

Curriculum Development in Business Education: Challenges in Enhancing the Implementation

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ABSTRACT: *Business Education programme in Nigeria requires a proactive and effective assessment that can bridge the gap between theory and practice. This will go a long way in ensuring the correlation between skills and competency displayed by graduates of business education and the certificate they obtain to parade looking for white-collar jobs in the world of competition. This can only be achieved through a well-structured and update of business education curriculum. The curriculum development process include: curriculum content with details of what the teachers are expected to teach and each students expected to learn. Business education graduates should be able to put to practice the skills professed by their certificates. The study examines, concept of curriculum development, types of curriculum development models, principles of curriculum development, trends that will shape curriculum development. Some of the challenges in enhancing the implementation of business education curriculum are; Inadequate funding of business education programme, Poor maintenance of business education equipment, unstructured curriculum in business education and inadequate qualified lecturers. Among others, it was recommended that the university authorities should adequately fund Business education Programmes to enable them have a required facilities for effective teaching and learning and employing adequate qualified teachers to teach in business education programme*

KEYWORDS: business education, curriculum development and implementation

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum development is a systematic and intentional process that aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of students' learning experience. It encompasses the creation and arrangement of educational tasks aimed at achieving certain learning objectives. Curriculum development refers to the systematic process by which an educational institution or teacher plans and formulates a comprehensive plan for a certain course or programme. Moreover, this technique is not static and incorporates ongoing enhancement, wherein the material is assessed, modified, and refreshed in accordance with the requirements and expectations. Curriculum encompasses

the systematic and purposeful behaviours and procedures that direct and promote meaningful learning experiences.

Oluwadare et al (2022) argue that the implementation of a standardised curriculum for Business education is necessary in order to effectively connect theoretical concepts with practical applications. This will significantly contribute to establishing a strong association between the abilities and competencies shown by business graduates. This can only be accomplished via a well designed and regularly updated business education programme. Business education is a fundamental component of vocational education. This programme is available in universities and colleges of education. According to Hamza and Yusuf (2019), business education equips students with practical abilities in using office equipment in the rapidly evolving technological landscape. Nwosu (2009) states that business education focuses on experiential learning, which enables the development of practical and applied abilities. According to Amoor (2009) cited in Hamza and Yusuf (2019), business education is a vocational curriculum available at colleges of education and universities. Its purpose is to provide students with the necessary skills, attitude, and knowledge to pursue careers in business. University business education curricula include essential components that provide graduates with the necessary abilities to become self-employed and thrive in the professional world.

University graduates may also serve as administrative officials in both the public and commercial sectors of the economy. The purpose of business education is to provide graduates with the necessary information, skills, abilities, and competences to become entrepreneurs who effectively use both human and material resources to achieve maximum production. Additionally, business education aims to develop self-reliance skills in graduates (Hamza & Yusuf 2019). Business education facilitates self-employment by fostering the acquisition and development of skills. Additionally, it serves as a means for governments to address unemployment and alleviate poverty in society (Amoor, 2010).

The curriculum creation process include the formulation of curriculum content, which outlines the specific topics and concepts that instructors are required to teach, as well as the intended learning outcomes for each student. Many schools in Nigeria use assessment tools such as tests, assignments, term papers, projects, research reports, practical work, and examinations.

Concept of Curriculum Development

Curriculum encompasses the deliberate acts and systematic procedures that direct and promote meaningful learning experiences. Curriculum development is a systematic and intentional process that aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of students' learning experiences. It encompasses the creation and structuring of educational tasks with the aim of achieving desired learning objectives. It also requires the careful evaluation of those learning results. Curriculum development involves enhancing and refining the curriculum. Diverse methodologies have been used in the creation of educational courses. Frequently used methodologies include analysis, design, formation selection, and review (Wikipedia, 2023). Curriculum pertains to the precise instruction

and scholarly material that is imparted in schools and educational institutions for a given course or programme. Conversely, curriculum development is a systematic process that seeks to enhance the curriculum via the use of several methodologies. Some often used tactics include need and task analysis, objective design, selection of suitable teaching and learning methods, choice of assessment methods, and establishment of the curriculum committee and curriculum review committee.

The primary objective of curriculum is to optimise the quality and influence of the instructional and educational encounter. When creating a course or programme of study, it is important to consider certain factors in order to provide relevant learning experiences. Curriculum development goes beyond focusing just on the material and instead takes into account the connection between the desired learning goals of a course or programme, the evaluation of those results, and the activities and opportunities created to support student learning. In designing a course or program, developers need to consider:

- **Outcomes:** What should the learner know and be able to do at the end of this course/program?
- **Assessment:** How will learners and teachers know if the learning outcomes have been accomplished?
- **Activities:** What needs to be done to achieve the learning outcomes?

Types Of Curriculum Development Models

- Learner-Centred Design
- Subject-Centred Design
- Problem-Centred Design

Learner-Centered Design

The learner-centered design focuses on the understanding that each learner has different characteristics. The teachers or instructors are to give opportunities to the learners to take ownership of a project or assignment. They require to create chances for independent learning with well-regulated liberty. This indicates that students take a more active role in the classroom, but it is to be done under the instructor's guidance.

There are four distinct attributes of learner-centered design, which includes:

Context- This refers to the assignments and tasks given in the classroom that should have real-world application. Consequently, the relevant context in student learning will help learners to connect with what they are learning.

Construction - Learners should relate their own experiences and prior learning with new learning.

Collaboration- Creating an environment and providing opportunities that encourage collaboration between classmates. Activities like group discussions and team assignments allows the learners to only form individuality but also expose to others' opinions.

Conversation- Exercises to improve learners' communication skills are mandatory, and hence instructors should employ them accordingly.

Subject-Centered Design

Subject-centered design is a traditional approach to curriculum that focuses on a particular

Subject matter or discipline rather than on the individual. Additionally, during the curriculum development process, this approach includes four subtypes of curriculum designs: subject-area design, discipline design, broad-field design, and correlation design.

Problem-Centered Design

Problem-centered design is an approach that focuses on developing problem-solving skills, thinking and communication skills. This is a student-centric strategy wherein the learners are given problematic situations and encouraged to solve them after careful observation.

Process Of Curriculum Development

The curriculum development process consists of the following six stages.

- **Stage 1:** Assessing the educational needs
- **Stage 2:** Formulating objectives and learning goals
- **Stage 3:** Careful selection of learning experiences to accomplish these objectives
- **Stage 4:** The selecting the rich and valuable content through which teachers can offer the learning experiences.
- **Stage 5:** Organizing and integrating learning experiences with relevant content keeping in mind the teaching-learning process
- **Stage 6:** Timely and accurate evaluation of all the above phases.

Principles of Curriculum Development

The principles of the curriculum are norms, values, moralities, and philosophies that will benefit teachers, students, and the whole education system. The curriculum and instructional strategy are essential components of imparting knowledge to students.

According to National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005), **The following are** few of the basic principles of curriculum development

1. **Principle of Totality of Experiences:** It is imperative to realize that curriculum does not merely indicate academic subjects traditionally taught in schools and colleges. It also includes the totality of experiences a student gains through several curricular, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.
2. **Principle of Child-Centeredness:** Instead of sticking to the predetermined curriculum, instructors must consider the child's concerns, motives, and needs while developing the curriculum. In addition, while planning any curricular activities, educators must consider ways to enrich learners' interests.
3. **Principle of Conservation And Creativity:** While developing a curriculum, it is mandatory to include subjects and experiences that would help conserve cultural heritage. Furthermore, one of the most essential principles of curriculum development is that the curriculum cannot be static. On the contrary, it should be subject to modification as per the requirement aligned with the changing global educational trends and students' needs.
4. **Principle of Integration:** The curriculum should be planned in such a way that varied subjects could be added at different stages of education. Similarly, the existing subjects should be able to integrate with other subjects apart from enabling the students to correlate with the content.
5. **Principle of Flexibility:** One of the ideal qualities that a curriculum should have is flexibility and dynamism, as this will be instrumental in serving the needs and concerns of individuals and society. Also, timely changes and appropriate modifications to the curriculum allows educators and learners alike to stay updated with academic goals.
6. **Principle of Utility:** Curriculum construction should follow the principle of utility, according to which educators must include content that is useful to the individual and society. In addition, the curriculum must consist of rich and valuable content that would be useful later in life.
7. **Principle of Character Formation:** The goal of the curriculum is not just educating learners through bookish knowledge. It should also encourage the development of character and personality in students. Therefore, the curriculum must aid in students' character training throughout the academic years.
8. **Principle of Mental Discipline:** A significant task of the curriculum is to foster learners' various mental faculties or powers through cognitive training and practice.
9. **Principle of Social Fulfillment :** Education aims to provide the overall development of the students through comprehensive teaching styles and content. Moreover, the

curriculum should also consider adding the element of social life so that learners could gain insight into becoming responsible citizens.

Trends that will shape Curriculum Development

Sharma (2023) gave 10 trends that will shape curriculum development;

Blended Mode of Learning

Blended or hybrid learning is gaining popularity for making education accessible and attainable for every student, especially those living in remote areas. Blended learning brings together the good features of classroom learning and online learning. It provides students with the option of virtually attending classes from their homes or physically attending classes in school. Blended learning makes education flexible and, at the same time, better structured and enhances students' learning experience.

Personalized Learning

Every student has a different learning style. Being cognizant of this, personalized learning takes a student-centric approach and tailors learning courses in a way that meets the need of every student. It imparts knowledge through different mediums, including textbooks, video and audio lectures, storytelling, etc. Combining the powers of AI and personalized learning will make education more impactful and powerful and develop a self-driven and accountable attitude from an early age in students, which will help them through their adult life.

Gamification

Gamifying the way education is delivered with the help of K12 ed-tech companies will make education engaging. It will also increase students' interest and encourage them to participate actively in learning activities. In addition, it will motivate the students to perform better and rank higher on the leaderboard than they do now. Gamification will improve the overall learning process and result in the formation of an interactive classroom environment.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning revolves around the concept of students teaming up in small groups to work on a task, create a product, or solve a problem. Working together facilitates discussions among students and helps them voice their points of view. Listening to differing points of view develops the quality of open-mindedness and also improves their understanding of concepts.

Besides increasing the engagement of students, collaborative learning builds interpersonal skills, which are pre-requisite for success in every field today.

Immersive Learning

Digital curriculum providers now offer VR (virtual reality) and AR (augmented reality) based learning. VR and AR enable students to interact with their course material in 3D, thus creating an immersive learning experience. They simplify complex concepts by making them realistic and also add an element of exploration to the learning process.

AR and VR are expected to grow at 18.2% CAGR from 2022-27 in the education sector. As a result, in the future, AR and VR will completely change the way students learn and the way teachers teach.

Mobile-First Learning

Statista expects there to be 7.49 billion mobile phone users globally by 2025. This means that mobile-first learning is here to stay. Mobile-first learning refers to accessing the course content on mobile-based devices. It allows students to access the educational resources at a time and place of their convenience. Implementing mobile-first learning will ensure that learning continues to take place outside the boundaries of the classroom.

Micro-Learning

Micro-learning, also known as bite-sized learning, is an approach to learning where complex topics are divided into small digestible chunks. Micro-learning prevents burnout by reducing cognitive overload. It also improves students' focus and leads to better retention of knowledge. Owing to the benefits of micro-learning, many K12 curriculum development companies now offer course material in the form of multimedia-rich bite-sized chunks.

Disability-Accessible Learning

A current trend in curriculum development is about making learning accessible to K12 students with disabilities, including blindness, speech deficits, deafness, photosensitivity, etc.

Owing to this, educational institutions have started ensuring that their websites are WCAG-compliant. Many e-learning K12 companies have also started providing screen-reader-friendly and easy-to-understand content that includes the learning needs of differently-abled students.

Social-Emotional Learning

The pandemic brought the mental health crisis to the forefront. The likelihood of children suffering from stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders has drastically increased. Suicide has reportedly become the second leading cause of mortality among 10 to 14-year-olds. All this has created a need to include social-emotional learning (SEL) in educational content development. SEL focuses on developing self-awareness, control, management, and interpersonal skills of K12 students and teachers through academic resources, systems, and programs. It also assists them in becoming mentally and emotionally strong.

Project-Based Learning

Alternatively referred to as learning by doing, project-based learning (PBL) is a teaching strategy intended to allow students to build their skills and knowledge through projects based on problems and obstacles they may encounter in the real world. PBL fosters the development of technical abilities and skills in students and prepares them to face the workforce. At the same time, PBL stimulates the growth of soft skills like problem-solving, team-working, and critical thinking skills.

Challenges

Challenges in enhancing the implementation of the curriculum are;

1. Inadequate funding of business education programme.
2. Poor maintenance of business education equipment.
3. Inadequate instructional materials.
4. Public poor perception towards business education programme.
5. Inadequate textbooks in business education programme.
6. Unstructured curriculum in business education.
7. Inadequate qualified lecturers.
8. Poor implementation of education polices.
9. Poor supervision in business education programme.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations given;

1. The university authorities should adequately fund Business education Programmes to enable them have a required facilities for effective teaching and learning.
2. Employing adequate qualified teachers to teach in business education programme
3. The curriculum should be updated based on the market needs, Business Education Course Structure should be regularly reviewed by the university management to meet up to the current economic trends.
4. Adequate funding of business education programmes, Modern equipment should be provided by the university authorities in Business education to facilitate effective teaching and learning.
5. Collaboration with employers of labour to employ business education graduates,
6. Collaboration with association of business educators for their input in curriculum design,
7. Public enlightenment programmes on business education programme,
8. Award of honorary certificates to eminent members of the society to promote business education programme, provision of adequate class rooms for effective learning,
9. Formulation of government policies that will encourage the programme
10. Collaboration in business education programme, involving business people in planning school curriculum,

CONCLUSION

Business Education can meaningfully contribute to the growth of the nation One of the ways to fast track development of any nation is to give adequate funding and promote the acquisition of skills and knowledge through Business education,.

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