



Curbing The Challenges Facing Business Teacher Education In Tertiary Institutions

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ABSTRACT

This paper focused on the challenges facing business teacher education in tertiary institutions and ways of curbing them. The paper highlighted the concept of business education and stated that business education has two areas which are vocational business education and business teacher education. The paper explained that vocational business teacher education prepares individuals in business courses such as accounting, office technology and management, marketing, banking among others. Business teacher education on the other hand equips individuals with competencies for effective career as business teachers at all levels of education. Lack of modern training facilities, inadequacy of human resources, ineffective teaching practice, epileptic power supply, deficiencies in curriculum among others were identified as some of the challenges facing business teacher education programs in tertiary institutions. Alternative source of funding, provision of modern facilities, improved supply of human resources, quality assurance in teaching practice, improved power supply to mention but a few were explained as some of the ways of curbing the challenges facing business teacher education programs. The paper recommended among others that Business teacher education managers should reach out to philanthropists in their societies for supports, healthy school-community relationship should be established by managers of business teacher education and Universities should allocate full semester for teaching practice without adding any other academic program.

Keywords: Challenges, Business Teacher Education, Tertiary Institutions, Nigeria, Vocational Education, Power

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1. INTRODUCTION

Imperative of business teacher education is gaining momentum as the day goes. Increasing need for preparation of students in vocational oriented programs and societal acceptance of business subjects seems to be on the rise. In this regard, business teacher education is seen to have formidable influence towards production of needed human resources that provides solutions to challenges related to teaching business subjects at all levels of Nigeria education system.



Despite the enormous relevance of business teacher education, the effective delivery of its programs in tertiary institutions needs to be considered. This is because failure to address these challenges will negate effectiveness of teaching and learning business teacher education thereby undermining its undisputable roles in human capital development.

Business teacher education is an aspect of business education programs offered in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Business education programs are generally divided into business teacher education and vocational business education (Ibrahim, 2011). Vocational business education as explained by Utoware and Kren-Ikidi and Apreala (2014) focuses on preparation of individuals for career in business. Individuals in this aspect of business education program are prepared with relevant skills for effective participation in business environment as producers and distributors of business products. In vocational business education, individuals are trained in specific skills such as accounting, banking, office technology and management, insurance, marketing, business management among other. All these skill areas are aimed at producing individuals for inclusive contribution to societal development through offering business products. On the other hand, business teacher education aims at preparing individuals for career in teaching profession.

Okifo and Ayo (2015) defined business teacher education as an aspect of business education with the responsibility of producing individuals that teach business subjects in schools. These individuals provides instructions that impart business and entrepreneurial knowledge on learners at various educational levels. Business teachers are adjudged to be equipped with skills, knowledge, attitudes required for effective teaching of business subjects at primary, secondary and tertiary school systems. At these levels of education, employers and school managers expect graduates of business teacher education to possess competencies for practical teaching of business subjects. These graduates ought to be outstanding in teaching business subjects by having good knowledge of the subject matter, have good understanding of business developments as well as the ability to employ varying teaching methods that suits their topics (Riebenbauer and stock, 2012). With all these, business teachers can effectively plan, prepare, deliver and evaluate instructions as representatives of their various institutions of training.

In Nigeria, institutions offering business teacher education programs prepare teachers that possess competencies to teach business subjects and courses at all levels of education. Business teacher education is mainly offered in colleges of education and universities in Nigeria. These training institutions are charged with responsibility of preparing teachers and awarding different certificates in business education. In colleges of education, graduates of business teacher education are awarded national certificate in education (NCE) while those from universities are awarded bachelor of science in education (BSc, ed). These certificates empowers the recipient to teach in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions as the case may be. Those with NCE are specifically prepared with skills to teach various subjects in primary and secondary schools (National Commission for Colleges of Education, 2012). While those with Bsc, ed can teach at all levels of education including Colleges of Education and Universities.



However, Ekpenyong (2011) posited that graduates of business teacher education are expected to develop initiatives, creativity and ability to manipulate resources for effective teaching and learning of business subjects. Chukwurah (2011) remarked that despite the certificate possessed by a business teacher, he/she should be able to understand subject matter and effectively employ necessary pedagogies that leads to effective teaching and learning of business subjects. This implies that a good business teacher should be able to effectively utilize different competencies and instructional methods aimed at helping learners to attain self reliance. Therefore, business teachers are expected to possess competencies that facilitate effective teaching and learning of business subjects as well as helping learners to achieve their life goals.

2. COMPETENCIES IN BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION

Though business teacher education tends to equip students with all the competencies in business education, but specifically, business teachers are prepared to possess the following competencies:

1. **Professional competence:** Business teachers need to showcase high leveled competence in knowledge of their subject matter. They are expected to possess professional knowledge in their subject matter of training such as accounting, office practice, marketing, commerce to mention but a few. They should be well equipped with both practical and theoretical aspects of their professional knowledge. With this knowledge, they will be able to teach instructional content and assist learners to understand various subjects within their professions.
2. **Pedagogical competence:** Knowledge of the subject matter alone cannot lead to effective teaching and learning of business subjects. It is imperative that business teachers also possess competencies that will help them in applying different instructional strategies while teaching. Business teachers need to be able to understand different teaching methods, how to apply them and when to apply them. In this regard, business teachers need to be abreast also with how to play leadership roles and mentor the students towards accomplishing instructional objectives.
3. **Social competence:** In this competency, business teachers are expected to show good interpersonal relationship, good classroom management practices and application of good communication strategies. A Business teacher has to be skilled in handling various issues within and outside the classroom. With this, they will understand their students better, improve their relationship with them, their colleague and management as well as sustain good classroom management practices.
4. **Personal competence:** A teacher is seen as a role model by students, therefore, the teacher's personality should be considered during their training. A business teacher is expected to always appear neat, smart and intelligent. Also, he/she need to be open mindedness, easily to forgive, ability to make decisions, empathic and always showcase positive attitude to people. In the same vein, a business teacher should be creative and innovative as this will help him/her in effective utilization of instructional materials (if available) or improvise if instructional materials are not available. Schelten in Riebenbauer and stock (2012) emphasized that a teacher should always be willing to learn and adapt to new educational developments. Therefore, a business teacher need to be confident, enthusiastic, warmth, empathic and audible.



3. TEACHING PRACTICE IN BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION

Teaching practice is one of the programs in business teacher education aimed at allowing students to gain practical teaching experiences while in school. According to Reda (2018), teaching practice is the act of assigning student teachers to schools within a locality where they will be allowed to participate in planning and delivery of instructions and evaluation of students under the supervision of a teacher. In most institutions, student teachers are assigned for teaching practice at their final year. The student teachers must complete this program as one of the prerequisite for award of certificate in business education. Souza (2017) observed that assigning of students to various schools for teaching practice is usually done by faculties or departments depending on institutional practices. This program provides students with the opportunity of gaining experiences in actual teaching and learning environment and as well serve as an interface between student hood and professional teaching.

In business teacher education, student teachers are assigned to schools for teaching practice towards the end of their program. In some schools, student are usually assigned to schools for teaching practice at their third year while in other schools, students get involved in teaching practice at their final year. According to Rakesh (2013) teaching practice exposes the students to the complexities and realities of being a professional teacher. Collaboratively, business teacher education expose student teachers to challenging real experience in teaching and position them to overcome challenges in the classroom. There is no gainsaying that teaching practice at the beginning creates anxiety and apprehension in students and also create in them excitement and anticipation as it signals a road to the end of their program in school. During this period, student teachers have opportunity to interact with students in their schools of assignment, professional teachers and the entire teaching and learning environment.

Teaching practice in business teacher education begin with assigning students to schools, students teachers reporting to schools of assignment and getting involved in all the programs of the school. Student teachers under the supervision of a professional teacher prepare their lesson plans, lesson notes and lesson diaries and teach the students while being supervised. In universities, students combine teaching practice program with other semester courses. This however inhibits the effectiveness of teaching practice as the students lack the desired concentration and presence in their schools of teaching practice assignment.

In universities, teaching practice is usually a 12 weeks program divided into 6 weeks for teaching practice 1 and another 6 weeks for teaching practice 2. In colleges of education, students are fully engaged in teaching practice for one full semester without any other academic engagement. By implication, business teacher education students at NCE level are expected to be fully involved in their assignment in their various schools of teaching practice. Be that as it may, teaching practice in business teacher education prepares students for effective transition from student-hood to professional teaching.



4. CHALLENGES FACING BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION

Business teacher education is bedeviled by many challenges among which are:

1. **Lack of Modern Training Facilities:** the imperative of training facilities in business teacher education is indisputable. It was on this premise that Oyedele and Oladeji (2016), Ekoh (2016) and Adebayo in Akasi and Nwabufo (2016) recommended provision of modern training facilities in business education programs. In business teacher education as applicable to vocational business education program, the need for availability of functional modern facilities is very important. Modern training facilities such as micro teaching laboratory, projectors, computers, internet facilities, electronic boards, to mention but a few, are very important. Unfortunately, all these training facilities are not adequately available in most institutions offering business teacher education program. Unavailability or inadequacy of modern training facilities incapacitates students handling of such facilities while undergoing training.
2. **Inadequacy of Human Resources:** Human resources are critical to the achievement of business teacher education objectives. It is worrisome that the needed human resources are inadequate in most tertiary institutions offering business teacher education programs. The quantity and quality of human resources in Business teacher programs are insignificant when compared to level work expected of them. This pitiable condition makes the available human resources to be overloaded with teaching and other responsibilities. With this worrisome conditions, the available human resources may not be putting in their best as they try to meet up with enormous responsibilities.
3. **Ineffective Teaching Practices:** The essence of teaching practice in business teacher education is to create opportunity for students to acquire teaching experience in real teaching and learning environment. Worrisomely, many factors ranging from poor supervision, low concentration, absenteeism among others make teaching practice to be ineffective. In recent times, schools reject teaching practice students citing unseriousness of past students and possibility of the new ones repeating same. Business teacher training institutions on the other hand contribute to this rejection as teaching practice students also attend lectures even when they are expected to be in their assigned teaching practice schools.
4. **Epileptic Power Supply:** Power supply is one of the challenges affecting education across Nigeria. Unfortunately, tertiary institutions that are expected to use modern equipment in training their students are found handicapped because of epileptic power supply. In business teacher education, available resources are hardly used because of power outage. In most tertiary institutions, students are not privileged to use available modern training facilities as there is no source of power. Business teachers that are supposed to be equipped with competences required in handling electronic instructional materials are usually handicapped because they were not opportune to use them while in school.
5. **Deficiencies in Curriculum:** The major problem with most curricula is continuous technological changes and their implication to education. Despite this development and continuous efforts towards reviewing business teacher education curricula, the curricula is yet to meet up with the contemporary societal needs. In a society ridden with modern facilities for note taking and digital teaching, it is worrisome that business teacher education curriculum has not yet adequately addressed issues in electronic teaching and learning. This



deficiency makes it difficult for students of business teacher education to possess needed competencies on usage of emerging technologies in teaching and learning. Inability of most business teacher education programs to incorporate e-teaching and e-learning system into their programs has unfortunately affected the productivity of their students.

- 6. Admission process:** Students intake in most business teacher education seems to be for “academic never do wells”. Students rejected in other programs or those with poor academic achievement in their entry requirements are usually dumped in business teacher education. This however affects the quality of individuals produced in this program as most students admitted into business teacher education program are educational interlopers. This crop of persons become too difficult to be trained in needed competencies and after graduation, their attitudes portrays the program negatively in the society.

5. WAYS OF CURBING CHALLENGES FACING BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION

The following are some of the ways of overcoming challenges facing business teacher education in tertiary institutions:

- 1. Alternative Funding:** Smooth running of business teacher education program largely depends on amount of fund available for acquiring of resources. Unfortunately, government at all levels in Nigeria seems unconcerned in providing adequate funding to education in the country. Inadequacy of funding education in Nigeria is evident as schools lack everything except students. Therefore, efforts should be geared towards raising funds from alternative sources such as alumni associations, students associations, parents/guardians, partnership with industries to mention but a few. Over dependence on government for all financial needs of business teacher education will continually lead to inadequacy of almost all resources. Managers of business teacher education programs need to reach out for alternative sources of funds. Gambo and Fasanmi (2019) noted that parents and other stakeholders can make donations to schools willingly when approached with challenges facing training of their children.

Also, managers of business teacher education institutions can go into commercial ventures where products produced by the department could be sold for profit.

- 2. Provision of Modern Training Facilities:** Amesi and Akpomi (2014) noted that the objectives of business education program without creating enabling environment where the students could touch necessary facilities will never be comprehensively achieved. This explain why provision of modern training facilities should be prioritized in business teacher education programs. Managers of business teacher education should strive to establish healthy relationship with their host communities, institutions and entire business community. With good school-community relationship, individuals and organizations within the host communities can be of help in providing some of the facilities required for training or business teachers. Business teacher education can indentify successful entrepreneurs, business moguls and other respectable individuals and honour them. With such honour, the school can go into partnership with such persons thereby bringing them closer to the program’s needs.
- 3. Improved Supply of Human Resources:** Human resource is cardinal to effective implementation of business teacher education. Business teacher education should be positioned for efficiency through employment of qualified manpower. Mangers of business teacher education should be open to accept well trained business educators who are willing



to offer pro bono services to the department. The department can raise trust funds from where experts could be engaged on contract basis. Knowledge transfer between institutions could be achieved through healthy institutional relations. Experts from other institutions could be invited periodically to assist in preparing the students in business teacher educational program.

4. **Quality Assurance in Teaching Practice:** Teaching practice is an important aspect of business teacher education programs leading to qualification of an individual as a professional teacher. Efforts should be geared towards ensuring quality of the program. At university level, teaching practice should be separated from other courses. Within the period of teaching practice, students should not engage in any other academic programs. This will make them to concentrate in their activities within the school they were assigned. Generally, supervision of teaching practice program need to be improved. Supervisors ought to visit schools regularly without announcing their visit. School authorities where the students were assigned to, should open record of students' activities and such record should be added as part of evaluation and scoring prerequisites.
5. **Improved Power Supply:** Power supply is critical to training of business teachers. Business teacher trainees ought to be having regular access to equipment necessary for their training. Therefore alternative source of power should be put in place in business teacher education programs. Managers of business teacher education programs should provide power generating or solar energy as alternative to public source of power. When this is done, power supply in business teacher education will be improved and available resources adequately utilized.
6. **Curriculum Improvement:** Business teacher education curricula need to be in line with needs of the society. It ought to be contently reviewed to sustain its relevance to the needs and aspirations of the society. With technological advancement evident in all areas of education, business teacher education curricula need to be in tandem with the technological needs of the society and obnoxious courses should be removed and emerging courses should be added. Therefore, business teacher education curricula should be reviewed in line with contemporary needs of the society.

6. CONCLUSION

Business teacher education has been playing crucial roles in producing individuals for effective teaching and learning. Recipients of business teacher education are usually prepared to be experts in subject matter and pedagogies. To improve their pedagogical skills, the students are exposed to real life teaching as teaching practice students. However, despite the challenges facing business teacher education, improve funding, provision of modern training facilities school, community relations among other could be used in overcoming such challenges and improve quality of business teacher education in tertiary institutions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the contents of this paper, the following were recommended:

1. Business teacher education managers should reach out to philanthropists in their societies for supports.



2. Healthy school-community relationship should be established by managers of business teacher education.
3. Universities should allocate full semester for teaching practice without adding any other academic program.
4. School authorities should be encouraged to admit students with high academic records into business teacher education programs.

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