.

Business education prepares recipients in such a way that they will be useful to themselves and the society. What leads many into crime is not having what to do. As it is said “an idle mind is the devil’s workshop”. But if these idle “minds” are equipped with necessary skills, attitudes and knowledge which can help them to harness other resources, there will be no room for violence behaviour. Business education from whatever angle one looks at it is a formidable force in equipping youths with appropriate skills, abilities, knowledge and competency to enable the individuals to be employed or self-reliant, which will lead to national peace sustainability. Business education instills in the recipients the act to be conscious of economic development. When recipients of business education launch business outfits they are seen as the backbone of the economy. Since they promote cottage and rural industries is an important step in rural development. They help in the supply of needed raw materials to big companies and this helps those companies to expand their business horizon. The expansion of industry provides or creates additional demands for industries that supply it with raw materials which make possible the economies of large-scale production, that bring about the lowering of prices of goods at the advantages of ultimate buyers.

Challenges of Business Education
There are many challenges confronting business education. As a result of these obstacles and constraints, it becomes obvious that business education could not effectively produce necessary qualified graduates that will profitably contribute to the growth of the economy. Some of these challenges are identified as follows:

**Lack of Planned Curriculum:** Lack of a well planned and designed curriculum is a major constraint. Curriculum is a group of learning experiences which students are exposed to through teachers in order to have a positive change in their behaviours. Orah & Odei (2011) opined that availability of reliable labour market information, business opportunities and career data banks are major requirements for a well designed and suitable curriculum of business education. Absence of useful information serve as constraints to business educators who only have to plan their programmes and curricula with insufficient information, hence, lack of a good curriculum.

**Dearth or Lack of Equipment and Instructional Materials:** It is either there is dearth or lack of equipment and facilities that are consequential for positive business education. It is on record that business education is faced with inappropriate and inadequate teaching facilities, equipment and qualified staff. Business skills and competencies can only be guaranteed and utilized when learning environment is equipped with the same tools, machines and operating techniques as obtained in work place or industry. Olaitan (1993) said that the beginning of an effective learning environment using the same instructional materials rests on its potency in making lesson real particularly today, where many tertiary institutions are not equipped with appropriate and up-to-date equipment and facilities for functional business education programme.

**Lack of Qualified Staff/personnel:** Lack of qualified staff is another problem besiege effective business education programme. Even when there are qualified teachers they are
very scanty in supply. Business educators are needed to teach and impart knowledge and skill to students as a result of their long involvement in the use of business education equipment and facilities. The problem of poor teachers especially in the area of quality is the manifestation of poor output (graduates) of business education. This was reiterated by Fafunwa (1969) that poorly trained teachers tend to produce their own kind. The significance of quality teachers was seen in National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) when it stated that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers.

**Societal Attitude:** Business education as a course is looked down upon as unviable and productive type of education. Society doesn’t see any good in students studying business education in schools. It is considered as a course meant for the poorly performed candidates or even drop outs. Business education is seen as last resort programme since many parents, especially the rich and well to do will not allow their wards enroll for this noble course.

**Apathy Funding of Business Education:** Business education programmes demands substantial financial outlay. Poor attitude of government towards funding of this important programme is a serious challenge. When government even shows keen interest and make fund available, the officials in the ministry divert proportionate part of the allocation to their own domestic activities (Omole, 2010). The remaining fund will be inadequate to procure necessary equipment and facilities that will enhance teaching and learning. Poor funding stems from the fact that government has not seen the importance of business education as being panacea to poverty eradication.

**Absence of Vocation/Career guidance:** Lack of career guidance in the programme posses big constraints to business educators, students and employers. Odei (2010) opined that in Nigeria there exists among students, confusion and ignorance about entrepreneurial abilities, careers and choice making. The author continued that many University graduates were ignorant of the programme (business education) they went in for at the University. It is evident from the above statement that there is high and serious need for career guidance to provide information and direction to students on the relationship between the acquisition of higher certificates and economic realities of their future career.

**Conclusion**
This study evaluated the impact of peace on economic growth of a nation. Peace positively affects economic growth of many countries in the world directly or indirectly. The effects of peace on human and capital accumulation are more than direct effects of peace on economic growth. Peace determines growth which is root determined of economic development in developing countries. Policy makers and politicians in developing countries mostly interested in economic policies issues to achieve growth. Economic development in developing countries is comprehensive outcomes of socio-political stability rather than economic stability. Conflicts in most developing countries are mostly determined due to the corrupted liberal democracy. Rulers are not as philosophical leaders. Instead, they are leaders backed by mobs and thugs. Non-peace environment and heterogeneity among the ethnic and religious groups, election violence and instability of the regime are mostly made by politicians who serve as leaders of nations. Political culture made by third class leaders in most of developing countries leads to conflicts, violence and war. Peace cannot be achieved by liberal democracy in developing countries. Instead, it can be attained by a predetermined group of unchanged
leaderships. It is thereby, recommended that developing countries should evade and terminate conflict and war, and make peace environment to attain stable economy. They should also make necessary economic policy environment to achieve economic growth.

References