ROLES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN RESHAPING STUDENTS' ETHICAL PRACTICES IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN DELTA STATE

CHIEDU AUGUSTINA
08087951989
augustinachiedu8@gmail.com

Abstract

Business education in digital society is driven by predominance of business which is essential in the work environment. Business education sensitizes business students towards the fulfillment of their future on ethical responsibilities by guiding them into creating values and innovative skills that will make them useful citizens in order to contribute meaningfully to economic growth through integration of ethics, critical thinking and diversity into the curriculum. By so doing, learners are prepared to become responsible and ethical leaders in the global work environment through exposure to ethical dilemmas and development of global mindset that guides their decision-making processes and actions. Upon graduation they are equipped with technical expertise, values and principles that guide them to make ethical and socially responsible decisions contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive business environment. Business ethics is an applied ethics that examines ethical rules and principles, ethical problems that may arise in a business setting and special duties that applies to persons who are engaged in business within a work environment. (Patel et al, 2024.Conclusively, Business education serves as a veritable tool in reshaping students' values and empowering them to lead with integrity and positive impact in today's dynamic business world. It was recommended that Business educators should teach students to critically evaluate information, analyze data and make informed decisions. Business education should also expose students to diverse cultures and global business phenomenon in other to excel in business world.

Keywords: Business education, values, work environment and business ethics.

Introduction

Education is a crucial driver of a nation's economic development, equipping students with knowledge which is essential for informed decision-making, practical skills, personal and professional growth, competencies and capacities to apply knowledge effectively. Education help students to develop themselves futures as to be able to contribute meaningfully to the growth of the society. Parankimmaliin Chidinmaet al (2024) contended that the fundamental aim of education is the physical ,intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of the individual as a social

instrument for developing human resources and for human capital formation. Onthe other hand, Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015) opined that business education is a driving force for national transformation and economic development. Education serves as a prerequisite for quality manpower development, creation of wealth, a sure path to success in life and service to humanity. It is regarded as the most powerful instrument for social progress and a tool that maximizes creative potentials of individual for self-realization and general development. It is very important to note that Nigeria and any nation's future social-economic success depends on the ability of its people to deal with a global environment that is knowledge driven.Businesseducation is one of the major components of vocational education that isoffered at both the secondary and tertiary levels of education.(Iyamu'2023).

Roles of Business Education

1. Business Education is one of the basic foundations upon which the students build an awareness and understanding of business concept. According to Abumchukwu(2010), Business education is an aspect of total educational programme which provides the recipient with knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform well in the business world.

2. Business education help students on the wide range perspectives and ethical considerations in business, they are better equipped to make informed decisions and navigate complex business environments (Nartea, 2019). One of the fundamental aspects of business education is instilling ethical values in students.

Ethics is the principle of morality, including both the science of the good and the nature of the right that involves doing the right thing in the right manner. It is a system of moral principles or rules of behaviors. (Gloria, 2011). She added that ethics is the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and right and wrong or with moral duty and obligation. In the words of Hurnin Gloria (2011), ethics is considered as the study of ''human duty in its wider sense'', underlining the common thread of the recognition of obligation and acceptance of responsibility for how one's actions would impact on other people. When ethics are applied to a profession, it becomes the standard rule that governs or influences the behavior of members of the profession. When applied in an organization, it refers to the application and strict adherence to the use of laid down rules or principles of behavior. Ethics is about making choices that may not always feel good or seem like they benefit a person but, are the "right" choices to make. They are choices that are examples of "model citizens" and examples of the golden rules: don't hurt, don't steal, don't lie or one of the most famous, do unto others as you would want them to do to you. These are not catchy phrases, they are words of wisdom that any productive and responsible member of the society should strive to live by part of understanding ethics is realizing that we are all capable of the best and worst ethics at any time.

Therefore, step zero in one's ethics education begins with recognizing the inherently high ethical error rate in us all, appreciating the negative effect these errors can have on people, organizations, and ourselves, and making the prevention of these errors priority in our personal and professional lives. Once this step is fully grasped, then the tools of ethical reasoning will come easily and benefit their users greatly. Obasuyi(2021) stated that ethics is a process of rational thinking aimed at establishing what value positions to hold and when to change them and requires the continuous realignment of value positions in accordance with ethical principles. In real ethics, we must be ready to adjust our thinking positions and behavior to be ethical and to remain ethical over time. Hence, ethics demands a willingness to change.

Ethical values provide the foundation on which a civilized society exists and without that foundation, civilization collapses. Before one's behavior can be taken to be ethical he or she must be self disciplined with integrity. The following ten universal values namely: honesty, integrity, promise-keeping, fidelity, fairness, caring, respect for others, responsible citizenship, pursuit of excellence and accountability were described as ethical values. Without these values, one cannot be said to be ethical and cannot keep the ethics of his or herprofession. Personal ethical values are the underpinning strength of development in every economy. Maintaining a high level of ethics and standards of practice is a "battle" for freedom. Unless we maintain high personal ethical values, the battle will never be won According to a study by Temple University, ethics education in business schools has a significant impact on students' ethical decision-making abilities and behavior in the work environment. By exploring ethical dilemmas and real-world case studies, students learn to critically evaluate various perspectives and make ethical decisions in their professional lives.Furthermore, business education helps students develop a global perspective by exposing them to diverse cultures, business practices, and economic systems. In today's interconnected world, having a global mindset is essential for success in the business world (Moeller, &Benzing, 2018). Moreover, business education equips students with essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and financial literacy, which are essential for success in the business world (Khan, et al, 2019). By providing students with hands-on learning experiences, such as internships and case competitions, business education prepares students for the challenges and opportunities they will face in their careers. This paper focuses on the roles of business education in reshaping students value and ethical practices in work environment.

Roles of Business Education in Reshaping Student'sEthical Values

Business education can play major roles in shaping students' ethical practices as thus:

- Instilling ethical values: Business education can help instill ethical values in students by teaching them the importance of ethics in business decision-making.

International Journal of Education, Social and Management Science (IJESMS)
Volume 1, *Issue*:3.

276

- Developing critical thinking: By teaching students to critically evaluate information and analyze data, business education can help them make informed, ethical decisions.

- Exposing students to diverse perspectives: By exposing students to diverse cultures and perspectives, business education can help them understand different viewpoints and make more informed, ethical decisions.

- Teaching social responsibility: Business education can teach students about the importance of social responsibility and sustainability in business practices.

- Encouraging ethical decision-making: Business education can provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to make ethical decisions in complex business situations.

- Business education can play a crucial role in shaping students' ethical practices and preparing them to make informed, responsible decisions in their future career.

- Provision of Entrepreneurial Spirit and Innovation:

Entrepreneurial spirit refers to the mindset and attributes of individuals who are willing to take risks, seize opportunities, and drive innovation in the business world. Business education plays a key role in nurturing this spirit by equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to think creatively, identify opportunities, and develop innovative solutions to complex problems. Through entrepreneurship courses,experiential learning opportunities, and mentorship programs, business schools encourage students to embrace risk-taking, resilience, and a proactive approach to businesschallenges.

15.   Encouraging Ethical Decision-Making and Social Responsibility:

Ethical decision-making and social responsibility are fundamental values that are ingrained in business education to ensure that students uphold high ethical standards and contribute positively to society. By emphasizing the importance of integrity, honesty, fairness, and social impact, business education instills a sense of ethical responsibility in students that guides their decision-making processes in the workplace. Through ethics courses, case studies, and real-world examples, business schools challenge students to consider the ethical implications of their actions and make principled decisions that align with ethical principles.

-     Fostering Global Awareness and Cultural Competence

Business education plays a crucial role in fostering global awareness and cultural competence among students. Recognizing the interconnected nature of the global economy, Nigerian business schools emphasize the importance of understanding diverse cultures, markets, and business practices to succeed in the international business arena. By integrating global perspectives into the

curriculum, offering international business courses, and promoting cross-cultural experiences, business education in Nigeria prepares students to navigate the complexities of global business environments effectively.

,- Inculcating Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are essential values instilled through business education in Nigeria to equip students with the ability to analyzeinformation, evaluate options, and make informed decisions in the face of complexchallenges. Nigerian business schools emphasize the importance of developing analytical thinking, strategic planning, and decision-making skills to prepare students for success in the competitive business landscape. Through case studies, simulations, and practical exercises, business education in Nigeria fosters a culture of critical thinking, creativity, and innovation among students.

- Collaboration and Teamwork

Collaboration and teamwork are essential values fostered through business education in Nigeria to prepare students for the collaborative nature of the business world. Nigerian business schools emphasize the importance of working effectively in teams, communicating seamlessly, and leveraging diverse talents to achieve shared goals. Through group projects, team-based assignments, and leadership development programs, business education in Nigeria promotes a culture of collaboration, trust, and synergy among students.

Benefits Of Business Education In Reshaping Students Ethical Practices.

1. Career Choices and Professional Development:

The values instilled through business education influence students' career choices and professional development by shaping their interests, skills, and aspirations.Students who prioritize global awareness and cultural competence may seek out international business opportunities or roles that require cross-cultural communication skills. Those with strong critical thinking and problem-solving abilities may gravitate towards positions that require analytical thinking and strategic decision-making. Additionally, students who value collaboration and teamwork may pursue careers in team-oriented environments or leadership roles that emphasize collaboration.

2. Approach to Leadership and Management:The values instilled through business education also shape students' approach to leadership and management by influencing their leadership style, decision-making processes, and interpersonal skills. Students who prioritize global awareness and cultural competence may adopt inclusive leadership practices that value diversity and promote cross-cultural understanding. Those with strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills may approach leadership challenges with a strategic and analytical mindset. Additionally, students who value collaboration and teamwork may cultivate a leadership style that emphasizes teamwork,

communication, and empowerment.Thus instilling values such as global awareness, critical thinking, and collaboration, business education prepares students to assume leadership roles, navigate complex business challenges, and inspire teams to achieve common goals.

3. Understanding of Market Dynamics and Consumer Behavior. The values instilled through business education also influence students' understanding of market dynamics and consumer behavior by shaping their knowledge, perspectives, and analysis of market trends and consumer preferences. Students who prioritize global awareness and cultural competence may have a deeper understanding of international markets and consumer behavior in diverse cultural contexts. Those with strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills may be adept at analyzing market data, identifying trends, and predicting consumer behavior. Additionally, students who value collaboration and teamwork may recognize the importance of consumer-centric strategies and market research. By instilling values such as global awareness, critical thinking, and collaboration, business education equips students with the skills and insights needed to navigate competitive markets,understand consumer behavior, and develop effective marketing strategies.

4. AttitudesToward Sustainability and Environmental ResponsibilityThe values instilled through business education also influence students' attitudes toward sustainability and environmental responsibility by shaping their awareness, values, and practices related to sustainability and corporate social responsibility. Students who prioritize global awareness and cultural competence may recognize the importance of environmental sustainability in a global context and seek out sustainable business practices. Those with strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills may analyze the environmental impact of business decisions and advocate for sustainable solutions. Inculcating global awareness, critical thinking, and collaboration, business education is capable of fostering a culture of environmental responsibility among students, encouraging them to make sustainable choices, advocate for green practices, as well as drive positive change in organizations and communities.

5. Perspectives on Globalization and Cultural DiversityThe values instilled through business education also shape students' perspectives on globalization and cultural diversity by influencing their awareness, openness, and appreciation of diverse cultures and global trends. Students who prioritize global awareness and cultural competence may embrace globalization as an opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and collaboration so as to appreciate diversity, navigate cultural differences and engage with global challenges and opportunities.

Conclusion

Business education plays crucial roles in reshaping students' values and ethical practices by providing them with the knowledge, aptitudes ,skills, and ethical frameworks to succeed in the business environment. By emphasizing ethics, global decadence, business education prepares

students to make positive impacts in the business environment and contribute to a more socially responsible andsustainable future. By equipping students with the tools they need to navigate complex business environments, make ethical decisions, and think critically, business education plays a key role in preparing the next generation of business leaders to succeed in an ever-changing global economy.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

i. Institutions of higher learning are advised to integrate ethics education in their academic curriculum not as a sub-topic under the different courses the students offer, but as a stand-alone course titled business ethics.

ii. Individuals are advised to embrace good personal values which will enhance better ethical behavior

3. Business educators should focus on teaching students how to critically evaluate information, analyze data, and make informed decisions.

4. Business education should expose students to a diverse range of cultures, perspectives, and global business practices during training.

References

Ajibolade, S.O. (2018). A Survey of the Perception of Ethical Behavior of Future Nigerian Accounting Professionals. The Nigerian accountant, July/Sept, pp.54- 59

Smyth L. S., Davis J.R., Kroncke C. (2019). Students Perceptions of Business Ethics: Using Cheating as a Surrogate for Business Situations. Journal of Education for Business, March/ April, pp. 229-238

Evan F. J., Marcal L. E. (2025). Educating for Ethics: Business Deans Perspectives. Business and Society Review 110 (3), 233-248

Hurn B. J. (2008). Ethics in international business.Industrial and commercial training, 40(7), 347-354. Doi10.110800197850810912216.

International Journal of Education, Social and Management Science (IJESMS)
Volume 1, Issue:3.

280

Izedonmi P. F. (2008). Review of Accounting Ethics Curriculum of Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria. Paper Presented at the ICAN Stakeholders Forum on Accounting Ethics and Information Technology, 22 November 2008.

Okafor, G. O. (2020). The Ethics of business education Profession. Journal of global business education 2 (1), 70-75.

Curry M. (2024). Ethics in the workplace.Available from http://www.businesstrainingmedia.coEthics Quality for Organizational Excellence (2019). Ethics and culture management services

Smith K. T., Smith M. L. (2023). Business and accounting ethics. Texas: A & M University

Davies J.R, Welton R.E. (2021). Professional Ethics: Business Students Perception. J ournal of Business Ethics 10. Pp 451 – 463.

Gill S. (2010). Is Gender Inclusivity an Answer to Ethical Issues in Business? An Indian Stance.Career choice and professional development. Journal of Business Education Research, 12(2), 66-80.

Chong, K. C., Lim, C. M., & Yew, E. T. (2019).Developing leadership skills through business education programs. Journal of Leadership Development, 8(1), 45-59.

Fayolle, A., Griffiths, M., & Wright, M. (2020). The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial attitudes and intention: Hysteresis and persistence. Journal of Small Business Management, 58(3), 500-520.

Gong, Q., Shi, Y., & Shen, X. (2018). Does business ethics education affect ethical awareness and behavior of business students? An empirical study from China. Education + Training, 60(4), 338-354.

Gupta, A. K., & Srinivasan, R. (2013).Business Models in the Digital Economy. Information Systems Research, 24(1), 3-16.

Khan, Muhammad N., Rao, A. S., &Akhtari-Zavare, M. (2019).Impact of Business Studies Education on Graduates Employability. Journal of Education for Business,94(4), 234-241.

Nartea, G. V. (2019). Does Business Ethics Teaching Affect Academic Performance in Higher Education? Evidence from UK Undergraduate Students. Journal of Business Ethics Education, 16(1), 179-204.

Ng, S. Y., Wong, L. T., & Yap, C. S. (2017). Fostering sustainability attitudes and practices through business education. Journal of Sustainability Education, 18.

Ogunnaike, O., Ojo, M. A., &Adeyemi, T. (2020). Collaboration and teamwork in Nigerian business education: A case study approach. Nigerian Journal of Business Studies, 9(2), 76-89.

Olarinde, O. J., Adebisi, O. S., &Aina, N. T. (2021).Global awareness and cultural competence through study abroad programs.Journal of Nigerian Business Education Journal, 4(2), 123-138.Sternberg, R. J., & Krauss, G. L. (2017). The Kanazawa Incident in Cross-Cultural Perspective: An Analysis of Stereotyping, Discrimination, and 'Foreign Devil' Faculties in Japanese Universities. Journal of Educational Psychology, 87(2), 222-234.