



## **Strategies for Improving Teachers Quality in Business Education Programme in Nigerian Colleges of Education**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined strategies for improving teachers' quality in Business Education programmes in Nigerian colleges of education. In the light of the foregoing, the study looked at the concepts of business education and business educator, qualities of business educator, problems hampering teachers' quality and effects of poor teacher quality on graduates of business education. The literature revealed that there are two dimensional problems affecting teachers' quality. These problems are institutional and governmental. The institutional problems include lack of highly qualified professional business educators, lack of link between industry and academia, lack of facilities for good quality in business education research, lack of corporate leadership, no standardised performance evaluation system of teachers' promotion, and lecturers' approach to students of tertiary institutions. The problems from government side include inadequate government investment, politicised curricula in educational sector, corruption in educational sector, inadequate classroom for learning and examinations. In order to enhance teachers' performance in business education programme in the country there should be establishment of partnership with business sector. The colleges of education in Nigeria should try to establish partnership with business sector in such way that they should provide a pool of well trained and talented personnel to business sector and in return ask for investment in the colleges. In such way only business education sector will be provided a source of fund but also strong linkages will be formed between business sector and academia.

**Keywords:** Strategies, Teachers Quality, Business Education, Programme, Nigerian Colleges & Education.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Business education is the foundation upon which students build an awareness of business and an understanding of business concept. Business is the process by which individuals, organisations and societies interact to improve their economic wellbeing through the exchange of products, services and ideas. The ability to make individual decisions based on choice is essential to this process.

Business education according to Azuka, Nwosu, Kanu & Agomuo (2006), is a process of instructing a person about what happens during business transactions in offices, banks, markets and anywhere money changes hands. It is also a type of education that helps someone to learn facts, acquire skills, develop abilities, solve problems and be able to have business like attitudes useful for success in business situations.

The concept of business education had evolved over time. This is evident in the different definitions offered by various authors and researchers in trying to make clear the meaning of business education. Agwumezie (1999) defined business education as a course that prepares students for entry in advancement of jobs within business, and prepares them to handle their own business affairs to function

intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy. Similarly, Amaewhule (2000) opined that business education encompasses knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed by all citizens in order to effectively manage their personal businesses and economic system. Atakpa (2011) remarked that business education is an embodiment of vocational knowledge and skills needed for employment and advancement in a broad range of business careers. In other words, business education means education for business or training skills which is required in business offices, clerical occupation and business policy analysis. Okoye (2013) extensively defined business education as an education programme that orientate students in art of business making (marketing) typing and shorthand skills, (currently competing with computer appreciation and operation) service delivery, secretarial jobs, stenography, account clerking, office information system and management. He elaborated that business education prepared students in two interrelated areas;

1. Education for business
  2. Education about business
- Okoye (2013) believed that education for business provides professional training in:
1. Method of business making
  2. Techniques in business making
  3. Tactics to attract clients and make profit.
  4. Scheming ideas for profitable venture
  5. Appropriate attitude and behaviour of a good businessman and education about business prepares individuals to know:
    - How and when to buy goods for profitable outcome (in-season and out- season)
    - Where to obtain goods for better sales.
    - Where to situate business for continued existence.
    - Where to make best sales for (increased turnover rate)
    - Where to make sales for increase profit
    - Tricks in season forecast for good business making.
    - Self-conviction indicator about risk making.

Amoor (2010) noted that business education is an integral part of vocational and technical education. It is a form of vocational education that is directed towards developing the learner to become productive in teaching, paid employment and self-employment. Amoor (2010) in Tema (2007) postulated that this type of vocational education prepares learners for gainful employment and sustainable livelihood. He went further to say that business education plays signification role in the economic development by providing knowledge and skills to the learners thereby enabling them to adequately impart knowledge into others and handle sophisticated office technologies and information systems.

The goal of business education is primarily to produce competent, skillful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work. Amoor (2008) noted with dismay that the calibre of students that graduate from business education especially office technology and management (OTM) option, have the problem of inadequate exposure to modern office technologies, information system and the rudiments of office administration. He further stressed that lack of adequate teachers is responsible for this unfortunate trend.

### **Concept of Business Educator Quality**

The issue of knowing and classifying who is business educator has been a controversial one. The complexities of this issue emanates from the versatile nature of the course business. The effort to have enough hands in teaching of the various areas of the course results in bringing people from other discipline into the business area. A business educator must have broad knowledge in all the major components of business. Having knowledge in a single aspect of the course does not generally qualify one to be a business educator in other words, a business educator must be knowledgeable in general education, general business subjects, secretarial components, marketing and distribution education subjects, professional education, accounting, teaching and industrial work experience. The business educator is worried and concerned about making business education recognised and accepted, imbibe changes where necessary, giving quality business education, identify problems and offer solution to them.

The business educator is that teacher who helps students develop to their maximum capacity especially those students who desire to work in the business world through developing those basic skills and knowledge which are required for initial employment. Some guiding questions towards identifying that is a business educator includes, who actually am I? What do I have value for? What am I to be doing and why? (Anioke, 2015).

Osuala (2004) defined business educator is a person who is knowledge in the six components of the course that make up a business education programmes as identified by Anioke (2005) above. According to Osuala (2004) business educator is a professional teacher of business who is constantly aware of the state of the art in business education. In other words, a business educator is any person who:

1. Plays the initial role in making business education viable and visible in the community.
2. Plays the role of agent of change in business education.
3. Delivers high quality business education programmes that are equal to any academic offering in the school system.
4. is able to identify problems facing learning and teaching in business education subjects and he is able to speculate solution to these problems.

Amoor (2010) in Idialu (2007) described quality as standard of something as compared to other things. In other words, the degree of goodness or excellence. Therefore, business education quality means the ability of the teacher to raise students' performance on tests as well as skills and also work well with other educators and school management staff for the purpose of raising the performance of the students. From the foregoing, it is pertinent to deduce that business educator quality entails effective and excellent teaching that improves students learning and satisfaction. It also ensures that learners possess adequate knowledge, skills and competences that are appropriate for their areas of responsibility that would meet the needs of labour workforce.

A quality teacher in other words means teacher mastering the subjects he teaches and how to teach it to the students, understand how students learn and what to do when they are having difficulty; be able to use effective teaching methods for those who are learning easily as well as those who have special needs. Teacher quality is an important determinant of students' outcomes.

In a nut shell, the following are the qualities of business educator:

1. The business teacher must be a master of the subject he teaches.
2. He must be able to cause learning or inspire people to learn.
3. He must assume the role of a leader and must develop leadership qualities in his students.
4. He must be a person of integrity, an adviser, a guardian as well as custodian of discipline.
5. He must be able to stimulate students to undertake various activities, which result in learning.
6. He must show good examples and maintain good and healthy relationships with business students.
7. He must be familiar with the philosophy of the school he teaches for examples, the curriculum and population of students' requirements for a business and certification.
8. He must be familiar with the community in which he teaches. He should be part of the community and should understand the relationship between the community and the school.

### **Problems affecting Business Educators Quality in Business Education Programmes**

Despite the growth of Business education programmes in Nigerian colleges of education, still suffer different institutional as well as governmental problems. Thus majority of them cannot follow the international standards of business education (Ali & Wajidi, 2008). The institutional problems of business education includes lack of highly qualified professional teachers specialised in different business areas, lack of link between industry and academia, lack of facilities for good quality in business education research, lack of corporate leadership, no standardised performance evaluation system of teacher's promotion, lecturers approach to students in tertiary institutions. The problems from government side include inadequate government investment, politicised curricula in educational sector, corruption in educational sector, inadequate classroom for learning and examinations. The brief description of problems both from institutional as well as government side is given below.

**Lack of highly qualified professional teachers:** Through the government of Nigeria has fixed considerable budget for tertiary institutions throughout the country but still the business education programme faces the shortage of highly qualified professional business educators have not only strong academic background in business and commerce but also have experience in corporate sector, so that they can give the real image of business education to students.

**Lack of linkage between industry and academia:** In Nigeria there is lack of linkage between industry and academia and this is really a serious problem hampering the performance of business education that the students should also learn practical techniques and should build skills related to commerce, trade and industry for which they have to practically visit the business sites and locations. If there are fewer linkages between industry and academia then they will not be able to get practical exposure.

**Lack of facilities for good quality research and presence of work load among business educators:** In order to overcome the gap between theory and practice, there is a need of quality research. But in the business education in Nigeria especially in the private sector there are no facilities for doing good quality research; there are no properly maintained libraries, with non updated data bases and no extra remunerations for researchers. Furthermore, teachers are given too many courses in each semester, which perceived by teaching as extra burden which ultimately hampers their teaching effectiveness (Anwar, Ishak & Kamran, 2011).

**Lack standardised performance evaluation system:** The lack of standardised evaluation system has demoralising effects on the academic staff. The public sector colleges of education follow the old annual confidential report technique, in which the performance of teachers is evaluated on annual basis by their boss and this evaluated is one sided in such way that no feedback is given to the teachers. Often this evaluation is used for promotion of teachers and is not used for teaching improvement and quality enhancement purposes (Udeme, 2012)

**Lack of lecturers' approach to students in colleges of education:** Another amazing problems leading to the production of poor quality graduates in Nigeria is the lecturers approach to students. It is unfortunate that the lecturers who suppose to render a helping hands in the production of good quality graduate now constituting nuisance in national educational system because they are only interested in money and fail to commit to memory that their activities today determined the progress and downfall of national development in future. No interest for lecture, they see their lecturing duty as the second chance duty, the lecturers approach to inculcate knowledge, skill in students had failed instead they contrive more hazard in national educational system, they enhance the students illegalities. A lecturer in one of the colleges of education announced to students secretly after exams. Any student who needs 'A' will pay ₦4000, is not a good impression. With this, some students will relax after all I will pay ₦4000 and get at least 'A' and the act is only jeopardising the school system but also the nation because from there the students learn bribing and corruption which is now common in the country.. Some lecturers demand for canal knowledge of a girl in order to award her pass mark, with this, compel that student to commit fornication which can stimulate the student to develop sexual intensity. That means Nigerian tertiary institutions are not only producing poor quality graduates but also burglars and prostitutes (Udeme, 2012).

**Lack of government investment:** The government of Nigeria has increased budget for education sector of the country, but still it is considered that the government investment in education sector is low. Furthermore, over 95% of educational budget is spent on salaries and office expenses and lesser amount is left for research and development.

Nevertheless, it is pertinent to recognise that school conveniences can never be overlook when debating on poor quality graduates produced in Nigerian tertiary institution on mentioning school conveniences, we remember the responsible body for school conveniences which is the government of the country, the response of government to educational sector compared to other sectors is generally very unfortunate. Education which is the foundation for every development suppose to be given a higher attention before other sectors, because without appropriate approved educational standard those sectors will not stand , just as it has become problem today and channel to part time programme is wrong. Any house without a solid foundation cannot stand the test of time. That is what is happening in our country, the government

of our nation devoted low interest on education which gives birth to other sectors of the economy. The impression government gives to academic staff are very meagre. A BSc, Masters or PhD holder in educational sectors cannot be compared to their educational qualification counterpart in other sectors, with this, how will the educational instructors devote their full interest for their duty/? The impression compels them to compromise their duty even when they are eligible to render effective service to students and nations at large (Obiete, Nwazor, & Vin Mbah, 2015).

Inadequate classroom for learning and examinations constitutes downfall in our education, some students are not comfortable when learning in school. Congestion in the hall during examination gives exam malpractice and with exam malpractice, quack students get access to graduate from school, without that, poor quality graduates will not be found in the labour market because they cannot leave the school until they qualified.

### **Effects of Poor Teachers' Quality on Graduates of Business Education**

According to Amoor (2010) poor teacher quality causes serious damages on the graduates of business in Nigeria colleges of Education in the following ways.

- It hinders the graduate from developing intellectual skills and knowledge that will equip them to contribute significantly to the society and nation at large.
- It denies the graduates the ability to satisfy the requirements of the labour market. This causes unemployment and subsequently the graduates are engulfed in poverty.

### **CONCLUSION**

Business education is an important type of professional education which aims at preparing managers, competent lecturers and executives for the future. The Omega events of 20<sup>th</sup> century have caused an immense proliferation of business education throughout the world. The roots of modern business education in Nigeria can be traced back to the education system introduced by British a century ago. It has passed through different stages of growth in such way that in the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century it has experienced big changes.

The present paper concludes that the existing business education system has the abilities and potentials for improvements, yet the system is reluctant to implement changes because of prevalent lethargic behaviour in the market place. There are other impediments like absence of proper reward and appraisal system for school, lack of guidance for school and students, less facilities for research, ever changing educational policies, fewer linkages between industry and academia, redtapism, corruption, school shortage, etc which doesn't allow the smooth and steady functioning of the business education system in Nigeria. The business education programme in Nigeria can be improved through taking effective planned initiatives like making a strong link between colleges and allowing nationwide accessibility of education through introduction of diverse programme, training teachers according to existing educational needs, allocating proper budget to research and devising proper mechanism for teachers evaluation and compensation. This should be done by keeping in mind not only the local requirement of business education as well as also keep in mind the international standard about the business education.

There is a need of integrated system in which government work together with the educational institution by giving chance to the people, so that in broad manner all of the problems of the business education programmes are identified and then multi fact development strategies are applied not only to overcome the problems but also to further improve the system for the development of our country as whole.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to enhance teachers' performance in business education programme in the country there should be establishment of partnership with business sector. The colleges of education in Nigeria should try to establish partnership with business sector in such way that they should provide a pool of well trained and talented personnel to business sector and in return ask for investment in the colleges. In such way only business education sector will be provided a source of fund but also strong linkages will be formed between business sector and academia.

*More focus on research:* The colleges of education should focus more on research and development in order to overcome the gap between the theory and practice. Furthermore it can only provide technology and updated skills to business sector, once it is engaged in research and development activities for an improved pedagogy.

*Introduction of modern techniques of evaluation:* The colleges of education should try to formulate and adopt new techniques of performance evaluation of the academic staff. These techniques should include both qualitative as well as quantitative techniques. Furthermore both the students as well as colleagues along with head of department should be included in this process of evaluation and in the end feedback should be given to the academic staff members for improvement of their performance and overcoming of weaknesses.

Colleges of education in the country should try to train their teachers on regular basis by imparting them latest knowledge about business management. Furthermore, the teachers should be given special training in teaching and research, so that their quality of instruction is improved and they can produce good quality research work, which can benefit not only their students but also the people outside the world of academia.

Only qualified and competent business educators should be recruited into the business education programmes to teach in order to avoid half-baked graduates in our country. One-sided lecturer should not be employed as business education is not meant for all comers or interlopers.

Since there has been a downward trend in the quality of business education graduates, it suffices to say that the quality of teaching these graduates received while in school is below standard and has reflected in their inability to function effectively in corporate environment. In the light of the above, and the need to produce quality business education graduates authors and researchers through training and retraining of business education lecturers on modern corporate governance practices like transparency and accountability, the legal and regulatory environment, appropriate risk management measures, information flows and the responsibility of senior management and the board of directors. These lecturers can be trained through organisation of seminars, conferences and professional courses in corporate governance. Administrator of business education programme should integrate the study of business ethics courses in the business curriculum.

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