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## **Empowering youths through business education for sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria**

**Adeleye Olatunji John<sup>1</sup>, Adeleke Mose Solagbade<sup>2</sup>, Olawoyin Rasheed Olawale<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1-3</sup> Department of Business Education, School of Vocational and Technical Education, The College of Education, Lanlate, Oyo State, Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated empowering youths through business education for sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. A total of 335 Business Education students in Federal and State owned colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria were sampled for this study by means of proportionate stratified sampling technique. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to determine the internal consistency of the items which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The results of the data collected and analysed indicated that there was significant relationship between business education programme and youth empowerment in Nigeria. Also the study revealed that there was significant relationship between business education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria. It was however recommended among others that there is the need for adequate reorientation, sustained enlightenment of Business Education graduates in order to promote peace and security.

**Keywords:** business education, peace, security, and empowerment

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### **Introduction**

Education has been regarded as an instrument that widens the horizon of an individual and opens their eyes to be able to differentiate right from left and to also give constructive criticisms when they want to be denied their rights in the society. Nigeria has been able to lay much of the foundation upon which an excellent education structure could be built, in spite of wide range of challenges she faces. The need to redesign our education and the teaching profession, most especially, Business Education programme in Nigeria is becoming paramount if Nigeria is to promote peace and security through youth empowerment. The advent of technologies in our educational system has brought a lot of challenges in our educational sector including Business Education. Business Education is an aspect of general education that inculcates in the recipients the necessary skills, values and competencies required in the labour market which in turn promote peace and security among youths when they are empowered in our nation. Nwachukwu (2012) sees Business Education as an umbrella name concerning those educational processes involving the study of techniques, related science and acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and knowledge relating to occupation in vocational sectors of the economic and social life of a people. Ulifun, in Dibbari and Ibe (2012) sees Business Education as education for business and about business. This means that Business education is education for teaching business skills such as accounting, marketing, office technology and management entrepreneurship, basic skills, ICT, among others. This type of programme, apart from preparing one for exposure to Business activities, also equips individuals for self-reliance and fosters peace, harmony and security through empowering youth and making the whole nation to be at rest (Ezeami, 2014).

Business Education programme by its nature is skill development programme and capital intensive. It aims at equipping its recipients with practical skills and value to become self-reliant and employable in the world of work. Business Education in any part of the world requires enormous financing. (Ogunwole, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>. It is a programme of study which is geared toward equipping the learners with employability skills and knowledge which would enable them create or secure jobs, stay on the jobs, and grow in the jobs. The programme has been implemented for more than three decades, yet graduates of Business Education are adversely plagued by unemployment. Those who are employed at all are found to be incompetent in discharging their assigned duties (Aquah, 2014). They lack practical knowledge and manual skills. This could be as a result of government negative attitude towards making Business Education a reality in promoting peace and security through youth empowerment in Nigeria.

Empowerment means the granting of political, social or economic power to an individual or group. It is also the process of supporting a person or persons to discover and claim personal power such as Business Education students. Youth empowerment is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives. Youth empowerment is aimed at improving the quality of life of the youths and is achieved through the participation of youths in such programmes and projects, such as Business Education (Samuel & Deinibitem, 2018) <sup>[9]</sup>. The Nigerian educational system has been faced with policy revision and policy rehearsals just like the educational systems of other developed and developing countries which are not quite healthy for promoting peace and security socially, economically and politically. This failure could have been as a result of 'I don't care attitude' of our government to empower the youth through

creation of job opportunities that will bring peace and harmony in Nigeria (Njoku, 2015) <sup>[6]</sup>.

Over the years, successive governments in Nigeria have embarked on various youth empowerment policies, projects and programmes aimed at empowering the youths in the country so as to make them promote peace and security in the nation. Some of the youth empowerment programmes include Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS), Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA), Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (You WIN), National Directorate of Employment (NDE) scheme and N-power among others (Samuel & Deinibiteim, 2018) <sup>[9]</sup>.

In spite of government's efforts with these programme and many others not mentioned in this study, there has been persistent increasing in issues and challenges with respect to youth empowerment, including youth unemployment, increasing crimes and criminality such as armed robbery, kidnapping, drug abuse, oil theft, sea-piracy, Biafra agitation and Boko Haram menace, Niger Delta militants, among others. There is no gain saying that these issues and challenges have adverse implications on promoting peace and security of Nigeria. It is on the basis of the foregoing that this study was conceived to investigate how empowering youths through innovative Business Education for sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate how peace and security could be fostered through innovative Business Education in Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

1. The relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment in Nigeria.
2. The relationship between Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria.

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment in Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Youth**

Youth is defined by Webster's New Oxford Dictionary in Adebayo (2002) as "the time of life when one is young especially the period between childhood and maturity of the early period of existence, growth or development" the word "youth" "adolescence" "teenager" and "young person" are often used interchangeably. Youth generally refers to a time of life that is neither childhood nor adulthood but rather somewhere in-between. Youth is an alternative word to the scientifically oriented adolescent and the common terms of teen and teenager. According to Lucas, Alaka and Odozi (2014) <sup>[5]</sup> in Jega (2012) <sup>[4]</sup> youth are regarded as a special group of people with strong stamina and passion for realizing certain set of goals and objectives". The way in which a nation defines its youth is related

to especially historical and contemporary socio-economic and political issues that need to be addressed. In Nigeria, the youth comprises all young persons of age 18-35 who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Youths are Nigeria's most culture, the most volatile and yet, the most vulnerable segment of the population, socio-economically, emotionally and in other respects. Youths share certain qualities that distinguish them from others generations. Such qualities include impatience for change, zealously, radicalism, rebellions, curiosity, hard work, ego and ambition. From above, it is safe to say that, youths are the engine and asserts of promoting peace and security for national development, if their mindsets are channelled in the right direction.

### **Youth Empowerment**

Youth empowerment is an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain ability, authority and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own and lives of other people, including youths and adults (Sasaki, 2006). Youth empowerment through Business Education should involve promotion of peace and security in our nation. Isa and Lambe (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> observed that youths are not often involved in the collection of data, information and research on the issues affecting them. Consequently, youth empowerment, policies, programme and projects designed based on such data are usually products of unseen title research that are rather based on unsubstantiated assumptions, commonly described as "the rule of the thumb" (Harry, 2017) <sup>[2]</sup>. The outcome is the failure of these schemes to sufficiently address the challenges of youths so as to make them promotion of peace and security for their usefulness of themselves and the nation at large.

According to Ezeanu (2012) <sup>[1]</sup> sprang from the need to enable young people to have a say in decisions which affect them and to have lower and heard voices. This would give young people, most especially, Business Education students the opportunity to gain the economic, social and cultural advancement of their countries and self-fulfillment, and in turn promote peace and security in the society at large. Empowering youth in this study means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf and on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others. These enabling conditions includes, economic and social base, political will, adequate resources allocation and supportive legal and administrative frameworks, a stable environment of equality, peace and security and access to Business Education knowledge, information and skills and positive value system.

### **How to promote peace**

Peace is promoted by resolving the root causes of conflicts. Promoting peace is not only marked by absence of war but also by absence of violence, criminality, radicalism, rebellions among others in the society which are threat to peace. Promoting peace can be actualized through equal participation of all citizens in the society, respect of human rights, security, and dignity among others. Expressions of violence are seen through acts such as robberies and through youth empowerment such acts can be dealt with as the youth engage in productive economic activities. Peace can be promoted by achieving positive peace whereby the root causes of a conflict are resolved. These strategies can be taught

in schools through Business Education hence empowerment of the youth.

**Method**

The area of the study was Oyo State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study consisted of 2050 Business Education students of the colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria. This number is made up of 1,441 students from state colleges of education and 604 students from federal college of education. The colleges of Education in Oyo State are Emmanuel Alayande College of Education Oyo, Oyo State, The College of Education Lanlate, Oyo State and Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo. The sample size for the study was 335 Business Education students across the government owned colleges of education in Oyo State. The sample was arrived at using Taro Yamane sample size

determination formula (  $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$  ). Proportionate

stratified random sampling technique was adopted to draw the sample (Federal- 100, State- 235). Out of this number, 132 male students and 203 female students were proportionately selected. The instrument adopted for the study was titled Empowering Youths Questionnaire (EPQ). The questionnaire was in two sections A and B. Section A sought respondents’ personal

information. Section B was divided into B<sub>1</sub> and B<sub>2</sub>. B<sub>1</sub> with 15 items (on two point rating scale of Yes or No) sought information on Business Education programme and youth empowerment while B<sub>2</sub> with 15 items (on four point rating scale of SA-4, A-3, D-2, and SD-1) elicited information relating to Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria. The instrument was faced-validated by three experts. The corrections and inputs of the experts formed the basis for the modification of the draft and the production of the final instruments. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha statistical method which yielded 0.82 co-efficient indicating that the instrument was reliable. Cronbach Alpha method was considered appropriate as the instrument was polychotomously scored. Then the questionnaire was administered directly on the respondents by the researchers and research assistants. Pearson Product Moment correlation statistics was used to analyse data relating to the null hypotheses. Where the p- value is less than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected but where the p-value is greater than the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis was not rejected.

**Results**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment.

**Table 1:** Summary of correlation analysis on significance of relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment as opined by male and female respondents

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r	$\alpha$	P-value	Remarks
Bus. Edu. Programme		3.21	0.89				
	335			0.21	0.05	0.00	Rejected
Youth Empowerment		3.20	0.92				

The data in Table 1 shows correlation analysis of significant relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment as indicated by Business Education students of colleges of education in Oyo state Nigeria. The data shows p-value of 0.00 to be less than alpha level of 0.05. There exists enough evidence to conclude that there is significant relationship between Business Education programme and youth

empowerment. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment is rejected.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria.

**Table 2:** Business Education programmes and sustenance of peace and security

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r	$\alpha$	P-value	Remarks
Bus. Edu. Programme		2.98	0.73				
	335			0.41	0.05	0.01	Rejected
Sustenance of peace and security		3.01	0.68				

The data in Table 2 shows correlation analysis of significant relationship between Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria as indicated by Business Education students of colleges of education in Oyo state Nigeria. The data shows p-value of 0.00 to be less than alpha level of 0.05. There exists enough evidence to conclude that there is significant relationship between Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Business Education programme and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria is rejected.

**Findings**

The analysis from hypothesis one above shows that there is significant relationship between Business Education programme and youth empowerment. The implication of this is that Business Education programme has great influence on promoting youth empowerment in the society. This agrees with (2015) submission that unemployed young people are a potential threat to peace and security processes unless efforts are made to keep the young graduates of the streets, by giving them sound and quality Business Education.

From the findings in Table 2, it was indicated that p-value is less than 0.05 which indicates that there is relationship between

Business Education and sustenance of peace and security in Nigeria. This means that if relevant skills and instilled in the students of Business Education programme higher institutions, they would have the opportunity of promoting peace and security in the society.

### Conclusion

The results of the study revealed that Business Education programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions has direct relationship with youth empowerment as well as peace and security. From the foregoing, it is clear that youth empowerment is central or critically linked to national peace and security. It is obvious that without sound Business Education programme, it may be difficult to achieve the stated objectives of making graduate to promote peace and security in our society. Therefore, it is concluded that for youth to be empowered and promote peace and security in the society, improving Business Education activities should be paramount for all education stakeholders.

### Recommendations

1. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:
2. Necessary instructional facilities such as personal protective equipment for lecturers and students There is the need for adequate reorientation, sustained enlightenment of Business Education graduates in order to promote peace and security.
3. lecture halls and other facilities should be adequately provided.
4. All professional bodies in the area of Business Education, Vocational Education and Technology should monitor the standard of Business Education in academic institutions in Nigeria.
5. Government, at various levels (Federal, State and Local) should give priority attention to Business Education for youth empowerment and stop paying lip service to youth empowerment.

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