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COST ACCOUNTING CURRICULUM AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT
The study determined how cost accounting curriculum can be beneficial to the youths of business education in Rivers State. Survey research design was employed, the population of the study was 600 business educators from three tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The total sample size for the study comprised 240 business education youths from three tertiary institution in Rivers State. Simple random sampling was used to obtain the sample of the study and also purposive sampling was used to select respondents where necessary. The sample size was determined using Taro Yemane (1967) formula of sample determination. Cost accounting education curriculum specifically influences entrepreneurial set ups, business start ups and employment opportunities of business education youths. In summary, it was found out that influence of cost accounting curriculum on employment opportunities of business education youths was at a high extent. Finally, it was also found out, that government policies affect quality education delivery especially in the area of the release of fund for proper planning of the accounting education curriculum in respect of the employment of business education youths.

Keywords: Cost Accounting, Curriculum, Youth, Empowerment

INTRODUCTION
In the formal educational set-up teaching and learning are carefully and deliberately planned in order to meet the needs of society. This planned activity is what we generally refer to as the curriculum. Some educators view the curriculum as the syllabus or scheme of work. This narrow view equates the curriculum with the list of subjects, which constitute the content to be mastered by the learners. Surely, the subject matter or content should be considered as part of the curriculum and not the curriculum itself. Others view the curriculum as the work to be done in a particular class or grade level such as the primary school curriculum. The junior secondary school curriculum, the senior secondary school curriculum, etc. Others equally view it as the content of a particular subject or chemistry curriculum, mathematics curriculum, etc. while it is true that there can be individual subject based curriculum, this view of the school curriculum is limited in that it does not see the learner being subjected to a total teaching-learning situation which involves his exposure to a wide variety of activities initiated and organized by the school, Ajoku et al (2013).

Although, educators or curriculum experts have not agreed about the exact meaning and definition of the term, many specialists in the field seem to have reach some understanding as to what constitutes the curriculum. They view it as the vehicle through which the school strives towards the achievement of its educational objectives.

In support of this, Onwuka (1981) opined that curriculum embraces purposeful experiences provided and directed y educational institutions to achieve predetermined goals. According to Wheeler (1967), curriculum means planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the school. Curriculum Development refers to the process of planning learning opportunities intended to bring about certain changes in the learner and the assessment of the extent to which these changes have taken place. Such an activity is collective responsibility involving experts (school administrators, curriculum specialists and subject specialists) teachers, parents clergymen, laymen and learners. Usually, the activity is carried out in consideration to the nature of education demanded by the society. The exercise is a continuous one in view of the dynamic nature of society arising from knowledge explosion. Youth development is a process that prepares a young person to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood and achieve his or her fill potential. Providing the conditions for positively youth development is a responsibility shared by families, schools, and communities. Youth empowerment can be defined as a process where people gain the ability and authority to make informed decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people. It is a means of encouraging youths to do great things for themselves and as youths, you are at the centre of absolute strength. You think big, hope for the best and envision a better tomorrow, therefore making continuous efforts to turn your dreams into reality. According to the global organization (UN) reports, Nigerian youth migrants in Europe and America are three times more than migrants from other West African Country. This report also added that the migration rate of the youth was 32 percent in 1999, compared to less than 15 percent for non-youth populations. It was estimated that by the end of 2012, over 50 percent of the youths in Nigeria will be residing in foreign countries where job opportunities are easier to come by. This is including the massive migration rate of Nigerians to Canada and other foreign countries since 2017, if not more, Olusola, (2019).

Research hypotheses

The null hypotheses formulated for the study will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

$H0_1$: There is no significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State.

$H0_2$: There is no significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on entrepreneurial set ups of business education youths in Rivers State.

$H0_3$: There is no significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on business startups of business education youths in Rivers State.

Cost Accounting

Cost accounting is a method of management accounting which aims to capture the total production cost of a business by measuring the variable costs of each production phase as well as fixed costs, such as expense.

Historians believe that cost accounting was first introduced during the industrial revolution when the new global supply and demand economics forced producers to begin monitoring their fixed and variable costs to automate their manufacturing processes.Cost accounting allowed rail and steel companies to manage costs and make themselves more competitive. By the early 20th century, cost accounting had becomes a widely discussed subject in the literature of business management. According to Bhavana (2021), a company's internal management department uses cost accounting to define both variable and fixed costs associated with the manufacturing process. It will first individually calculate and report these costs, then compare input costs with production results to assist in assessing financial performance and in making potential business decisions. Cost accounting includes several forms of costs which are listed below: fixed lost, operating costs, direct cost, variable costs and indirect costs. Cost accounting has now becomes the norm in most industries and firms. Almost all medium and large scale businesses rely on cost accounting to supplement the information that financial accounting provides. In fact, cost accounting is essential not only to business men and the management but also to the students and the economy as a whole. It also helps the students both undergraduates and post graduates to have a better understanding of what happens in the firms. According to "toppr.com/guides/fu" (2021), cost accounting enables students to gain mastery of measuring and improving efficiency. Cost accounting allows for data that enables the firms to measure efficacy. This could be efficiencies with respect to cost, time, expenses. Standard costing is then used to compare actual numbers with the industry or economy standards to indicate changes in efficiency.

According to Firdausi et al (2021), cost accounting is a specialized branch of accounting that deals with the classification, recording and allocation of current costs and prospective costs. In modern commercial world, it is one of the most important technology or process for a business. The management of an organization and its workers both greatly benefit from it.Ordinarily students will not understand the importance of cost accounting, but by its importance to the management, workers and even the government, they can certainly have a feel of the importance of cost accounting.One of the biggest uses of cost accounting is that it helps us calculate efficiency. So it is clear that students who study accounting are potential beneficiates of companies incentive scheme for workers.Cost accounting creates the privilege for students to understand how the government can assess income tax or any other such government liabilities. Through cost accounting, the students who study accounting can also understand how to set industry standards and helps with prices fixing, tariff plans, cost control etc.In contemporary times cost accounting knowledge gained from tertiary institutions can arm the students with great advantages. The extent of advantages derived from cost accounting is based on the type, adequacy and efficiency of cost accounting system installation. Some of the advantages are: Elimination of wastes, losses and inefficiencies, cost reduction, identifying the reasons for profit or loss, advises on make or buy decision etc.

Concept of Youth Empowerment

Youth empowerment; Youth empowerment is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives. They do this by addressing their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resource and transform their consciousness through their beliefs values and attitudes. Youth empowerment aims to improve quality of life. Youth empowerment is achieved through participation in youth empowerment programs. However scholars argue that children's rights implementation should go beyond learning about formal rights and procedures to give birth to a concrete experience of rights, you Safzai, (2021). According to Yousafzai, (2021), there are numerous models that youth empowerment programs use that help youth achieve empowerment. A variety of youth empowerment initiatives are underway around the world. The programs can be through non-profit organizations, government organizations, schools or private organization.Youth empowerment is different from youth development because youth development is centered on developing individuals, while empowerment is focused on creating greater community change relies on the development individual capacity.Empowerment movements, including youth empowerment, originate, gain momentum, become viable and become institutionalized. Youth movement is often addressed as a gateway to intergenerational equity, civic engagement and democracy building. Activities may focus on youth- led media, youth involvement in community decision making and other methods.Youth empowerment examines six interdependent dimensions: Psychological, community, organizational, economic, social and cultural. Psychological empowerment enhances individuals consciousness, belief in self-efficacy, awareness and knowledge of problems and solutions and of how individuals can address problems that harm their quality of life. This dimension aims to create self-confidence and give youth the skill to acquire knowledge community empowerment focusses on enhancing the community through leadership development, improving communication, and creating a network of support to mobilize the community to address concerns.Yousafzai (2021) further argues that youth empowerment is measurable and that over the last two decades, quality of life (QOL) has emerged as an important unit of measurement to evaluate the used as a good of programs as well as an indicator of effectiveness QOL. A persons QOL is dependent upon subjective evaluation of the individual aspects of that individuals life. Youth empowerment programs thrive in positive development settings. Positive developmental setting promote youth competence, confidence and connections. Two features of the positive developmental youth settings are supportive relationships and support for efficacy and mattering. Supportive relationships are those that are between youth and non-familiar adults that faster trust and respect. Support for efficacy and mattering specifically focusses on youth bring active, instrumental agents of change in their communities, collective decision making and adults listen to and respect their voice. Organizational empowerment aims to create a base of resources for a community, including voluntary organizations, unions and associations that aim to protect, promote and advocate for the powerless. Economics empowerment teaches entrepreneurial skills, how to have income security. Social empowerment teaches youth about social inclusion and literacy as well as helping kids find the resources to be practices in their communities. Cultural practices and redefine cultural rules and norms for youth. Through these dimensions of empowerment, programs can work on empower youth in one or more aspects of their lives.

Empowerment theory

Empowerment theory is an element of empowerment. Yousafzai (2021) said that empowerment theory focusses on processes that enable participation enhances control through shared decision making; and create opportunities to learn, practice, and increase skills.Empowerment theory suggests that engaging youth in pro-social, meaningful, and community enhancing activities that the youths themselves define and control, helps, youths gain vital skills, responsibilities, and confidence necessary to become productive and healthy adults, Yousafzai, (2021).Youth empowerment examines six types of interdependent dimensions: Psychological, community, organizational, economic, social and cultural. Psychological empowerment enhances individual's consciousness, belief in self-efficacy, awareness and knowledge of problems and solutions and how individuals can address problems that harm the quality of life. This dimension aims to create confidence and give youth the skills to acquire knowledge. Community empowerment focuses on enhancing the community through leadership development, improving communication and creating a network of support to mobilize the community to address concerns. Organizational empowerment aims to create a base of resources for a community, including voluntary organizations, unions and associations that aim to protect, promote and advocate for the powerless. Economic empowerment teaches entrepreneurial skills, how to take ownership of their assets and how to have income security. Social empowerment teaches youth about social inclusion and literacy as well as helping kids find the resources to be proactive in their communities. Cultural empowerment aims to recreate cultural practices and redefine cultural rules and norms for youth. Through these dimensions of empowerment, programs can work on empowering youth in one or more aspects of their lives.

According to Ijiri (2001), accounting theories are developed from empirical observations of situations yearning to be address through a frame work as reference for the practice. Accounting theory is a set of assumptions, frame works, and methodologies used in the study and application of financial reporting principles. The accounting curriculum is a mix of general education courses, business classes such as Business Finance and organizational behaviour and specialized accounting classes such as Financial Accounting; Managerial Accounting; Fundamentals of Tax; Auditing and control and financial statement Analysis. Accounting theory operates in levels: syntactical, interpretational or semantical and behavioural or pragmatic theories.

The aim of accounting education is to help students learn to learn to become professional accountants. The teacher should often mix theory with practice (the why and the how) and often indicate the contact of the course with accounting courses.The five (5) principles of accounting are; Revenue Recognition principle, Historical cost principle, Matching principle, Full disclosure principle and objectivity principle.The basic accounting concepts are: Accruals concept; Revenue is recognized when earned, and expenses are recognized when assets are consumed, Conservatism concept, Consistency concept, Economic entity concept, Going-concern concept, Matching Concept, Materiality concept. In accounting, theory is formulated by an approach that begins basic accounting prepositions (Assumption) and proceeds to derive by logical means the accounting principle.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a survey research design. The population for this study consists of 600 business education youths from three tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

S/N	INSTITUTION UNIVERSITIES	POPULATION
1.	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education	200
2.	Rivers State University	250
3.	Federal College of Education Omoku	150
	Total	**600**

Source: University Human Resource Management (2021)

The sample for the study comprises 240 business education youths from three tertiary institutions in Rivers State. In this study, simple random sampling was used to obtain the sample size of the study and also purposive sampling was used to select respondents where necessary. The sample size was determined using Taro-Yamane (1967) formula of sample determination. The research developed an instrument titled; "Accounting Education Curriculum and Youths Empowerment Questionnaire (AECYEQ) was used to determine how Accounting Education Curriculum and Youths Empowerment. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using linear regression at 0.05 level of significance with the aid of statistical product for service solution (SPSS) software version (25).

Test of Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State.

Summary of simple linear regression analysis of the significant influence of accounting curriculum on employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	T	Sig
(Constant)	1.982	0.310	6.397	0.000
Cost accounting curriculum	0.873	0.021	42.521	0.000*
R	0.919[a]			
R-Squared	0.845			
Adjusted R-square	0.843			
F –statistic	107.987			
P-value	0.004[b]			
Df	238			

a. Dependent variable: Cost Accounting Curriculum
b. Independent variable: Employment Opportunities
c. *Significant influence with the two variables at 0.05 level of significance

Source: Field work,(2022).

The F-statistics testing on the extent to which cost accounting curriculum influences employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State is presented in Table 4.12. The R-squared value of .845 indicated the variation of 85% to the influence of cost accounting curriculum on employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State. The test yields an F-value of 107.987 with a p-value of .004 and df = 238. Since the p-value (.004) is less than .05, the null hypothesis tested is rejected. It implies that there is a significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on entrepreneurial set ups of business education youths in Rivers State.

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Summary of simple linear regression analysis of the significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on entrepreneurial setups of business education youths in Rivers State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	T	Sig
(Constant)	3.200	0.490	6.697	0.000
Cost accounting curriculum	0.789	0.034	26.081	0.000*
R	0.808[a]			
R-Squared	0.767			
Adjusted R-square	0.766			
F –statistic	437.387			
P-value	0.001[b]			
Df	238			

a. Dependent variable: Cost Accounting Curriculum
b. Independent variable: Entrepreneurial Setups
c. *Significant influence with the two variables at 0.05 level of significance

Source: Field work,(2022).

The F-statistics testing on the extent to which cost accounting curriculum influences enterpreneurial setups of business education youths in Rivers State is presented in Table 4.13. The R-squared value of .767 indicated the variation of 76% to the influence of cost accounting curriculum on enterpreneurial setups of business education youths in Rivers State. The test yields an F-value of 437.387 with a p-value of .001 and df = 238. Since the p-value (.001) is less than .05, the null hypothesis tested is rejected. It implies that there is a significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on enterpreneurial setups of business education youths in Rivers State.

Research Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on business startups of business education youths in Rivers State.

Summary of simple linear regression analysis of the significant influence of cost accounting curriculum on business startups of business education youths in Rivers State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	T	Sig
(Constant)	3.082	0.560	6.672	0.000
Cost accounting curriculum	0.773	0.041	23.500	0.000*
R	0.858[a]			
R-Squared	0.867			
Adjusted R-square	0.866			
F –statistic	257.007			
P-value	0.005[b]			
Df	238			

a. Dependent variable: Cost Accounting Curriculum
b. Independent variable: Business Startups
c. *Significant influence with the two variables at 0.05 level of significance

Source: Field work,(2022).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed as follows:

Cost accounting curriculum influences employment opportunities of business education youths in Rivers State

The findings of this study disclosed by the respondents indicate the extent cost accounting curriculum influences employment opportunities of business education youths.The high extent was revealed by the opinions of the respondents on the following items cost accounting. However, the result indicated that cost accounting curriculum has high extent of influence on employment opportunities because it fills the students with the knowledge to adapt to job.This study agreed with the opinion of Osuala (2004) who wrote that business education curriculum is very sacrusant for graduates of business education whose aims their livings through businessesgrowth. Also the result of the study disproved the submission of Ile (2009) who posited that business education curriculumcan only help only graduates of business eduction.

Cost accounting curriculum influences entrepreneurial set upsof business education youths

The findings of this study disclosed by the respondents indicate the extent accounting curriculum influences entrepreneurial set ups of business education youths in Rivers State.However, the result indicated that cost accounting curriculum has high extent of influence on entrepreneurial set ups because new and practical curriculumon business set up were taught in school and then adopted by business education youths to set up a small scale business after graduation. This study agreed with the opinion of Osuala (2004) who wrote that business education curriculum is very sacrosant for graduates of business education whose aims their livings through businesses growth. Also the result of the study is in agreement with IAS (2019) stated that cost analysis plays a significant role on the inflow and outflow cash trasaction in business cycles.

Cost accounting curriculum influences business startups of business education youths

The findings of this study revealed by the respondents indicate the extent cost accounting curriculum influences business startups of business education youths in Rivers State. However, the result indicated that cost accounting curriculum has High extent of influence on business startups because the knowledge gained from the curriculum at school enables the youth to startup business of their chioce and grow a small scale business for empowerment. This study agreed with the opinion of Osuala (2010) who wrote that business education curriculum is very sacrusant for graduates of business education whose aim their livings through businesses growth. Also the result of the study is in agreement with IAS (2019) stated that cost analysis plays a significant role on the inflow and outflow cash transaction in business cycles.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings made, it is concluded among others that cost accounting curriculum was beneficial to the youths of business education in tertiary institutions in Rivers state. accounting education curriculum have made a significant impact on the economic growth and substainability of youths of business education as widely reported in the literature reviewed. It is also concluded that accounting education curriculum was a viable curriculum used by youths of business education in tertiary institutions to strive in bid to achieve economic growth and development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Nigerian University Commission should establish a viable curriculum that will promote youths of business education through job creation.

2. Financial accounting should be thought effectively in tertiary institutions for business start ups.
3. Tertiary institution should always review lecturers' workload distribution on a periodic basis to ensure equitable distribution of tasks to lecturers and help to make them more productive in delivering the accounting education curriculum.

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