

*Review*

# Strategies for global reforms in business teacher education towards self-reliance in Nigeria

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**Nigeria as a country had advocated for the type of education that would enhance the needed self-reliance for the learners and the society. Reforming business education programme would help in achieving the much desired self-reliance in Nigeria. This paper examined the conceptual issues of Business Teacher Education such Issues are: quality of candidates for business teachers training programme, training facilities, funding, quality of lecturers and relevance of business teacher education curriculum to the needs of the society. The paper made case for strategies for global reforms that will reinvigorate business teacher education programme towards attaining self-reliance in Nigeria.**

**Key words:** Strategies, global reforms, business teacher education, curriculum, self-reliance.

## INTRODUCTION

Teacher education which concern is the production of teachers at all levels has been recognized as major concern for the nation since no school whatever level, can be run without the teacher. Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) has it that teacher education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning because no education can rise above the quality of its teachers. It becomes obvious that the wheel of education carried out by the teachers, norms, values, laws, artifacts and other societal upheld tenets can be passed on from one generation to another (Chukwurah, 2007).

Business teacher education is not left out in the task of producing potential business teachers who would take up the challenges. Business educators play prominent roles in preparing students to become responsible citizens, capable of making astute economic decisions that would benefit their personal and professional lives. We witness changes continuously due to technological advancement globally and as such, business education programme becomes increasingly important for preparing learners to imbibe the changes.

The role of business education teachers as a handy tool in the realization of self-reliance in a country cannot be over-emphasized. Noting this important role, Ibigbami (2004) stressed that Business Teacher Education Curriculum should be developed in response to the

national demand for education reform. Business teachers are therefore expected to demonstrate specific skills, apply knowledge and possess professional qualities which will enable them prepare students who can meet society's demands for high performance. The National policy on education (2004) in accordance with the existing Business teacher education programme provides for career development in business education at secondary school level to make it possible for recipients who cannot continue their education to the next level to find useful jobs. Business teacher education should exist with emphasis geared towards creating or offering employment opportunities covering a wide range of training requirements from certain semi-skilled sorting and filling jobs to managerial and executive positions (Ekpenyong, 2005).

## THE CONCEPT OF BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Curriculum according to Ubulum (2000) is a set of intentions about opportunities for engagement of persons to be educated with other persons and things (all bearers of information, processes, techniques and values) in certain arrangements of times and space. Curriculum could also be referred to as the sum total of the

educational experiences of the learners during their schooling period. The extent to which a curriculum assists business students and business teacher-trainees to competently enter and succeed in the world of work spells out success. In fact, every meaningful curriculum especially the business teacher education curriculum should not only be systematically developed, but should not be static or irrelevant. Else such curriculum would definitely have an adverse effect on whoever comes in contact with it. As put by Finch and Crunkilton (1984), a Business Teachers' Education Curriculum should be data-based, dynamic, and explicit in its outcome, fully articulated, realistic, student-oriented, evaluation-conscious and future-oriented.

In terms of relevance, Wheeler in Chukwurah (2010) stated that business teacher education curriculum planning and development like every other education programme planning and development, is a continuous process and should be in the following phases:

1. The selection of aims, goals and objectives;
2. The selection of learning experiences calculated to help in the attainment of these aims, goals and objectives;
3. The selection of content (subject-matter) through which certain types of experiences may be offered;
4. The organization and integration of learning experiences and content with respect to the teaching/ learning process within the school and classroom; and
5. Evaluation of the effectiveness of all aspects of Phases - 2, 3 and 4 above in attaining the goals detailed in Phase one. These phases are related, interdependent and combined to form a cyclical process.

### **Business teacher education**

The education of business teachers in Nigeria has been expanding and growing in recent years. This is as a result of increase in the demand for business teachers because of increase in students' enrolment in business education programme and quest for acquisition of employable skills both in private and public schools. In Nigeria's Third National Development Plan (1975 to 1980), the Federal Government maintained that the quality of teaching staff in all fields is probably the most important determinant of educational standards at all levels. Furthermore, the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) stated that teachers' education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning because no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Therefore, for business education teacher quality to rise above the business education system, a strong global reform in business teacher education curriculum is required. Such reforms would enhance business teacher education the chance of being a component of any educational system charged with

the education and training of teachers to acquire the competencies and skills of teaching for the attainment of self-reliance of the individual learner and the nation at large.

Business education is an aspect of educational programme offered at the higher institution of learning which prepares students for careers in business. Ubulum (2000) sees business teacher education as the pedagogical and business competencies necessary for teaching business attitudes, concepts, skills and knowledge. It could be seen as an aspect of educational training process which business teacher-trainees receive with the primary motive of enabling them acquire adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities, for personal or vocational usage, and/or for careers as administrators, managers and teachers wherever they may find themselves in the business world. Business teacher education aims at:

1. Educating business education teachers who will be positively oriented towards teaching business subjects.
2. Producing effective business teachers who are highly motivated and conscious of the important role they are expected to play in the development of business education.
3. Producing business teachers who possess sufficient knowledge in the theory and practice of business education which they can in turn teach in the teacher training colleges and
4. Equipping the business education students with sufficient knowledge and skills in business management.

However, business teacher education specially encompasses such programmes that are designed to give pedagogical training to those who will be engaged in the teaching of:

1. JSS Business studies;
2. Compartmentalized single business subjects at the senior secondary school (SSS), which includes; book-keeping/Accounts, Commerce, Economics, Typewriting and Shorthand; and
3. At the tertiary institutions/they are required to teach courses in Accounting, Business Management, Marketing, Computer Operation/Secretarial Studies, Methods of Teaching Business Education and other business related fields.

Business teacher education curriculum is structured in such a way that student-teachers are made to complete training in the four major components of teacher education which include:

- a. General Education;
- b. Professional (Pedagogical education);
- c. Teaching subject; and
- d. Teaching practice/students' industrial work experience (SIWES), NPE (2004).

## STRATEGIES FOR GLOBAL REFORMS IN BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION

Adequate strategies and means need to be devised if Nigerian business teacher education should be compared to the type obtained globally. The following need to be considered necessary for reforming business teacher education programme in Nigeria:

1. Quality of candidates for business education programme: According to Federal Government of Nigeria, (2004), the Nigerian certificate of education (NCE) remains the minimum qualification for entry into teaching profession in the Nigeria educational system. Imogie (1999) considered such entry requirement in teaching to be too low to be regarded as a profession. Such poor entrants to the teacher education programme in our schools today constitute the problems of recruitment of competent and professionally trained business teachers into Nigerian school system (Afe, 2002). The poor quality of teachers according to Maxwell in Osho (1994) can be ascribed to the low entry behavior of pre-service teachers. According to him, the majority of pupils who opt for business education from secondary schools are low achievers who invariably exhibit mediocrity in their output;
2. Training facilities for business teacher education programme: The importance of training facilities to the overall success of any educational enterprise has never been in doubt. It is on this basis that Olutola in Ekpenyong and Nwabuisi (2003) emphasized on the need for the provision of adequate training facilities. Ekpenyong and Nwabuisi (Processing in developing the business teacher education curriculum.

Chika (2000) maintained that training equipment and facilities needed for effective instruction of business education should be a replica of what is obtained and used in business offices and which the business teacher-trainees must appreciate their 2003) further stressed that in business teacher education, as is applicable to other technical courses, the need for the availability of functional training facilities and equipment, such as modern office machines in terms of computers, word processors and electronic typewriters, copiers, is to say the least, critical. There is need therefore, to involve the design teams for various subject areas such as Accounting, Management, Marketing, Office Management and Word importance. There is no doubt that wherever effective training equipment and facilities are utilized, they generate greater students' interest in the learning system and also enhance retention of learned ideas.

Funding of tertiary institution in Nigeria is nothing to write home about and this invariably is affecting the procurement of required training equipment and facilities for business education teachers. Ugiagbe (2003) observed that poor funding cause acute shortage of

typewriters, computer systems, furniture and sizeable laboratories for business teacher education programme to become effective as is found in most developed nations. There should be adequate and appropriate funding both by the government and stakeholders. This would enhance the purchase and provision of training equipment and facilities and adequate manpower development in business education.

## QUALITY BUSINESS TEACHERS

The importance of quality business education teachers in reforming business teacher education cannot be over-emphasized. Uwameiye and Osunde (2000) stated that the nine colleges of education (technical) established to train teachers outside the four Universities and other colleges of education could not cope with the number of teachers required for the programme. According to them, the teachers were poorly trained as many could not teach the subjects they were not trained in. The ability of the teachers to perform depends on the type of training available to them, the quality of facilities, materials and the environment under which they operate (Ehiamefor, 2003).

It has been observed that some skills are likely to become obsolete as a result of lack of updating knowledge by business teachers. There is need for a workable staff development policy that would influence the retraining of business educators whose skills will turn out to be unmarketable. Such staff development will center on the area of new technology application. Business teachers need to engage themselves through a number of processes such as internet browsing, attendance to seminars, conferences, reading relevant books and journals and playing active roles in relevant professional associations.

## Curriculum

The need for the curriculum of business teacher education to be relevant to the needs of the student-teachers cannot be overemphasized. Business teacher education curriculum should be viewed from the point of occupational and pedagogical competence, relevance to the needs of the students, society and employers, comprehension in scope, depth in knowledge and competence in skills, (Ojo, 2004). As new ideas accumulate in business and industry and as Nigeria will have to fully embrace advanced ICT, the curriculum of teachers who will impart these new areas of knowledge will have to be enriched.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

1. As business transactions are becoming more complex and computerized, government policy on computer education should provide for the training of business educators who will be well placed in training individuals for new jobs that are occasioned by automated equipment and devices;
2. Adequate funding of business teacher education should be a priority of governments and stakeholders.
3. Appropriate legislation for the implementation of the National policy on teacher education is a necessity in Nigeria;
4. For an effective enrichment of business teacher education curriculum, there is the need to develop a responsive curriculum which will be relevant to the current and anticipated needs, problems and aspirations of the learners. It is a well known fact that learning that is divorced from the major waves of changes in the learner's environment could be incapable of solving current and even future problems of the learner and society at large;
5. Our present society requires an educational system that would enable learners become self-reliant, as such business teacher education curriculum should be enriched by adopting a responsive curriculum that would enable its products respond to social goals, economic realities and future life challenges. This should be done by selecting contents that are consistent with emergent and anticipated needs, like issues on ICT, conflict resolution and economic survival and entrepreneurship education.

## CONCLUSION

The global reforms in business education calls for serious attention in reshaping Nigerian business teacher education curriculum. This necessitates the plan and organization of business teacher education in such a way that will help the teachers to acquire the needed occupational and pedagogical competence. The training of Nigerian teachers should top the list of priorities of government because the service of business teachers in speeding the national development cannot be ignored.

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