



Evaluation of Facilities Utilized for the Implementation of Business Education Programmes in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the equipment and facilities utilized for the implementation of business education programmes in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Evaluation research design was adopted in this study. This is because the evaluation research design seeks to document and describe what exists or the present status of existence or absence of what is being investigated. The study was carried out in Rivers State in Nigeria. The population of this study consists of 4,527 year II and final year male and female business education students drawn from Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt and Federal College of Education (T), Omoku respectively. A sample size of 1,358 respondents was used for the study. Stratified simple sampling technique was adopted to arrive at the sample size used in the study, which is 30% of the target population of male and female business education students drawn from the three tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Research instruments known as Perceived Availability of Equipment and Facilities in Business Education Rating Scale (PAEFBERS) and Perceived Level of Maintenance Culture of Equipment and Facilities in Business Education Rating Scale (PLMCEFBERS) were used to gather data for the study. The trial test reliability of the PAEFBERS and PLMCEFBERS using Cronbach Alpha method yielded 0.76 and 0.78 reliability coefficient levels respectively. Mean scores were used to answer the research questions, while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses. It was revealed in the study that the school plants in business education departments fall below the required minimum academic standards level of the programme. Based on the results and findings of the study, the researchers therefore recommended that maintenance schedule for all the equipment and facilities be carried out for specific periods and planning process should take into consideration functional features, adequacy and efficiency that apply to all educational facilities before final decisions are made.

Keywords: Benchmarking, evaluation, maintenance, equipment, facilities

INTRODUCTION

Benchmarking is usually an important tool in measuring the level of achieving particular set goals in any business organization. This tool of measurement could also be adopted in the maintenance of school plants and equipment in the educational set up. Without the use and application of benchmarking as tool for setting and achieving standards, school administrators may not appreciate and achieve the importance

of maintaining school plants and equipment. According to Livia (2011), benchmarking is a multiple step process that allows organization to compare the aspects of performance, identify the differences, seek out alternative approaches, assess opportunities for improvement, implement the change, and monitor outcomes.

The place of school equipment and facilities in the nation's educational system stands more pronounced than ever in recent times because the school is seen as society's laboratory where desired changes in the society are incubated and hatched. The school is seen as a service enterprise, and all other sectors of the economy depend upon for the needed societal positive change. Formal education, which is responsible for producing required manpower for the various sectors of the economy that need necessary and utmost concern in the adequacy and availability of functional school plants and equipment to operate. The demand for education appears to be increasing due to rapid explosion in population and aspirations for knowledge. This is the reason why there should be an increase in the availability of educational resources for the education process to achieve her set goals and objectives (Erinosho, 2005). Maintenance of school equipment and facilities implies the process, which is designed for the keeping of school facilities and equipment in the school in their original, efficient and functional state of utility in the teaching and learning process to foster and promote the life span of the equipment and facilities and also avoid future damage or depletion.

To ensure optimum teaching and learning under the best of conditions, business education departments are expected to be adequately and sufficiently provided with requisite instructional facilities and equipment. Where the requisite teaching and learning tools are non-existent or inadequate, effective instruction may not take place. Recognizing the importance of the availability of standard education in business education programme, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology according to Amirize (2000) and the National Universities Commission (2005), are benchmark and controlling agencies that prescribed the minimum standard for the maintenance of school plants, equipment and facilities needed for the teaching and learning of business education in tertiary institutions. The prescriptions made by these controlling bodies hinge on the fact that mastery in business subjects would be difficult (if not impossible) in the absence of the requisite tools. A business educator cannot effectively teach students home keys of a computer or how to operate the adding machine without having the needed school plants and machines in the classroom (Enyekit, Ubulom & Egwe, 2010). Hence, it could be acknowledged that the functions and benefits derived from the use of these school plants and machines especially in business education programme cannot be ignored (FRN, 2004).

Business education like other manpower training programmes is designed with the primary purpose of upgrading skills or providing citizens with the necessary tools required to obtain gainful employment. Business education includes education for office occupations, distribution and marketing occupation, business teaching, business administration and economic undertakings. Nevertheless, Ubulom (1999), further defined business education as an aspect of educational or training process which an individual receives with the primary motive of enabling him acquire adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for his personal or for vocational usage, for career as administrator or manager and for career as a business teacher wherever he may find himself in the world of work.

The mission of business education according to Adesina & Ogunsaju (1984), in Enyekit, Silas-Dikibo & Vinazor (2012), include:

1. To educate individuals for and about business,
2. To provide a continuous programme of planned learning experiences designed to equip individuals to fulfil effectively three roles which includes; to provide and distribute goods and services as workers, to use the result of production as consumers, and to make judicious socioeconomic decisions as citizens.
3. To provide career information that helps students relate to their interests, needs and abilities of occupational opportunities in business, and

4. To provide educational opportunities for students preparing for careers in fields other than business to acquire business knowledge and skills needed to function effectively in these careers.

According to Ubulom (1999), the objectives of business education to include:

1. Teacher Education; to develop in all students, knowledge and understanding that they may require as effective trained business teachers or educators.
2. Exploratory; to make available to all students opportunities to explore and learn about the world of business and the possible interest and potentials careers it has to offer.
3. Consumer Education; to help develop in all students the ability to choose discriminately and use wisely the goods and services that business is to offer.
4. Occupational Intelligence; to assist in developing intelligent, understanding on the part of all students of the various occupations to be found in the world of business.
5. Economic Understanding; to develop in all students the practical way of understanding and appreciating the actual functioning of our economic system.
6. Personal Use; to enable the students acquire the business knowledge and skills that they may need for their personal use.
7. Vocational; to prepare students to enter and succeed in business occupations as beginners who expect to follow business as a career.
8. Semi-vocational; to prepare students to perform business activities common to many professional, industrial, agricultural awareness and home-making career.
9. College Preparation; to prepare students for more effective study in the field of business and education beyond the secondary school educational level.

School equipment and facilities contribute to the teaching and learning process. Such facilities refer to immovable property, physical structures, assets and facilities belonging to or allocated to an educational institution, used primarily for educational purposes and activities, these include classrooms, laboratories and equipment, libraries, hostel furniture, staff quarters, playground and so on. The concept of educational facilities is a recent phenomenon and does not have definite meaning. Enyekit & Enyekit (2010), observed that very little attention or none was given to issues of education especially in the area of school plants and facilities. Federal Republic Nigeria (FRN, 2004) indicated that the quality of education that our children receive bear direct relevance to the availability of or the lack of school plants and facilities in which learning takes place. Hence National Universities Commission (NUC, 2005), observed that prior to the advent of educational facilities, the best teacher in the world would find it difficult to instruct or teach in an environment that is not conducive to learning. The resultant effect is that distractions would be evident among the students. Similarly, Njoku (2006), noted that the gradual development and sophistication of school plants and facilities may be found in the theories of educational psychology, school needs, learning and retention, individual differences, activity and learning, transfer of learning and so on.

Teaching facilities and equipment help to stimulate interest, facilities comparison and ensures mobility and continuity to the teaching-learning process. Whenever these facilities and equipment are optimally utilized they generate greater students' interests in the learning system and also enhance retention of ideas. Hence, it is a fact that learning would be less meaningful without the use of teaching facilities and students would grope in darkness for long before they can get a grasp of what the teacher says. Enyekit, Amaewhule, Onyeche & Enyekit (2011) noted that teaching facilities apart from lending themselves to practical learning are equally essential for actual occupation jobs for self-reliance. These skills could only be gotten when school plants and equipment are maintained based on the minimum standard and benchmark as stipulated by the monitoring and regulatory educational bodies.

Maintenance costs are usually the second largest single expense component for equipment and facilities operation cost. Having a quantitative understanding of equipment and facilities operations lends itself to comparing the school to others. One common mistake people make when developing a benchmarking strategy is selecting only organizations within their own industry to benchmark against. Business

education programme in tertiary institutions is expected to produce competent business education teachers for both tertiary and secondary schools on one hand and skilled and knowledgeable labour force for the commercial sector of the economy on the other hand. To ensure that the facilities and equipment input resources are adequately provided and maintained in business education departments, Federal Government agencies such as National Universities Commission (NUC), and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) made comprehensive recommendations on what should be provided and the quantities for a specific number of students. Enyekit & Enyekit (2011), observed that business education programmes in other countries are given adequate attention and priority in both input and output resources, but in Nigeria, the reverse appears to be the case. The complaints may be as a result of inadequate and lack of availability of school equipment and facilities needed for teaching in business education to impart the right skills and knowledge to the products of the programmes. In view of the above, since there is need for empirical study to be conducted on the evaluation of the level of availability of school equipment and facilities input resources as well as their level of maintenance culture as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, this therefore becomes imperative.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the functionality of the equipment and facilities input resources utilized in implementing business education programmes in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, the study posed to:

1. Determine the availability of equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. Determine the level of existence of maintenance culture of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the level of the availability of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
2. What is the level of existence of maintenance culture of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business education students' on the extent of availability of school equipment and facilities for effective teaching in business education programmes in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business education students' on the extent of maintenance culture of school equipment and facilities for effective teaching in business education programmes in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Rivers State.

METHOD

Evaluation research design was adopted in this study. This is because the evaluation research design seeks to document and describe what exists or the present status of existence or absence of what is being investigated. It was used in this study to describe the assessment of students' perceptions on extent of availability and maintenance culture of school equipment and facilities for effective teaching of business education programme in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study was carried out in Rivers State in Nigeria. The population of this study consists of 4,527 year II and final year male and female business education students drawn from Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt and Federal College of Education (T), Omoku. These are tertiary institutions run business education programmes at Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and National Certificate in Education (NCE) levels in Rivers State respectively. A sample size of 1,358 respondents was used for the study. Stratified simple sampling technique was adopted to arrive at the sample size used in the study, which is 30% of the target

population of male and female business education students drawn from the three tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Self-structured research instruments known as Perceived Availability of Equipment and Facilities in Business Education Rating Scale (PAEFBERS) and Perceived Level of Maintenance Culture of Equipment and Facilities in Business Education Rating Scale (PLMCEFBERS) were used to gather data for the study. The instruments were well elaborated in simple manner to give the respondents the opportunity and ease to respond to the questions. Responses with mean scores of 2.50 – 5.00 were considered as available and those below 2.50 – 0.0 were considered as not available.

The instruments were face-validated by four experts; three in Business Education from the Department of Vocational Teacher Education, in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Guidance and Counseling, University of Port Harcourt. Their corrections and inputs were used to modify the research instruments used in this study. In order to ensure the internal consistency of the PAEFBERS and PLMCEFBERS, a trial test was carried out with forty five final year students from Delta State University, Abraka and University of Calabar, Nigeria. The trial test reliability of the PAEFBERS and PLMCEFBERS using Cronbach Alpha method yielded 0.76 and 0.78 coefficient levels respectively. Mean scores were computed and used to answer the research questions, while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses in this study.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the level of the availability of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Computation of the Availability of School Equipment and Facilities and NUC Benchmark Standard in Business Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State

S/N	Equipment and facilities	X	SD	Decision
1	Manual typewriter	1.34	1.203	Reject
2	Electric typewriter	1.48	1.121	“
3	Shorthand laboratory	1.78	1.111	“
4	Tape recorders	1.11	1.240	“
5	Cassette player	1.32	1.122	“
6	Line jack with headphone	1.31	1.143	“
7	Projectors	1.53	1.124	“
8	Video tapes and monitors	1.19	1.061	“
9	Telephone equipment (adapted)	1.27	1.075	“
10	Franking machine	1.44	1.122	“
11	Filling equipment	1.32	1.115	“
12	Shredding machine	1.09	1.130	“
13	Duplicators	1.19	1.180	“
14	Electric calculators	1.33	1.165	“
15	Photocopiers	1.53	1.215	“
16	Scanning machine	1.44	1.214	“
17	School buildings	2.67	1.574	Accept
18	School plants	3.63	1.712	“

Items 1-16 on Table 1 have mean scores below 2.5 cut-off point. Only items 17 and 18 on school buildings and school plants that have mean scores of 2.78 and 3.26 that are above the cut-off point of 2.5

respectively. This shows that low level of the availability of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State exist.

Research Question 2

What is the level of existence of maintenance culture of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Computation of the Level of Maintenance Culture of School Equipment and Facilities in Business Education Programmes as Perceived by Business Education Students in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State?

S/N	Equipment and facilities	X	SD	Decision
1	Manual typewriter	1.14	1.223	Reject
2	Electric typewriter	1.18	1.111	“
3	Shorthand laboratory	1.38	1.131	“
4	Tape recorders	1.61	1.220	“
5	Cassette player	1.12	1.132	“
6	Line jack with headphone	1.41	1.123	“
7	Projectors	1.33	1.144	“
8	Video tapes and monitors	1.09	1.021	“
9	Telephone equipment (adapted)	1.37	1.035	“
10	Franking machine	1.24	1.112	“
11	Filling equipment	1.32	1.125	“
12	Shredding machine	1.59	1.100	“
13	Duplicators	1.29	1.120	“
14	Electric calculators	1.13	1.162	“
15	Photocopiers	1.33	1.223	“
16	Scanning machine	1.04	1.203	“
17	School buildings	1.17	1.542	Reject
18	School plants	1.23	1.343	“

In Table 2, items 1 - 18 have means below the cut-off point of 2.5. This is an indication that low level of maintenance culture of school equipment and facilities input resources as perceived by business education students exist in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Hypothesis 1

There is no significance difference in the mean response scores of male and female business education students in their perception on the availability of equipment and facilities input resources in the teaching of business education programme in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 3: t-test Comparison of Male and Female Business Education Students Opinion on Availability of Equipment and Facilities used for the Teaching of Business Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State

Respondents	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Male	537	1.53	234.09			
Female	821	2.47	112.7	1356	1.169	2.06
						NS

Table 3 revealed that t-cal value stood at 1.169 while t-crit value for 1,356 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance was 2.06. Since the t-cal value is less than the t-crit value, the null hypothesis of no significant different is upheld. This implies that there is no significant different in the mean response

scores of male and female business education students concerning the availability of equipment and facilities input resources in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significance difference in the mean response scores of male and female business education students in their perception on the level of maintenance culture of equipment and facilities input resources in the teaching of business education programme in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4: T-test Comparison of Male and Female Business Education Students Opinion on Maintenance Culture of Equipment and Facilities used for the Teaching of Business Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State

Respondents	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Male	537	1.63	224.09			
Female	821	2.27	192.7	1356	1.659	2.06
						NS

Table 4 revealed that t-cal value stood at 1.659 while t-crit value for 1,356 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 2.06. Since the t-cal value is less than the t-crit value, the null hypothesis of no significant different is upheld. This implies that there is no significant different in the mean response scores of male and female business education students concerning the level of maintenance culture of equipment and facilities input resources in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

From the result of the study, it is evident that the school plants in business education departments fall below the required minimum academic standards of the programme. In the opinions of business education programme implementers and administrators, the available facilities are inadequate for effective instruction and learning (Enyekit, Silas-Dikibo & Vinazor. 2011). This is contrary to the standards of the National Universities Commission (NUC 2010) and Nzerem (2011), which affirmed the types and minimum quantity of school plants, equipment and facilities that should be provided for the business education programmes to be effective and result oriented. It is a known fact that the availability of requisite items of school plants and facilities make for better teaching and learning under the best of conditions. Obaro (2001) noted the invaluable role requisite equipment and facility play in the teaching and learning of business education in schools. The right school plants, equipment and facility lend themselves to practical learning, brighten the students learning horizon and ensure that instruction is effective. They also make teaching more permanent in the minds of the learner. Enyekit (2010), Obi & Akume (2011) opined that any educational programme that lack essential school plants and facilities cannot reasonably expect to achieve its main objective. The findings of the authors have also justified the results and findings of this present study.

CONCLUSION

The quality of education our children receive have direct relevance to the availability of or lack of physical school plants, facilities and overall atmosphere in which learning takes place. Poor planning is often accompanied by dissipated efforts, wasted resources and poor results. The process of planning of school plants and facilities involves the selection of suitable site for building and other facilities designed to satisfy the educational needs of the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and findings of the study, the researchers therefore recommended that:

1. Maintenance schedule for each operational unit within the plant for specific periods and hold meeting with the school administrators of various department to discuss maintenance efficiency.

2. Planning should take into consideration functional features, adequacy and efficiency that apply to all educational facilities before final decisions are made on school plants and facilities.
3. Educational planners should draw up well planned policies and strategies in advance on the overall plan based on the study of present and future needs in school plants and facilities.
4. Existing number of secondary school plants in the state could be doubled by introducing double shift system to meet the capacity of usage and as a result of enrolment explosion and need of the present need of the schools.

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