



# **Societal Valuing and Students' Interest in Enrolment into Business Education Degree Programme in Rivers State Universities, Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the societal valuing and students' interest in enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities. The study employed the correlational research design. Four hundred and two (402) Business Education undergraduate students in Rivers State Universities participated in this study. A self-structured research instrument titled 'societal valuing in Business Education programme Questionnaire (SOVIBEPQ)' was used for data collection for the study. The data collected were analysed using statistical tools such as the Mean and Standard Deviation and the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. From the analysis, the following findings were revealed; that, there is a significant relationship between societal valuing and students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme in Rivers State, Sequel to these findings, useful recommendations were made; that government should provide functioning facilities for Business Education students in high institutions of learning in Rivers State, that Business Education teachers should be trained and retrained through seminars and conferences, parents should be encouraged on how to educate their children on issues of choosing the course of studies. Finally, the society should be enlightened on the importance of Business Educators for development and economic growth of the nation.

**Keywords:** societal valuing, students' enrolment, Business Education, degree programme

## **INTRODUCTION**

There is no fire without smoke, therefore, people must have reasons for their active enrolment into a given occupation or programme of study. Determinants are the propelling, inspirational and motivational factors or reasons that enhance students to pursue a given career and their actual enrolment (Asukwo, 2008). Students' enrolment into the study of Business Education in the university is a very vital stage and process considering the importance of Business Education programme as a vocation in the life of a nation's economy and the level of enrolment must be influenced by some prevailing situations or concepts or values in a society, which are referred to as determinants, and these determinants are self-express values, students personal interest on Business Education programme, (Ubulom, 2004). Interest is the aspect of self-concept and self-expressed value of students which affects most lives and behavior of learners especially, adolescents including choosing and enrolling into vocation not excluding Business Education, knowing too well that students' sense of self-esteem and competency in subject selection and occupational choice are built up by students' interest (Nwachukwu, 2003). However, Bassey in Ubulom (2004) believed that interest does not appear spontaneously in students, but it builds up to be constant interaction between students, teachers and society at large. In a related development, Inyang (1999) posit that students' courses and subsequent enrolment for academic programmes are greatly correlated and influenced by the noted interest of such students.

Denga (2004), pointed that original eagerness of students in a Business Education could generate high interest in students enrolling in Business Education programme and becoming successful in it. Dambo in Ubulom (2004) supported that students' interest in subjects taught in schools influence the choice of occupation. Moreover, the findings of Awanna (1998), founded that 56.9% of the respondents selected occupation was based on interest and modelling of the teacher, peer group and parents. Modelling is an act or process of attempting to be like somebody you admired and any person can be a child's model especially at adolescent age, as observed by Dambo in Amaewhule (2001) a child has chosen to observe the human model, making the desirable choices of personal action, takes pleasure from his actions to achieve success in it in various settings including academic and occupation, and it has been as well observed that choice of school subjects, students choice are affected by the personality of such teacher models in the school (Igwe, 2000).

A committed teacher or model who notices a child that does well in his subject, influencing such a child to pursue the very subjects at higher levels, in this way, he guides the student into developing special likeness for such subject. Such model tends to groom the students in a very special way and the student in turn would develop special liking for the model and may mimic him trying to do his kind of job (Adeleye, 2008) Once again, interest and modelling are exploits that determine students' enrolment into a vocation including Business Education degree programme even in Rivers State Universities and colleges.

The undergraduates of Business Education programmes are students who wish to gain preparatory qualification in a particular field of study. Thus, the primary objective of all undergraduate Business Education programme is to provide students with a solid Business Education skills along with additional knowledge and abilities enable them to succeed in a particular area of business and world of work; to prepare and develop students capacity for critical thinking, for integrating business knowledge across different business functions and disciplines and for utilizing current theory in approaching a practical business problem; provide the necessary quantitative analytical and communication skills while grounding students in applied theory and practice across the business disciplines; provide the students with an opportunity to focus in a particular area of study designed to meet the needs of highly diverse students body in a wide range of career of interests and priorities. Business Education is a specialized phase of vocational education that prepares students to enter teaching and office occupation as capable and intelligent members of the labour force. Business Education programme in Nigerian Universities is offered under the following options; Secretarial\office Education, Accounting, Marketing\Distributive and computer Education. Its primary objective is the acquisition of skills, competences for gainful employment in their professional's areas. Orifa (2004) explained that Business Education programmes are the type of educational programme that have to do with knowledge and skills which develop students physically and mentally and finally makes them self-independent through entrepreneurial practices.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

The entire values academic programme pursuit based on their importance to the society and there seems to be a persistent decline in the enrolment into Business Education degree programmes in higher institutions of learning in Rivers State. It is becoming more glaring that the reduction and lack of interest of some students to enrol into Business Education degree programme is generating interested, criticism and controversy in higher of earning in Rivers State. The efficiency, intelligence, the supportive aid impartation of knowledge to Business Education students and Business Education teachers are fast fading away. What has been the cause and responsible for these developments? How does the enrolment of students into undergraduate degree programme affect the societal interest? The West African Examinations Council (1998) reported that most secondary schools in Nigeria region do not teach business subjects. Students' enrolment in Business Education is negligible. This is caused by low students' preference for the course (Business ion), (Ekure, 1999), lack of competent teachers and business equipment. Moreso, there seems to be job dissatisfaction as a result of lack of interest and other pressure in early choice of the course. This therefore becomes a major issue of concern to our society in recent time. It is against these problems, that the researcher deems it necessary to look into the societal valuing and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine the societal valuing and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities. Specifically, the study sought to

1. Determine the societal value and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities.
2. Determine students' interest and their enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities.

### **Research Question**

1. To what extent does societal value influences students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities?
2. To what extent does students' interest influence their enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities?

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant relationship between societal value and Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru students' students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between students' interest and Rivers State university and Ignatius Ajuru students' students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted correlation research design. The research design involves to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. It is the act of eliciting questions from the respondents. The study was carried out in Rivers State of Nigeria. Rivers State is made up of 319 wards, three (3) senatorial district and 23 Local Government Areas. The population for the study comprised 402 Business Education students from Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education that offers Business Education programmes in Rivers State. The entire population of 402 students were selected from Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education that offers Business Education programmes in Rivers State. A structured 4-points scaled questionnaire titled "Societal Valuing of Business Education programme Questionnaire" was developed and used for the study. The instrument was face validated by two experts in Department of Business Education, their comments for the instrument indicated that the instrument was suitable for use in for the study. A coefficient of 0.78 was Obtained using Cronbach Alpha method. The instrument was administered to the respondents. A return rate of data collected was 95.5%. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while PPMCC statistical tool was utilized to test the hypotheses.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent does societal value influences students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities?*

**Table 1: Computed mean and standard deviation scores of the societal valuing in Business Education Degree Programme**

S/N	Statement (items)	Total Resp.	Mean Score	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Business Education graduates have influence in the society	1,152	3.20	0.30	Positive
2	Society needs Business Educators for social development	1044	2.90	0.28	Positive
3	I will bring development in the society as Business Educator.	1,296	3.60	0.34	Positive
4	Business Education cannot bring positive change in the society	828	2.30	0.22	Positive
5	Business Education brings self-employment.	1,188	3.30	0.31	Positive
6	1 can create job for unemployed	1,152	3.20	0.30	Positive
7	Business Educator is business oriented.	1,332	3.70	0.35	Positive
Grand Mean (GX) = 3.17			* = Positive Influence		

Table 2, reveals that Business Education graduates have influence in the society ( $x = 3.20$ ,  $SD = 0.30$ ), and society education has influence in the needs a Business Education for social development ( $x = 2.90$ ,  $SD = 0.28$ ). Society needs Business Educators for social development ( $x = 3.60$ ,  $SD = 0.34$ ), I can also educate and ( $x = 2.80$ ,  $SD = 0.26$ ). Business Education also brings a ( $x = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 0.31$ ). I can create jobs for unemployed ( $x = 3.20$ ,  $SD = 0.30$ ) and Business Educator is always business oriented ( $X = 30.3$ ,  $SD = 0.35$ ) amount to the determinants of students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State) since the computed scores are greater than the average point of 2.5. The table also shows that business education graduates are not regarded in the society ( $x = 2.40$ ,  $SD = 0.23$ ), that Business Education cannot bring any positive in the society ( $x = 2.30$ ,  $SD = 0.22$ ), do not constitute the determinants of students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree in Rivers State since the computed mean scores are less than the average point of 2.5. The table indicates that the computed grand mean (GX) from the response scores regarding how the societal values for Business Education can influence students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme was 3.17, which is higher than the average point of 2.5. This shows that societal values for Business Education can positively influence students' enrolment into Business Education degree.

**Research Question 2:** *To what extent does students' interest influence their enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State Universities?*

**Table 2** Computed mean and standard deviation scores of the interest for Business Education programme

S/N	Statement (items)	Total Resp.	Mean Score	Std Dev	Remarks
1	I enrolled into Business Education to understand the ethics of Business Education.	900	2.50	0.23	Positive
2	Business Education is a good course to study	1,008	2.80	0.33	Positive
3	Business Education requires more research for more knowledge.	1,152	3.20	0.36	Positive
4	I decided to enrol into Business Education	1,368	3.80	0.38	Positive
5	Business Education is an interesting and profitable programme	1,260	3.50	0.34	Positive
6	I therefore enrol into Business Education to be self-employed.	1,008	2.80	0.33	Positive
7	I always interact with my teachers/lecturers in respect to my course	936	2.60	0.24	Positive
Grand Mean (GX) = 3.02		* = Positive Influence			

Table 4: shows that I enrolled into Business Education to understand the ethics of Business Education. (x = 2.50, SD = 0.24) and Business Education is a good course to study (x 2.80, SD = 0.33), Business Education requires more research for more knowledge. (x 3.20, SD 0.36). I decided to enrol into Business Education (x = 3.80, SD = 0.38) result to the determinants of students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme in Rivers State, since the computed mean scores are greater than the average point of 2.5. Table 4 shoes that Business Education is an interesting and profitable programme (x = 3.50, SD 0.34) and I therefore enrol into Business Education to be self-employed. (x 2.80, SD 0.33) and I always interact with my teachers/lecturers in respect to my course (x 2.40, SD = 0.22) while some inherited the course from their friends (x = 2.60, SD 0.24) do not determine the student's enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme in Rivers State since the computed mean scores are less than the average point of 2.5. Finally, the table indicates that the computed grand mean (x) from the response scores regarding the determinant of students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme in Rivers State was 3.02, which is higher than the average point of 2.5. This shows that several factors contributed to determinants of students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme.

**Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between the societal valuing in Business Education and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme.

**Computation of the relationship between Societal values and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme**

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r-cal	r-crit	t-trans	t-crit
Societal valuing	3.14	0.454	3.15	±1.98	16.74	±1.960
Students' enrolment	2.20	0.220				
N = 402	df = 400	P > 0.05		* = Significant		

The mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents' responses regarding i.ne relationship existing between the societal values and the students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme is presented in Table 4.7. With N 402, df= 400 and p> 0.05, the calculated r was 3.15 and the

critical value of r was  $\pm 1.98$ . This shows that the calculated r is statistically significant at  $p = 0.05$  since it is greater than the critical value of r. To this end, the hypothesis (1102) is thus rejected (that is, not accepted) and the conclusion is that there is significant relationship between societal values and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme.

Again, with  $N = 402$ ,  $df = 400$ , the t-transformation was 18.38 and the critical value of t was  $\pm 1.960$ . This implies that the t-transformation is statistically significant at  $P = 0.05$ . Since it is greater than the critical value of t therefore the strength of the calculated r is adequate.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between students' interest and Rivers State university and Ignatius Ajuru students' students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme in Rivers State.

**Table: 4 Computation of the perceived interest in Business Education and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programmes**

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r-cal	r-crit	t-trans	t-crit
Perceived interest	3.57	0.361				
			2.43	$\pm 1.98$	17.53	$\pm 1.960$
Students' enrolment	2.28	0.228				

$N = 402$   $df = 400$        $p > 0.05$  \* = Significant

The mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents' responses in respect to the relationship existing between perceived students' interest and enrolment into Business Education is presented in Table 4.8 with  $N = 402$ ,  $df = 400$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . The calculated r was 2.43 and the critical value of r was  $\pm 1.98$ . This indicates that the calculated r is statistically significant at  $p = 0.05$  since it is greater than the critical value of r. That being so, the hypothesis (1-103) is thus rejected (that is, not accepted) and the conclusion is that there is significant relationship between perceived interest and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme.

Again, with  $N = 402$ ,  $df = 400$ , the t-transformation was 17.53 and the critical value of t was  $\pm 1.960$ . This implies that the t-transformation is statistically significant at  $p = 0.05$  since it is greater than the critical value of t. Therefore, the strength of the calculated r is adequate.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In the course of this study, the researcher generated and answer the two (2) research questions with two (2) formulated and tested hypotheses for the study, the results are discussed below;

**Societal Valuing for Business Education Students' Enrolment in Business Education degree programme:** The result of the study reveals that societal values in Business Education influence the students' enrolment into undergraduate Business Education degree programme in Rivers State. The result of the study is in line with the findings of Ekpeni (2004) that discovered that determinants are the propelling, inspirational and motivational factors that enhance students to pursue a given career and their actual enrolment. The result of the findings also reveals that students' enrolment in the study of Business Education is a vital state and process considering the importance of Business Education. It reveals that societal valuing for Business Education graduates propel students' enrolment into business education undergraduate degree programme. The study finally reveals that there is significant relationship between the societal valuing of Business Education graduates and students' enrolment into Business Education degree programme.

**The Interest in students' Enrolment into Undergraduate Business Education Degree Programme:** The study reveals that students' decision in the choice of Business Education as a course of study is greatly correlated and influence by the noted interest of such student. The result of the finding of this research study also agreed with the discovers of Giglioti and Fitzpatrick (1977) in Dambo (2001) which revealed that interest is an exploits that determine students' enrolment into a vocational programme which includes Business Education programme. The result of this finding is similar to the findings of studies carried out by Denga (2004), who discovered that the original eagerness of a student in Business

Education could generate high interest in students enrolling in Business Education degree programme and becoming successful in it.

The result of the study therefore supports the findings of Ubulom (2000) who discovered that students' interest in subjects taught in secondary schools influence the choice of occupation and that the result also goes in line with the findings of Azuka (2003), who earlier discovered that 65% of students in every institution selected course and occupations based on the interest they have in that course and occupation.

## CONCLUSION

Business Education is one of the integrated programmes of studies both at the secondary and tertiary level of learning and its content is derived from the major areas of business; it provides practical knowledge, skills and techniques for its graduates at all level. Business Education has a very complex and comprehensive curriculum at the tertiary institutions of learning which provides enrolment to undergraduate students with meaningful instructions about business and the world of business transactions, through the impartation of business skills, techniques and unique understanding of basic economic skills and peculiar activities essential to enable the enrolled students to adequately participate in the world of work as wage earners and consumers. The West African Examination Council (1998), asserted that students' enrolment into Business Education is negligible due to lack of teachers in business subjects which widely determined the level of enrolment into the universities and with the above stated assertion saying that the poor enrolment into Business Education degree programme is caused by low students preference for Business Education and related subjects at the secondary schools and due to lack of competent Business Education teachers and equipment for such studies at both secondary and university levels.

Enrolment into the university to study Business Education programme at the degree level can be influenced and determined by providing situation aid societal values placed on such profession, through Business Education is an aspect of vocational preparation that equips students and degree undergraduates with the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes for gainful employment. There must be determinants influencing the level of students' enrolments into the study of Business Education at the degree level in the university and colleges especially in Rivers State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the facts emanating from this study it is evident that counselling service should be a sine qua non in guiding students' right. In the light of this, the researcher recommends the following:

- The Rivers State government or school authorities should provide functional facilities as to enhance Business Education skills in the institutions of higher learning in the state.
- Business Education teachers should be trained and retrained through seminars and conferences to function effectively as counsellors or career guidance.
- The parents should monitor and dissuade their wards from mingling with bad company.
- The society should be enlightened on the importance of Business Educators and their role to economic and national development.

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