

TRAINING NEEDS IN BUSINESS TEACHER PREPARATION FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NEW SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL BUSINESS SUBJECTS CURRICULUM

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Abstract

It is not an overstatement to say that preparation of a teacher is the main tool for achieving any academic program. Over the years, curriculums for Senior Secondary School (SSS) and others have undergone many reviews in terms of content and structure. The recent one for SSS was widened to include 35 trade subjects out of which business subjects are six Stenography, Data Processing, Storekeeping, Book-keeping, Marketing and Salesmanship. Others already grouped under Business Studies as a field of study include Stores Management, Accounting, Commerce, Office Practice and Insurance. The teachers or 'would be' ones are supposed to be exposed to new technologies, sensitized and supported for continuous capacity building, effective handling of both genders, develop listening and questioning skills, communicate their courses to the public for acceptance and support, imbibe entrepreneurship education and operate on ethical standards to be able to handle the new SSS curriculum. These will enable them overcome some of the problems in business education. Major recommendation was that needed infrastructures should be provided by stakeholders and teachers used to survey any proposed curriculum before the actual provisions and implementations are started.

Keywords: *business, teacher preparation, curriculum.*

Introduction

Senior secondary education is a middle level education between primary education and tertiary education. It improves on primary education and prepares the foundation for tertiary education or for the world of work. It is decisive a stage that determines whether one can go further or switch into the world of work but as a junior staff unless one is prepared for self employment. The system of education in Nigeria has undergone several changes from 6-5-4 to 6-3-3-4 and now 9-3-4. This implies six years primary/five years senior secondary/four years tertiary education; six years primary/three years junior secondary/three years senior secondary/four years tertiary education and now nine years primary-junior secondary/three years senior secondary/four years tertiary education.

Nigeria as a member of United Nations Organizations is a signatory to several education charters among which are Education For All (EFA) and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) states Aina & Nwachukwu (2012). The authors continued by stating that charters have since influenced the policy foundation of education in Nigeria. In response to the global initiatives of MDGs and EFA, Nigeria adopted the nine years Universal Basic Education (UBE) program. The UBE program reform is set out to achieve the following among many others:

The integration of primary school and Junior Secondary School (JSS) (Basic Schools) into a continuous system of schooling;

The proposed vocationalization of the three- year Post Basic Education (PBE) or Senior Secondary Schools (SSS);



The planned review of the SSS curriculum in the context of the envisaged vocationalizing PBE;
The restructured school curricula at basic and post basic levels taking into account emerging national and global issues;
Review of school texts on the context of these reform measures;
Planned use of ICT to enhance learning and teaching;
Building the capacity of the school teacher in new ways of teaching and on the context of the new curricula specifications and
A planned shift from due emphasis on paper qualification to students' performance on tasks.
Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) has this for SSS as its broad goals in the national policy on education:
Useful living within the society and
Higher education.

Specifically, secondary education shall among many others

Provide holders of Basic Education Certificate ... with opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of gender, social status, religious or ethnic background;
Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents opportunities and future roles;
Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
Provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job-specific skills for self-reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development; and
Inspire students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence.

In view of these, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2008) spelt out that the curriculum for Senior Secondary Education shall consist of the following fields of study:

Science and Mathematics
Technology
Humanities
Business Studies which comprises of Stores Management, Accounting, Commerce, Office Practice and Insurance.
Trade/Entrepreneurship Subjects which are 35 in number covering many fields in addition to business subjects such as Stenography, Data Processing, Store keeping, Book keeping, Marketing and Salesmanship.

The focus of this paper was to look at the preparation of business teachers for proper implementation of the new SSS business education subjects' curriculum.

Theoretical Framework

Business can simply be said to be the supply of a product at a profit. Business teacher preparation is the training given to one in the field of business in a school in preparation for one to impart such learning to others. Business education is a program of studies which is aimed at creating



awareness in business occupations; preparing youths for work in business occupations; preparing people to become better citizens and consumers of goods, services and preparing business teachers. (Azuka, 2006). Enwemasor, Utebor and Okocha (2016) also stated that business education is a part of vocational education that prepares individuals for gainful employment through acquisition of skills and knowledge that prepares the individuals for the world of work. So, the person that impacts on others for business should be a prepared teacher. To Aliyu (2000), business education programs provide training for specific job and develop ability to use these skills in the business environment. So, business education prepares people for useful living. If so, it shows that the business teacher must be equipped adequately and must be living usefully in his/her society. Etonyeaku (2009) has these to offer for business education:

To empower the individual with desirable skills, knowledge and values to perform specific functions so as to become self reliant and

To empower the individual in such a way that the individual will develop his intellectual capacity that would help him to make informed decisions in all spheres of life.

With these in mind, Ekpeyong and Nwabuisi (2003) opined that the success of any system or organization is largely dependent on the quality and quantity of human resources available for the system. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) also stated that no education can rise above the level of its teachers. So, teachers' improvement remains cardinal and pivotal in the success of business education programs and every business teacher is expected to be acquainted with the present issues of technology advancement especially in the education industry states Onyesom, Agbule and Okwokenye (2012). Azih (2011) observed that Microsoft Excel, database management, basic computer networking, desktop publishing, web page design etc. are not included in business curriculum in many Nigerian universities. This shows serious deficiency in graduates who are expected to face the current office challenges or face the teaching of the SSS new curriculum structure which is more of the use of hands and brains. Ikegwuani (2018) stated that teaching has gone beyond talking and hearing but hearing, seeing and participating. We remember 85 90% of what we see but less than 15% of what we hear quips a communication expert - Sonya (2018). The type of education that equips its recipients to adapt to the changing world of work is business education. So, it is important that students are groomed to possess desired training, abilities, attitudes, skills and knowledge to fit into any place they may find themselves be it in work place, teaching institution or in self employment. This can be achieved when business education teacher is well prepared to inculcate the desired competencies in learners.

Business education cuts across all disciplines because all disciplines depend on business strategies to sell their products. In secondary education, it starts with business studies in Junior Secondary School (JSS) that covers Shorthand (though no longer emphasized), Typewriting, Book-keeping, Office Practice and Commerce. Then in Senior Secondary School (SSS), the students choose some of all the others already mentioned if the student is in commercial or social science group. After graduation, can the students fit properly into world of work or self employment? No because the present new technologies are not adequately handled by business teachers who are either not knowledgeable enough in the uses or lack equipment with which to impart desired knowledge and skills at this level.



Curriculum on the other hand is said to a planned program or course of study in a school. (Wikipedia, 2018). It is important that courses are reviewed in terms of content and relevance to societal needs. Thus, SSS curriculum has undergone several reviews to absorb the yearnings of the society and bears much on business studies as a field of study. So, the business teacher is being considered to be filled with certain competencies to enable him/her handle the reviewed courses effectively in order to meet national aspirations for our SSS business graduates.

Training Needs for Business Education Teachers

The teacher is an important key player in educational setting. The Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) will always use the slogan 'Teachers are great no controversy' or 'no teacher no nation'. If you say that education is expensive, you try ignorance and get the worst cheap loss. So, teachers' education to handle issues of learning should be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development of curriculum. In recognition of the pivotal role of quality teachers in the provision of quality education at all levels, teacher education shall continue to be emphasized at all educational planning and development states (FRN, 2013). It went further to state the goals of teacher education as follows:

- Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system;
- Further encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- Help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
- Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations; and
- Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

It stated that teacher education programs shall be structured to equip teachers for the effective performance of their duties. Information Technology (IT) training shall be incorporated into all teacher-training programs. Importantly, the provisions added that there will be revamping of teacher education curricula and training and I add, annually in order to meet the needs of everyday.

In view of the fact that business education graduates will eventually teach the SSS students, serious curriculum revision for business teacher education in line with SSS curriculum should always be done. Nagel (2013) stated that among all the challenges facing effective implementation of new technologies is the lack of professional development for teachers who are required to integrate them into the classroom. So, the need for adequate training of teachers in modern technologies can never over flogged at this time.

Technological Development of Teachers

Most learners toy with gadgets on IT but some do not apply the uses in the proper direction because they have not been taught with dedication on how to put them to great advantage in teaching and learning of their school subjects and in particular business subjects. They fiddle with various social media of interest but fail most of computer- based tests such as JAMB because their attention is focused on trivial issues that do not benefit their academic life.



All tertiary institutions offering business education should have ICT facilities to train. Learning in the contemporary can only be most effective when instructors eagerly and quickly accept and adapt to the challenges of e-training and e-business characterized by modern computers, interactive whiteboard, video library, video teleconferencing, electronic mail, projectors and other ICT facilities as suggested by many authors in their submissions and as practiced by few institutions. The use of these facilities has been evaluated in many ways.

Modern computers help to deliver lessons by allowing students practice with teacher as business education should be a 'brain and hand' course. One must listen, learn and practice for great perfection.

Internet enables phones and hybrid devices enhance students' motivation.

Electronic mail enhances communication and productivity in education.

Video library enables quick access to resource materials on line and have a positive impact on teaching.

Projectors help to facilitate hearing and seeing which kindles interest especially when pictures, charts, graphs etc. are shown.

Internet facilitates students' researches, projects and assignments outside the classroom.

ICT has greatly encouraged distance learning and wider spread of literacy devices.

The use of the above technologies will go a long way in enhancing or enriching the teaching and learning of business education programs regardless of level of that education and whatever name business studies, marketing, keyboarding etc.

Continuous training/Capacity Building

There is never a time learning can be said to have been perfected because when new things evolve, new teachings and learning come into play. A teacher of others must always try to be on top. So, training and retraining should be part of the teacher's yearning. Trainings can come through workshops, seminars, conferences, meetings, orientations etc. These, every teacher must embark on or avail themselves the opportunity to keep up-to-date. Teachers for business should be well ahead as other courses depend on them to prepare their learners on how to sell their products to the public. Though some teachers are reluctant to change, they must be encouraged to tackle innovations to avoid ineffectiveness. The facilitators for such programs should be people that have modern facts to add to existing body of knowledge. Aina and Nwachukwu (2012) opined that capacity building on an individual requires the development of conditions that allow participants to build and enhance existing knowledge and skills. Okolocha and Nwadiani (2014) stated that business studies teachers regardless of gender and experience were trained using the traditional approach with obsolete facilities and so, should improve themselves with determination to easily adapt to changes especially with ever reviewed curriculum to meet up with technological explosions.

Gender Insensitivity

This is another issue that should be emphasized on. It is observed that more women are found in department of education in most institutions. However, men explore more especially as regards modern technology and innovations. So, every institution for training of teachers should give



attention to admission of more males who are genuinely seeking admissions against those who opt for business education when all others fail. Women in training should be made to measure up to standards and not ignored in certain explorations because they are assumed to be weak. They should not be allowed to get away with whatever level they are able to explore but should be made to regard themselves as men who can delve into issues regardless of how hard they seem. With this, they can give adequate training to the SSS students as expected. It is with bold steps/attempts that teaching and learning of the new SSS curriculum can be achieved with desired competencies acquired by learners. In short, every learner of business education should be regarded as having the necessary endowment to acquire what it takes to be in the department regardless of sex. Women represent humanity and so, should no longer be regarded as decorative accessories and objects to be moved about or as companions to be flattered and calmed with promises and gifts but should be regarded as the nation's valuable human resources to be pampered, refined and adequately equipped and empowered to contribute appropriately to the nation's development states Maduewesi (2005).

Listening and Questioning Skills

For any meaningful teaching and learning, listening skills should be properly applied. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood leading to communication breakdown and the sender of the message can easily be frustrated or irritated emphasized Abayomi (2014). In the same way when question is not properly structured, it leads to misunderstanding and capable of many interpretations which can lead to wrong answers and actions. A student of business education should be taught how to deliver effectively in the classroom through developing listening and questioning abilities. It is not easy as most of the time personal dispositions and ideologies interfere in communication process. Basic principles of effective listening should be emphasized throughout the learning period and it includes

- Avoidance of interruption when another is talking;
- Paying adequate attention without allowing the mind to wonder off at that moment;
- Allowing the speaker to be at ease so that he/she can express his/her intended message with calmness;
- Being patient with the speaker to the end no matter the subject matter or his/her interjections; and
- Avoiding bias so that one can reason objectively and have impartial answers or responses.

Questioning skills are important too. The question should be

- Simple and straight to the point;
- In clear language and at the level of the person being asked;
- Capable of producing a clear answer and not double barreled or ambiguous;
- Asked in the tone that befits the situation; and
- Evenly distributed in the class to attract everybody's attention.

The learners should be encouraged to ask questions and every of their questions should be responded to regardless of how it is asked or whether it is assumed to be out of point. In fact, interactive sessions in teaching and learning have been found to be very effective and modern.



Public Relations Activities

There is common dictum that if you done say that 'I am' nobody will say that 'you are'. From the beginning, a student of business education should be taught to agree that he/she is in the best course. They should be taught to do all that is in their powers to sell the course to others especially the students whose 'lower mind' will always be opting for big sciences. All business education public should be attracted to beef up public image of the course. SSS curriculum talks more on doing and self reliance and therefore, efforts should be made to make the subjects attractive through excursions to industries and other notable places of business, having properly equipped business laboratory, organizing career conventions with parents and guardians in attendance, organizing business open days to show case some business ventures in collaboration with other departments in selling their products and inviting the public, dealing with criticisms and attacks on business subjects, newspaper and journal releases covering the department states Ikegwani and Ibeneme (2010). These are all in effort to make business courses attractive to the youths who will in turn seek for admissions into the department at tertiary level and become instructors some day.

Entrepreneurship Education

This is the talk of the day. It is no longer emphasized that one should graduate and seek for a well-paid job but for one to set up one's venture in order to be self reliant, self sustaining and employer of labour. Therefore, teacher of teachers should be made to have entrepreneurship spirit so that every topic and opportunity will see him/her thinking of how to convert it to a realistic and profitable adventure. Entrepreneurship Education can be seen as an educational pursuit that facilitates proper self-dependence by students and the society at large. (Ekwevugbe, 2015). The author continued by stating that this type of education is capable of transforming citizens to self-reliant individuals capable of contributing to the general economic development of the nation. The spirit of 'Yes I Can' should be inculcated in learners and also 'Do Much with Little' brings out the best of entrepreneurial minds.

Entrepreneurship moves with innovation. The maxim should be 'To Lead for others to follow'. Innovators are men and women of action. They are very courageous, alert and possess the ability to explore and create opportunities in every situation. They don't believe in failure as they turn failures to opportunities for profitable improvements. So, the attributes of entrepreneurs and innovators such as alertness, vision and mission developers, prudence, perseverance, tolerance, fall and rise etc. should find themselves all through the curriculum of business educators in their learning and in their life pursuit.

Concept of Ethics

Ethics refer to values, or rules of conduct held by a group or individuals within a family, work environment, institution, profession, community, society or nation states Eze and Njuru (2006). It is important to note that any setting without basic rules for fair practices or moral consciousness is bound to collapse someday. With all that have been discussed on running SSS curriculum in business subjects, ethical standards will make its implementation very effective. The business educators should be up and doing by requesting for adequate funding which provides for all other needed resources and sincerely put all the resources to use. It is important that features of ethical standards such as truthfulness, transparency, accountability, due process, prudence, self control, punctuality, regularity, honesty, fair play etc. be seen in practice in the teaching and learning of business education for a lasting achievement of the objectives of senior secondary business education. Shaibu, Mbaegbu & Ugoahukwu (2016) gave some ethical factors that should guide a teacher on what is expected of him/her in the profession which includes among many others



- Be dedicated to their profession
- Act as role model to learners
- Be punctual to both school and classes
- Have the interest of the learners and the job
- Be a good judge in evaluating learners
- Have a good knowledge of the subject matter
- Be industrious and have good initiative
- Be a good manager of classroom to promote learning
- Upgrade themselves through attendance of seminars, conferences, workshops as well as research writing and academic publication.

Included in the issue of ethical disposition is the manner of assessing business education students in schools. There should be zero tolerance for examination malpractice for objectivity to be observed. This will help to know if desired competencies have been acquired by learners who will in turn handle SSS classes. It is better for students to repeat or stay longer in school to get what is standard than to cheat all the way and rush out as 'educated illiterates'.

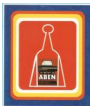
Problems in Business Teacher Education

There is setting that has no setbacks due to problems that are encountered. There are lacks and gaps that sometimes hinder adequate preparation of teachers in handling issues. They include

- Shortage of funds to cater for all other resources
- Apathy by stakeholders where every aspect of our learning are going scientific
- Lack of appropriate equipment to run the programs
- Incessant industrial actions by various pressure groups leading to insufficient handling of semester courses and proper assessments
- Restive disposition of present day students
- Cultism and other vices that impede smooth running of institutions with attendant threats to lives and property
- Lack of involvement of lecturers and other stakeholders during curriculum reviews and no preparation of implementers with adequate information and equipment to handle merging issues in the curriculum
- Lack of enough motivational incentives to educators for a dedicated service.

Conclusion

Curriculum reviews are good because change is continuous and must be followed to meet with emerging challenges. The new SSS business subject curriculum is a sound innovation n. if the teachers are given adequate trainings and motivated enough, they can willingly help to explore opportunities in their various fields. This is important now that self reliance and entrepreneurship is being advocated for. Well prepared and encouraged teachers will be ever ready to work in building a system for achievement of national aspirations for our youths through business education.



Recommendations

Institutions for business teacher education should review their curriculum in line with national aspirations to take care of emerging issues in secondary schools.

All relevant organs of the government should embark on serious training and retraining of business teachers for appreciating and implementing the curriculum.

Needed infrastructures should be provided by the government and other stakeholders to help in this regard.

Monitoring, supervision and inspections should be very effective so as engender quality assurance which is purely evidence-based.

Selected teaching personnel should be used to survey proposed issues to be carried to curriculum drafting committee before actual provisions are made for easy acceptance and implementation.

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