



ORGANIZING AND MANAGING BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA FOR QUALITY BUSINESS EDUCATION DELIVERY

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Abstract

The business world is changing rapidly. Business education requires teachers that can easily adapt to new curriculum designs and pedagogies that meet the demands of the current business world. There is therefore the need to organize and manage business teacher education and training programs such that they can produce the right caliber of business teachers who can deliver quality business education to students. This paper is on organizing and managing business teacher education and training programs in higher educational institutions in Nigeria, and discussed the concept of management in education context briefly, business teacher education and training (BTET), higher educational institutions, quality business education, and also examined the issues in organizing and managing business teacher education and training programs in Nigeria. Recommendations were advanced towards improving the management of business teacher education and training programs in higher educational institutions in Nigeria for effective quality business education delivery. These include properly addressing funding challenges; provision and regular maintenance of adequate and functional modern facilities and equipment; enhancing personnel training and development and staff welfare; continually reviewing the BTET curriculum to reflect current global demands and standards and cater for technology and innovations in the business world; organizing public enlightenment campaigns to sensitize, orientate and educate the public about BTET and its values to society; provision of uninterrupted power supply; and that, heads of business teacher education programs in higher educational institutions in Nigeria should live up to their roles and responsibilities as educational leaders of their departments.

Keywords: *Managing, business teacher education and training, higher educational institution, quality business education, Nigeria*

Introduction

A lot of changes are taking place within our respective organizations today. These changes are coming about as a result of the growing population, advances in technology, and increase of organizational specializations. In order to keep pace with the changes in the business world, there is constant pressure on higher educational institutions to produce business graduates that are capable of keeping in touch with the latest technologies in the business world and the demands of globalization. This is the responsibility of business teachers. Hence, great demands have been placed on education to produce specialists in order to keep pace with the changes and demands of business and industry. Lambrecht (2016, p.19) submitted that



A person planning to teach business subjects in the 21st century faces a wide array of possibilities regarding the students, subject areas, school levels, and sites at which business subjects are taught. The challenge of business teacher education is to provide viable paths for professional development and growth in settings that often require diverse technical skills and teaching competencies.

There is therefore the need for functional organization and management of business teacher education and training (BTET) programs in higher institutions of learning to be able to cope with these responsibilities. Effective organization and management of academic programs generally in higher educational institutions is important since it is the quality of the programs that shape the quality of the output they produce.

Concept of Management

To manage is to strive to achieve success despite difficulties. Managing therefore implies a continuous effort at achieving success in given circumstances. It refers to the process of management. Management is a multidimensional concept and thus applicable to different sectors or areas. In this paper, management is considered in the perspective of educational management. According to Chidobi and Okenwa (2015), educational management is the theory and practice of the organization and administration of existing educational establishments and systems. Akinwumi and Jayeoba (2014) considered it as the process by which principles, methods and practices of management are applied in educational institutions to establish, maintain and develop such institutions in line with the goals of the institutions. Further, Okwori and Ede (2012) submitted that management functions, principles and techniques are used to rationally organize the school system and control the school resources and operations in order to optimally achieve the school goals under different situations. It involves all the activities undertaken to achieve the goals and objectives of a school.

Managing business teacher education and training, BTET, (otherwise known as business education) program entails guiding and controlling the program operations or activities to ensure that the process of instruction is not disrupted for the objectives to be achieved. This is becoming very necessary due to the increasing need for investment of more resources in business teacher education and training for the production of better business teachers. Modern management techniques need to be applied in order to help solve the challenges of business teacher education and training programs. The process of management (McNamara, 2009) should involve planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling which were described by Henri Fayol as “the five elements of management”.

Business Teacher Education and Training (BTET)

Business teacher education and training (BTET) is one of the areas of education that is concerned with development of skills, knowledge and attitudes in would-be teachers, and all other programs specifically designed to help teachers of business already on the job to continuously update their knowledge, skills and attitude in order to meet up with the continuing changes in methods, course content and resources for teaching of business. It includes deliberately planned interventions aimed at enhancing business teacher job performance. It strives to impart in learners business skills, knowledge, attitudes and competencies necessary for teaching and molding the youth into useful citizens that could contribute positively to societal development. It is otherwise known as business education. Business education is a sub-set of the general education program which currently falls within the spectrum of vocational and technical education. According to Jimoh-Kadirri and Bupo



(2011), business education is concerned with the transfer of pedagogical and business competencies necessary for teaching business attitudes, concepts, skills and knowledge. Aliyu (in Akinlabi, 2017) submitted that the objectives of business education include to develop a mature understanding of general nature of business; provide the needed background for teaching business subjects; provide training for specialized phases of business activity; and to lay a cultural and ethical foundation for the development of the foregoing objectives. Umoru (2015) explained that the intention of business education is to inculcate into the student the understanding, values, knowledge, business skills and technical skills required in the world of work and for teaching other students. For the goals and objectives of business education to be realized, there is the need to ensure quality and standards in the business teacher education and training program.

Higher Educational Institutions

Higher educational institutions (HEIs), according to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) are the educational institutions that provide post-secondary education. They are universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics, and those institutions offering correspondence courses. HEIs offer a diverse range of programs in specialized fields, and training in special educational needs. In Nigeria, the HEIs concerned with Business Teacher Education and Training include universities, colleges of education, and polytechnics.

Quality Business Education

The issue of quality education generally has attracted a lot of attention among educational stakeholders. Quality education has to do with meeting the standards and goals of an educational system in the most efficient manner. The concept has been addressed differently by different scholars. For example, according to Eze (2016), quality education refers to appropriateness, value or worth associated with educational service provision. The Federal Government of Nigeria, FGN, (2010) submits that quality education is what the school does well; and what the school should do to improve further; taking into account three broad areas namely outcomes of learners, the quality of provision and the impact of leadership and management. Joy and Agala (2019) considered quality in education as a measure of how good or bad the products of higher institutions are in terms of academic performance and meeting globally established standards. Quality education may be seen as education that meets the minimum standards set for any educational system. According to Krcal, Glass and Tremblay (2014, p. 20), in the context of higher education,

Harvey and Green developed a concept for quality and identified five aspects to grasp “quality” in higher education: *exceptional*, when quality means a level of excellence that cannot be attained by most; *transformative*, when quality is linked with empowering and enhancing student ability to control their learning process; *value for money*, when quality is linked with efficiency and effectiveness of the educative process achieved at the lowest possible cost; *fitness for purpose*, when quality describes the extent to which the institution is able to fulfil its mission; *perfection*, when quality is closely linked to the process and aiming at zero-defect.

In light of the foregoing, quality business education may be considered as the business education program that meets the objectives of business education and the basic minimum standards set by policy makers and program planners. Quality business education implies the relevance and appropriateness of the business education program to the needs of the individuals and the community for which it is provided. To ensure quality business education



delivery therefore requires that the right quantity and quality of everything that has to do with the teaching-learning process is put in place. Quality business education delivery can only be achieved if there is quality teaching through quality business teacher preparation programs.

Issues in Organizing and Managing Business Teacher Education and Training Programs in Higher Educational Institutions in Nigeria

Although business teacher education and training has been identified as important in preparing teachers to help develop skills and prepare youths for gainful employment in the world of work, there are issues which constrain its proper organization and management, and consequent failure in achieving the desired results. Some scholars including Giwa (2020), Kwaghbo and Tiough (2018), and Lambrecht (2016) have identified some of the major issues to include funding, facilities and equipment, personnel and staff development, curriculum, perception of business education by society, and power supply.



Funding: Perhaps, funding remains the foremost issue in managing the Nigerian educational system. The issue of poor funding of educational programs in Nigeria has been reported by many scholars including Okoye and Arimonu (2016); Chidobi and Okenwa (2015); Dokubo and Dokubo (2013) and Oseni (2012). Similarly, Scheafer and Moss (2008) also averred that universities, polytechnics and colleges of education have used funds allocated to them to establish technical and vocational education (TVE) programs (business teacher education and training inclusive), instead, to establish other courses; while funds for research in TVE are controlled by some chief executives and channeled to other areas. Such acts add to the already many financial challenges of business teacher education and training. Funds are required to procure the necessary resources for quality education provision.

Facilities and Equipment: Closely related to funding is the issue of facilities and equipment provision and maintenance. BTET is an education program that cannot thrive without adequate and functional facilities and equipment. These are necessarily required for development of practical skills in the learners. Dokubo and Dokubo (2013) observed that most vocational education departments in Nigerian universities do not have usable laboratories, workshops and adequate equipment; where there are a few equipment, most of them are obsolete or grounded.

Human Resources Development: There is acute shortage of qualified staff to efficiently and effectively manage the BTET programs in the Nigerian higher institutions. Ojimba (2012) observed that most of the staff that are qualified to teach are being drained away from universities due to the unattractive nature of the teaching profession in Nigeria. Dokubo and Dokubo (2013) also lamented what they referred to as brain-drain, a situation where business education professionals leave teaching for more lucrative jobs outside the teaching profession. It should be noted that quality business education delivery can only be assured where there are qualified staff to impart quality business knowledge and skills. Staff development is also not given due attention as a result of the high cost of staff training coupled with poor funding. Nino (2010) also reported shortage of academic staff with PhD in business education departments.

Curriculum: Curriculum issues such as using foreign models, paucity of indigenous teaching-learning materials and texts, theoretically loaded content against practical, and teaching methods have been identified by scholars including Ogbonda and Wobi (2016), Okoye and Arimonu (2016), and Uwaifo (2010), Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015) discussed inadequacies in the curriculum content to include non-inclusion of some relevant courses in the BTET programs, non-relevance of course content, poor implementation of the curriculum, and inadequate time allocation to BTET courses. These issues could lead to production of half-baked business teachers – without adequate knowledge and skills for effective performance and delivery of quality business education.

Poor Societal Perception of BTET: Societal outlook on Teacher Education in Nigeria over the years has not been encouraging. Cheung (2016) and Dokubo (2013) observe that BTET programs are regarded by some people in negative perspectives – as educational programs for the low level intelligent, less brilliant, less privileged, second-class citizens, never do well, or drop-outs. Cheung (2016, p. 7) cited Gaskell as reporting that business education has been described by students and teachers as “a non-academic elective”. The phrase “non-academic” makes people feel it is meant for dullards. This also contributes to lack of students’ interest in BTET, which could lead to poor enrolment into the BTET profession.



The historical background of Business Education in Nigeria could also have an influence on this negative perception. Historically, business education developed from African Traditional Education of apprenticeship, an informal education system. Its initial growth was also in private business (commercial) institutes (Ikpe & Undie, 2014). Nino (2010) also reported that since the inception of business education in the early part of the 20th century, the discipline was shaped by forces of the market place, and as such, was not created based on research and scientific methods, but it evolved based on industry procedures and practices that were later compiled into business theory and textbooks. Because of this background, business education was never accorded its rightful placement in Nigeria by the colonial masters (Nwosu & Micah, 2017); and this has accounted for the poor perception of business education even up to the present.

Inadequate Power Supply: The issue of poor power supply in Nigeria affects all the production sectors of the economy, including education. Power supply is required to power technical equipment in workshops/laboratories for practical work. Students need to practice on machines and equipment in order to perfect. Hands-on learning has been identified as one of the ways to effectively impart knowledge in learners in technical and vocational education (Dalton, 2016). Absence of power supply limits hands-on learning in BTET.

Other issues include:

Globalization and diversity: Globalization and diversity is intensifying the need to bolster international business education which requires expansion in the curriculum of BTET to cater for the true scale of globalization strategy. Curriculum expansion could further compound the already wide area of study and content in business education.

Technological advances and standardization of course offerings: Technological advances require additional resources to introduce and replicate technology to help train teachers who will teach the new technologies to students. Nino (2010) submitted that this sometimes forces BTE departments to introduce more technological courses in the business teacher education curriculum that are considered descriptive rather than analytical. Also, with the growing demand for business education, institutions try to vary their course offerings to students, to make them more attractive in order to woo students. Programs such as part-time, distance learning, evening and online studies spring up with different standards of business teacher education curriculum taught, which in many cases affect quality business education delivery. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation activities could also lead to lack or inadequate control measures to check course offerings against quality assurance standards.

Conclusion

Organizing and managing business teacher education and training (BTET) programs such that the right caliber of business teachers who can impart the desired knowledge and skills to students is necessary. Business teacher education and training programs are desirable because of the contributions business education makes to national development. The dynamic business environment the world over demands that business students and practitioners in Nigeria be well trained in order to get employed, keep abreast with the new developments in the business world, and also compete globally. This requires adequate preparation of business teachers which is the core mandate of business teacher education programs in higher educational institutions. The challenges of business teacher education and training need to be properly addressed in order to enable the BTET programs achieve their mandate.



Recommendations

The following recommendations are advanced for improving the organization and management of business teacher education and training (BTET) programs in higher educational institutions in Nigeria for quality business education delivery:

1. Funding challenges should be properly addressed by government and school proprietors through adequate budgetary provisions and allocations to BTET programs in higher educational institutions.
2. Provision and regular maintenance of adequate and functional modern facilities and equipment for BTET programs should be enhanced by managers of higher educational institutions.
3. Personnel training and development, and staff welfare should be enhanced by the higher educational institutions in order to attract and retain more qualified people to the teaching profession.
4. The curriculum of BTET should be continually reviewed by business educators to reflect current global demands and standards, and cater for technology and innovations in the business world; and also new methods of teaching.
5. Government should organize public enlightenment campaigns to sensitize, orient and educate the public about BTET and its values to society. Business education should be viewed as an all-embracing program for those who possess both head and hand skills.
6. The issue of power supply for business teacher education programs in higher institutions in the country should be given due attention. Alternative sources of generating energy should be explored, researched and adopted as an option to public power supply.
7. Heads of business teacher education programs in higher educational institutions in Nigeria should live up to their roles and responsibilities as educational leaders in their departments.

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