Full Length Research Paper

Rethinking teacher-quality in an information age: Implications for pre-service business teacher production

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Information and communication technology (ICT) has permeated all nooks and crannies of our society. There is need for corresponding changes in the educational sector. It is the responsibility of the teachers training institutions to produce teaching manpower in accordance with the changes in the society. This paper examined the extent to which business teacher education programmes in Nigeria are ICT compliant. A 20-item questionnaire was administered to 45 business lecturers from the University of Calabar, Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH) and College of Education, Akamkpa, Cross River State. Three research questions were formulated based on the specific purposes and tested using weighted mean. Findings revealed among others, that pre-service business teacher production programmes in Cross River State are not ICT compliant. It was recommended, among others, that ICT tasks should be integrated into business teacher education curriculum in Nigeria to enhance business teacher quality in the information age.

Key words: Teacher quality, information age, pre-service, business teacher production, communication technology.

INTRODUCTION

The world in general and Nigeria in particular are witnessing a very critical period in a history characterized by radical changes in teaching and learning. These changes are constantly created by some major societal forces such as globalization and technological advances. The traditional purpose of technological education and the supporting business teacher education curricula are seen as inadequate for helping Nigerian citizens cope with the life demands of information and technology age. According to Nworgu (2006), contemporary school curricula are viewed as out of date and failing to prepare students for active role in the years ahead. Teacher education, obviously, is saddled with the responsibility of nation building, training institutions determine the pace of the nations' development. Jalyeoba and Atanda (2007) stated that quality in the educational sector is considered in terms of exceptionally high standards, consistency, fitness for purpose, value for money (accountability) and transformative effects. Jalyeoba and Atanda further maintained that students of good quality are the fruits not only of adequate material resources and funding, but also principally of good teachers exceptionally trained in their respective subject areas.

Business education teachers equally require exceptional training with respect to modern technologies to enable them possess the ability, power, authority, skill and knowledge required to fit into the information age. Information age is an expression used to describe the present age of the computer and other forms of communication super highway (Mohammed, 2008). It is concerned with the use of computer-based information systems to convert, store, protect, process, transmit and retrieve information. A business education teacher according Nwokoio and Ekwue (2001) should possess the following qualities: 1) mastery of effective communication skills, 2) ability to select appropriate teaching methods and teach business students practice areas. In addition to the aforementioned, the business

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education teacher needs to possess the ability to identify/ 
select and utilize the modern technologies necessary for 
teaching and learning business courses.

According to Olise and Gbenedion (2007) no 
meaningful economic development can take place unless 
a serious attention is given to quality business education. 
Ihimekpen (2004) stated that a business teacher would 
not become adequately, proficient in his teaching through 
one shot pre-service preparation alone. That a business 
education teacher needs to complete his preparation for 
his jobs and keep abreast of the changes in his work 
through professional improvement activities. Adhering to 
these would no doubt, enhance teacher quality in 
business education programme and hence the products 
will fit into information age.

METHODOLOGY

Statement of problems

The quality of teachers determines the quality of graduates turned 
out of every educational programme. One of the goals of business 
teacher education as stated in the National Policy on Education 
(2004) is to produce highly motivated, conscious and efficient 
classroom business teacher. Nigerian business education teachers 
seem to lack the ability to cope with the challenges of the 
information age due probably to lack of information and technology 
skills acquisition. As revealed by Nwosu (2003), despite the 
massive curriculum reforms and innovations. In Nigeria in the 
recent years, business education teachers are still ill-equipped to 
work in, contribute to and profit from an increasingly technological 
society. The situation would demand business teacher education 
programme that is ICT compliant.

Purpose of the study

The major purpose of the study is to ascertain the implications for 
pre-service business teacher production for re-thinking teacher 
quality in an INFORMATION age in Cross River State. Specifically, 
the study ascertained:

1. The extent to which business teacher education programmes are 
ICT compliant in Cross River State.
2. How the modern technologies are being utilized for pre-service 
business teacher production in Cross River State.
3. The qualities of lecturers that handle the pre-service business 
teacher production in Cross River State.

Research questions

1. What extent are the ICT tasks integrated in business teacher 
education programme in Cross River State?
2. How are the modern technologies utilized for pre-service 
business teacher production in Cross River State?
3. What are the qualities of lecturers that handle the pre-service business 
teacher production in Cross River State?

A survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was 
carried out in the University of Calabar, Cross River University of 
Technology (CRUTECH) and College of Education, Akampka all in 
Cross River State. The population of the study comprised 45 
Business Education lecturers from the aforementioned three tertiary 

institutions where pre-service business teacher education is being 
offered. A 20- item structured questionnaire was used for data 
collection. The data collected were analyzed using weighted mean. 
Acceptable mean of 2.50 was adopted for all the research 

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that none, except one item, modern business 
laboratory and qualified technology lecturers scored up to the acceptably mean of 2.50. This means 
that ICT tasks are not adequately integrated into the pre-
service business teacher programmes in the institutions 
studied. Hence, business education programmes in 
Cross River State are not computer compliant. Table 2 
indicated that only telephone (GSM), adding machines, 
television/radio and video recorder are the modern 
technologies being utilized for pre-service business 
teacher production in Cross River State. Their weighted 
mean responses were 3.6, 3.2, 3.6 and 3.4 respectively; 
computers power point, e-mail services, internet, 
overhead projector, fax and audio visual classrooms 
scored below the acceptable mean of 2.50. This means 
that they are not being utilized.

Table 3 shows that business education lecturers 
 though possessed academic qualifications necessary for 
teaching and learning, lacked other major qualities. Lecturers with M.Sc (Ed) had a mean score, of 3.4, Ph.D 
holders had mean response of 2.5, effective communi-
cation skills had 3.6 mean score, and mastery of 
business subjects is with mean response of 3.3, good 
human relations had 2.9, other qualities had mean scores 
below the acceptable mean of 2.50. This means that the 
lecturers were still lacking adequate qualities necessary 
for handling pre-service business teacher production in 
tertiary institutions.

DISCUSSION

From the findings of the study, it was revealed that pre-
service business teacher production in Cross River State 
have modern business education laboratories. This 
finding agrees with Okobiah (2000), who stated that it is 
not sufficient to build academic programmes dotted with 
the internet and website communication access to the 
world. This is usually achieved through adequate modern 
business laboratory.

The study further revealed that technology teachers in 
the institutions studied were academically qualified but 
lacked other essential qualities. This is in consonance 
with Nwokolo and Ekwue (2001) who stated that business 
teachers should possess qualities that would 
 enhance effectiveness in their subject areas. The 
respondents indicated from the finding that business 
laboratory is not well equipped, technologies not relevant 
to business education and no adequate use of modern
Table 1. Mean of weighted responses of business education lecturers on the extent of integration of ICT tasks in pre-service business teacher production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Highly integrated</th>
<th>Integrated</th>
<th>Fairly integrated</th>
<th>Not integrated</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modern lousiness laboratory</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well equipped Business laboratory</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technologies relevant to business education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate use of technologies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified technology teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Mean of weighted responses of lecturer on the utilization of modern technologies for pre-service business teacher production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power point</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead projector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio visual classrooms</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(GSM) Adding machines</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television/Radio</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video recorder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Mean of weighted responses of business education lecturers on the qualities of lecturers that handle the pre-service business teacher production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.Sc (Ed) In business subject</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D in business subject</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication skills</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of business subjects</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Human relations</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate modern Instructional materials</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate Teaching methods</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operate modern Business equipment</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, the pre-service business teacher production is not ICT compliant in Cross River State.

The finding does not agree with Nwosu (2003) who said that in most cases, the search for comprehensiveness to meet the ever changing needs of the rapidly changing world would demand a curriculum that is ICT compliant. It was revealed also that lecturers utilize only telephone (GSM), adding machines, television/radio and video recorder for pre-service business teacher production in Cross River State. This is contrary to Nwokolo and Ekwue (2001) who maintained that business teachers should possess the ability to use all modern business equipment. Computers/ power point,
e-mail services Internet, overhead projector, fax and audio visual classrooms were not being utilized. However, this finding is in line with Nworgu (2006), in one of his studies that business teachers lack the necessary skills for ICT application in the classrooms.

The study further revealed that apart from appropriate teaching methods and operation of modern business equipment, lecturers possess good academic qualifications, effective communication skills, mastery of business subjects, good human relations. Without the teacher's ability to use/operate modern business equipment, there likely might be poor quality of products from pre-service business teacher production in our institutions. According to Ibe (2007), rethinking of educational programmes like business teacher education programmes, calls for integration of ICT goals such as computer literacy. Ibe equally discovered in his study that pre-service teacher trainers are yet to adequately integrate ICT tasks in the teaching and learning.

REFERENCES


