

ASSESSMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION GRADUATES' COMPETENCIES ACQUIRED IN BUSINESS STUDIES FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN POSTIKUM METROPOLIS, YOBE STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study "Assessed basic education graduates' competencies acquired in business studies for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria" Five specific objective, five research questions and five null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted outcome evaluation research design. The study had population of 11,922 basic education graduates and 100 were randomly selected and used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was practical exercise adopted from previous examinations. The instrument was validated by two experts and pilot tested. A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. Five research assistants helped in the data collection. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistic of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while Independent-Sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that among others that the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with Keyboarding, Computer, Accounting and Shorthand skill was very low for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State. It was concluded that the philosophy of introducing business studies at basic education level to reduce the rate of unemployment among the graduates will not be achieved if the students continue to graduate without requisite skills in keyboarding, Shorthand, Computer, Marketing and Accounting skills. The study recommended among others that Basic education students should be exposed to more practical in keyboarding, marketing and accounting that will enable them acquire needed skills for self-reliance upon graduation.

Keywords: Assessment, Graduates, Competencies, Acquired, Self-Reliance.

Introduction

Business studies is an integral part of vocational education that encourages the use of head and hands in acquiring specific practical training required in business and industry at the junior secondary school level. Yakubu (2016) defined business studies as a programme designed to prepare junior secondary school students for work life experience in a specific skill in areas of: office management, business activities, technical and vocational occupation. Shuga (2018) opined that the main purposes for introducing Business Studies in secondary school curriculum is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to achieve success in their tertiary education or training, place of work, as well as our daily business life. The course content of business studies includes Book keeping, Commerce, Office Practice, Shorthand, Computer and Typewriting.

The alignment of Business Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School took cognizance of the need to provide students with ability and skills to be gainfully employed upon completion of their program as well as prepare them for setting up their small businesses as entrepreneurs as well as creating awareness on how to be better as consumers and knowing the right of the consumer Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2012). The general objectives of business studies according to NERDC (2012) is to: provide orientation and basic skills with which to start an occupation for those who may not have opportunity for further training; provide basic business skills for personal use now and in the future; prepare students for further training in Business Studies; relate the knowledge and skills to the national economy; and develop basic skills in office occupations, Oluwalola (2018), affirmed that the philosophy of business studies at Junior Secondary schools level is to provide technical, psychomotor and critical thinking needed by youths for self-reliance and economy development. Yakubu (2016) stated that Business studies is pre-vocational subject that provides the recipients with desirable skills, knowledge and values to perform specific functions so as to be self-reliant. This therefore means that, Business Studies students were expected to acquire Keyboarding skills, Marketing skills, Computer skills Accounting and, Shorthand skills for self-reliance.

The five keys' areas of business studies (keyboarding, marketing, computer, accounting and shorthand) have been recognized by scholars to be skills subjects that enable the recipients to be self-reliant. The study conducted by Mshelia (2019) reported that skills and knowledge acquired from the typewriting keyboarding provides the students with skills for self-reliance. The author added that, the keyboarding that translates into the present computer processing provides students with specific skills which will make them to be relevant in today's office and for self-reliance. Likewise, the study of Nwokike (2016) disclosed that business studies provide students with skills and knowledge in accounting, computing and data processing occupations for gainful employment enterprises for self-employment. The author added that, accounting provides students with the information needed for decision making and exposes them to the various users of accounting information and the interest of the users of such information. Oyekan (2019) maintained that, the knowledge and skills in typewriter provide students with skills for transcribing data. Mshelia (2019) maintained that, successful shorthand student has brighter future ahead because shorthand is useful in almost all

profession. It is thus expected that, teaching of business studies will help to provide students with skills for self-reliance which will address the problem of unemployment in the country.

Despite the laudable benefits conferred to Business Studies by scholars, there a growing rate of unemployment among secondary school leavers. In the last quarter of 2019, the data collected by the National Bureau of Statistics produce in 2020 reveals Nigeria's unemployment rate as at the last quarter of 2019 is 27.1% indicating that about 21,764,614 (21.7 million) Nigerians remain unemployed. The study indicated that, the highest unemployment rate was recorded among secondary school leavers between 15 – 24 years 40.8%. This indicated that the rate of unemployment in the 2nd quarter of 2018 worst-hit of 13.9 million, 13.1 million and 6.8 million of 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarter of 2019 respectively. The report further reveals that, Yobe State in the North Eastern part of Nigeria has the highest level of unemployment among the state in the country with 56 percent unemployment status. Yobe is followed by Zamfara and Sokoto, with 33.4 percent and 32.4 percent respectively. The report of National Bureau of Statistics (2020) indicated that, in the 2nd quarter of the year, Bauchi State recorded the highest rate with 43%, followed by Yobe and Adamawa, both with 38.4%. A closer look at unemployment and underemployment rate in Yobe state, it is evidence that the laudable objectives of introducing pre-vocational subjects at secondary school level is not yielding the desire objectives. Its base on the foregoing that the study sought to assess the extent to which basic education graduates acquired: Keyboarding, computer, marketing, accounting and Shorthand competencies for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State.

1.4 Research Questions

The research work provided answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do basic education graduates acquire business studies Keyboarding competency for self- reliance in Postikum metropolis, Yobe State?
2. To what extent do basic education graduates acquire business studies Marketing competency for self- reliance in Postikum metropolis, Yobe State?
3. To what extent do basic education graduates acquire Computer competency for self- reliance in Postikum metropolis, Yobe State?
4. To what extent do basic education graduates acquire accounting competency for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?
5. To what extent do basic education graduates acquire Shorthand competency for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

In line with the research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant levels.

H01: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Keyboarding competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

H02: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Marketing competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

H03: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Computer competency acquired or self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

H04: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the accounting competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

H05: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Shorthand competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

Methodology

This study adopted outcome evaluation research design. Outcome evaluation research design according to Formplus (2007) is primarily target-audience orientated because it measures the effects of project, programme or product on the beneficiaries. The design was considered suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to practically collect data to be used to assess of business studies skills acquired by basic education graduate's o for self-reliance in Yobe State.

The population of the study was 11,922 JS III Basic education graduates at offered Business studies at JSCE level in Potiskum metropolis, in Yobe State. The researchers sampled 100 Basic education graduates that offered Business studies at JSCE level for the study. The decision was based on the capacity allowed by the management of the institution which their facilities were used for the study. Fifty basic education graduates from public schools and fifty from private schools were involved in the study. In the choice of the schools that represent each stratum, random sampling technique was used.

The instrument used for data collection was Business Studies Competencies Examination (BSCE). The instrument was adopted from from past JSCE pratical examination question papers. Section A of the instument sought for the ownership of the schools of which student that participated in the study graduated from. The section B contrained practical examinations in keyboarding and shorthand while marketing, accounting and shorthand had10 multiple choice questions each. The instrument was validated by two experts from Federal College of Education (Technical), Potiskum. Their corrections, observation, recommendations were duly considered and affected by the researcher. This is in line with the view of Creswell (2012) who stressed the need and significance of establishing the validity of research instrument by a panel of experts to determine if the items of the instrument can obtain the desired data they are intended to obtain.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, pilot test of the instrument was conducted using 20 basic education gradautes that offered business studies in Gashuawa metropolis, Yobe state. The area used for the pilot study is not part of the population but the area have common characteristics with that of the study area. The data collected from the pilot study were analyzed using Split half Test, for the performance test as suggested by Mustpha (2016) who reported that Split Half is one of the most suitable tools for measuring reliability of performance and achievement test. A reliability coefficent of 0.77 was obtained . According

George and Mallery (2003) opined that a minimum reliability coefficient of .70 should be considered for experimental and outcome research design. Based on these submissions, the instrument was considered valid for the study.

The data for the study was collected using Federal College of Education Potiskum. The choice of the institution was based on the availability of adequate and functional Typewriters and Computers needed for the practical examination. The researchers recruited the service of research assistants who mobilize the graduates that participated in the study. Each research assistant mobilized five graduates of his school. To build confidence on them, the researcher gave them numbers to be used for identification instead of names. Graduates from private schools were numbered 1-50, while those from the public schools were 51-100. Considering that the capacity of the typing pool and computer room only accommodate 50 people at a time, the researcher grouped the subjects into two. The service of technologist was required to assist the subjects in case of any unforeseen problem with any typewriter or computer.

In the first phase of the data collection, graduates in group A start with Keyboarding practical examination while those in group B start for Computer practical examination. At the end of 45 minutes, the scripts were collected. In the second stage of practical examination, graduates in A sat for computer examination while those in group B sat for keyboarding examination. The question papers and plain sheets were provided by the researcher. The examination lasted for two hours and one hour was allocated for break before the second phase of the examination.

In the second phase of the data collection, the subjects were instructed to move to lectures hall. The graduates were subjected to multiple choice questions in Principles of Accounting, Principles of Marketing and Shorthand. The researcher with the help of research assistants shared the question papers and the answer scripts to the subjects. The test lasted for one hour, thereafter, the scripts were collected with the help of research assistants. The scripts were marked over hundred (%) by the researcher using drawn marking scheme.

The data collected were entered into Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS), 25, the package was used to run descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. In answering the research question, the decision rule was based on interval scale of mean score as follows: 1 – 39, Very Low Skilled (VLS); 40-44, Low Skilled (LS); 45-49 Fairly Skilled (FS); 50-59, Moderately Skilled (MS); 60-69, Highly Skilled (HS) and 70 & above, Very Highly Skilled (VHS).

The research null hypotheses were tested using *Independent Sample t-test* at 0.05 level of significance. In the test of the hypotheses, where the p-value is less than 0.05 ($P < \alpha$), the hypothesis was rejected and where the p-value was greater than 0.05 ($p \geq \alpha$), the hypothesis was retained.

Results and Discussion

The results of research questions were as presented in Table 1 to 5

Research Question One

To what extent do basic education graduates acquire Keyboarding competency for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?

The result of keyboarding performance test used to answer research question one is as presented in Table 1. From the Table, the grand score of 83 students that participated in the study was 2732 with mean score of 32.92 and standard deviation was 13.44. The mean score obtained fall under the decision rule of very low. The result therefore suggested the keyboarding competency acquired for graduates' self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis in Yobe state is very low.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics used to answer research questions one

KBSSR	N	Grand score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
	83	2732.00	32.9157	13.44384	Very Low Skilled

Research Question Two

To what extent do basic education graduates acquire Marketing competency for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?

The result of the data used to answer research question two on the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with marketing competency for self-reliance is as presented in Table 2. From the Table the 83 students scored 3865 with mean score of 46.57 and standard deviation of 12.71. The mean score falls under the scale of fairly skilled. The result suggested that business studies students graduates in Potiskum metropolis fairly acquired marketing competency for self-reliance in Yobe State.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics used to determine research question two

MSSR	N	Grand score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
	83	3865.00	46.57	12.71	Fairly Skilled

Research Question Three

To what extent do basic education graduates acquire Computer competency for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?

The result of Computer academic performance test used to answer research question three is as presented in Table 3. The 83 students that sat for the examination had grand score of 3200 with mean score of 38.55 and standard deviation of 13.08. The mean score obtained fall under the scale of very low extent which suggested that the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with Computer skill for self-reliance was very low in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

Table 3: Descriptive statistics used to answer research question three

CSSR	N	Grand score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
	83	3200.00	38.55	13.08	Very Low Skilled

Research Question Four

To what extent do basic education graduates acquire accounting competency for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?

The finding of research question four presented in Table 4 revealed the grand mean score of 3024 for 83 basic education graduates that participated in the study. The mean score stood at 36.44 with standard deviation of 15.58. The obtained (36.43) mean score fall under the benchmark of very low extent. The mean score of 36.43 suggested that the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with Accounting skill for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State was very low.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics used to determine accounting competency acquired in research question four

ASSR	N	Grand score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
	83	3024.00	36.43	15.58	Very Low Skilled

Research Question Five

To what extent do basic education graduates acquire Shorthand competency for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State?

The output of the descriptive statistics used to answer research five presented in Table 5 disclosed the grand score of 3139 for 83 Business studies students that participated in the study. The mean score of the students was 37.82 with the standard deviation of 14.54. The mean score was under the index score of very low extent, it is therefore concluded that the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with Shorthand skill for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State was very low.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics used to answer Shorthand skill acquired in research question five

SSSSR	N	Grand score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
	83	3139.00	37.82	14.54	Very Low Skilled

Results of Research Hypotheses

The results of test of hypotheses were presented in Table 6 to Table 10

Research Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Keyboarding competency acquired for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

The *Independent-samples t-test* employed to test null hypothesis one in Table 6 revealed the mean scores of 30.91 and 35.18 for private schools and public schools with standard deviations of

14.48 and 11.94 respectively. The t-value stood at -1.454 at degree of freedom of 81. The $p=.150$ which was greater than the alpha value of 0.05. The result indicated that there was no significant difference in the Keyboarding mean scores of the two groups of basic education graduates that were used for the study. The null hypothesis was therefore retained.

Table 6: *Independent-Sample t-test* on difference in the test of hypothesis one

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	p-value
Private schools	44	30.91	14.48	-1.454	81	.150
Public schools	39	35.18	11.94			

Research Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Marketing competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

The analysis of data for the test of null hypothesis two presented in Table 7 disclosed the mean score of 46.59 with standard deviation of 12.93 for basic education graduates in private schools. Basic education graduates from public secondary schools had mean 46.53 with standard deviation of 12.62. the obtained t-value stood at .019 at degree of freedom of 81. The $p-value$ was .985 at 0.05 level of significance. The result suggested that there was no significant difference in the marketing mean scores between basic education graduates from private and public schools. The null hypothesis was therefore upheld.

Table 7: *Independent-Sample t-test* on difference in the test of hypothesis two

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	p-value
Private schools	44	46.59	12.93	.019	81	.985
Public schools	39	46.54	12.62			

Research Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Computer competency acquired or self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

The result of *Independent-samples t-test* employed to test null hypothesis three presented in Table 8 revealed the mean of 36.05 with standard deviation of 11.35 for basic education graduates of private schools. The mean score of basic education graduates from public schools had mean of 41.38 with standard deviation of 14.41 at degree of freedom of 81. The $t=-1.885$ and $p=.63$. The p-value was greater than the alpha value ($.063>0.05$). The result suggested that no significant difference in the Computer mean scores of the two groups of basic education graduates that participated in the study. The null hypothesis three was therefore retained.

Table 8: *Independent-Sample t-test* on difference in the test of hypothesis three

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p-value
Private schools	44	36.05	11.35	-1.885	81	.063
Public schools	39	41.38	14.41			

Research Hypothesis Four

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the accounting competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

The outcome of the *independent-samples t-test* in Table 9 indicates the mean score of 34.64 for basic education graduates of private schools with standard deviation of 14.76. Graduates of public schools had (M = 38.46, SD = 16.42) at degree of freedom of 81. The $t=-1.118$ and $p=.267$ which was greater than 0.05 level of significance. The p-value therefore suggested that there was no significant difference between the mean score of basic education graduates from private schools and those from public schools. The result therefore suggested that there was no significant difference on the Accounting mean scores of the two groups of graduates that were involve in the study. The null hypothesis was retained

Table 9: *Independent-Sample t-test* on difference in the test of hypothesis four

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	p-value
Private schools	44	34.6364	14.76497	-1.118	81	.267
Public schools	39	38.4615	16.41541			

Research Hypothesis Five

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of basic education graduates from private and public secondary schools on the Shorthand competency acquired for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State

The result document in Table 10 on the test of null five revealed the mean responses of 38.91 with standard deviation of 13.91 for 44 basic education graduates that attended private schools. The 39 basic education that graduated from public schools have the mean of 36.39 with standard deviation of 15.30 at degree of freedom of 81. The $t=.723$. and p-value stood at .472. The p-value was greater than the alpha value ($.472 < 0.05$), the result indicated that there was no significant difference in the Shorthand mean performance of basic education students that attended private schools and those that attended public schools. The null hypothesis was retained.

Table 10: *Independent-Sample t-test* on difference in the test of hypothesis five

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p-value
Private schools	44	38.91	13.91305	.723	81	.472
Public schools	39	36.5897	15.30345			

Discussion of the Findings

The result of research question disclosed that the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with keyboarding competency for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis in Yobe state was very low. The finding confirmed the finding of Shuga (2018) who reported that the implementation of business studies at basic education level have not adequately provide students with practical skills and competencies in Keyboarding, computer appreciation, trade and shorthand needed for self-sustainability. Oyerinde and Falana (2016) also opined that entrepreneurial marketing skill needs which is involve thinking about how to reach the targeted audience for product and service produce by an entrepreneur is lacking

among many students interesting in self-reliance. Similarly, Ademiluyi (2017), opined that the students graduate without requisite entrepreneurial marketing skill on salesmanship and negotiation; sales record keeping; sales promotion; stock record keeping; pricing; advertising channels; advertising media; consumer behavior appreciation and transportation.

The finding of research question two revealed that basic education graduates fairly acquired Marketing skills for self-reliance in Potiskum Yobe state. The finding collaborate the earlier study conducted by Iwu (2016) who reported that business education supposed to gives the learners needed entrepreneurship skills and competencies needed for self-reliance and employment and as such, it is a discipline which equips an individual with occupational skills and knowledge that will enable him to fit into and find job satisfaction in the labour market. Similarly, Ezeonwurie (2016) points out that Business studies equips its recipients with the marketing skills, competences, understanding, knowledge and attitude for performing as workers in industries and civil service as well as proprietors of businesses.

The result of research question three suggested that the Computer skill acquired by basic education graduates for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State was very low. The finding was found to be similar with that of Yakubu (2016) pointed out some of the importance of business studies in enhancing the nation's economy cannot be achievement as students were ill prepared. Similarly, the study of **Oluwalola** (2019) reported that graduates of basic education lack the range computer knowledge for information processing and electronic communication needed for self-reliance. Aina and Igbiniedion (2019) also reported that students were not provided with computer skills that is widely use in all spheres of lives for self-sustainability.

The finding of research question four shows that the extent to which business studies provide basic education graduates with Accounting skill for self-reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State was very low. The finding agreed with the submission of Oluwalola (2019) which reported that knowledge acquired in business studies that is fundamental to the business owners is lacking among basic education graduates. According to Yakubu (2016) the knowledge of accounting is lacking among business owners which will enable them measure performance, process and communicate financial information about an economic sector. It also defined accounting as the process of recording, classifying, selecting, measuring, interpreting and communication financial data of an organization to enable users make decisions. Sulayman e tal (2019) opined that basic business studies skills that is expected to make school graduates control their own fortunes and consequently become self-reliant through business sustainability is lacking.

The finding of research question five which was further affirmed by the test of corresponding null hypothesis disclosed that the Shorthand skill acquired by both graduates of private and public schools for self- reliance in Potiskum metropolis, Yobe State was very low. The finding was found to be similar with that of Yakubu (2016) conducted research on a topic Assessment of Skills Acquisition for Self-Reliance in Business Studies Curriculum among Junior Secondary School Students in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Similarly, the study conducted by Oluwakemi et al (2018) reported that most of the students lack skills for office operation and management. Mshelia (2019) Assessment of employable skills acquisition for self-reliance in business studies curriculum among government junior secondary schools in Biu-Borno State.

Abubakar, Ajinuhi, Hassan and Imufutau, (2019) also reported that students were not properly provided with practical skill needed for self-reliance. The study of Adebayo, Mayeleeka, Nuberu and Okun (2020) reported that many of the school graduates lack trade subject skills needed for self-reliance.

Conclusion

The study disclosed that Business Studies has not provided basic education graduates with adequate skills for their self-reliance upon graduation. The results therefore suggested that basic education graduates that offered business studies at JSCE level graduate without basic skills for self-reliance as stipulated in the objectives of business studies curriculum; hence the philosophy of reducing the rate of unemployment among basic education graduates through business studies will not be achieved. It is therefore concluded the philosophy of introducing business studies at basic education level to reduce the rate of unemployment among the basic education level graduates will not be achieved if the students continue to graduate without requisite skills in keyboarding, Shorthand, Computer, Marketing and Accounting skills.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

- i. Basic education students should be exposed to more practical in typewriter so that they will acquire Keyboarding skills for their self-reliance.
- ii. that students should be expose to more practical in marketing and entrepreneurship through fieldtrip, workshop, internship in business management, advertisement, sales and turnover.
- iii. Ministry of Education should create enabling environment by providing needed facilities and equipment that will encourage teaching the students Computer application.
- iv. Business studies teachers should ensure that basic education students have basic foundation in Principles of Accounting and acquired needed skills and competencies needed for self-reliance.
- v. Shorthand aspect of Business Studies curriculum should be accurately taught so that students will graduate with the desired Shorthand competency for self-reliance.

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