

QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF BUSINESS EDUCATION AT COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

Simiku Helen Nwalado

*Department of Accounting Education,
Federal College of Education (Technical),
Asaba.*

Abstract

Presently, the issue of incompetency in the world of work is so alarming that it is now a concern to stakeholders and the general public. Most Business Education graduates lack the relevant knowledge, skills, attitude, abilities and competencies required to function effectively in the world of work. That is why the paper is on quality assurance for effective teaching and learning of Business Education at Colleges of Education. The idea is that, with quality assurance in the classroom, teachers and students will put heads together by making sure that teaching and learning is effective, efficient and productive. This work examines the concept of quality, quality assurance, Business Education, learning, college of Education, Quality assurance in Business Education and Quality assurance mechanism. The study recommends among others as follows; that employers in the school system should make sure appointment is appropriately done by employing the qualified teachers into the subject area where they fit in and not employing HND Business Administration graduates who have no teaching qualification to teach Business Education Subjects; management should ensure that teachers always teach their subjects at the right time, with the right materials and with the suitable instructional methods. There is need for every stakeholder to work hard to ensure proper implementation of quality assurance in Colleges of Education.

Key words: Quality Assurance, Business Education and College of Education

Business education is a programme designed to provide learners with competent skills required to function effectively in Business and enhances self-reliance which promote national growth and economic development. The knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies acquired from Business Education will help the individual graduate to understand the economic situation of his nation and that will influence his present and future standard of living. In order to be a good member of the society, the

student must have a sound grasp of the function of business in the economic system as well as acquire the ability to use the services of business (Obi, 2005).

Business Education is one of the Vocational subjects that need to be effectively taught by the teacher using the appropriate and required materials to make it functional. The world is full of competition and without functional education, the business education graduates will not contribute positively to nation building. The NCE business education students need quality education that will help them to contribute positively upon graduation. The quality of education and training provided for NCE business education students in Nigeria has been a source of serious concern in recent times. Nwoko in Nwalado (2005), expressed concern on the employment given to unqualified applicants (teaching appointment) in the Nigerian school system. It has also been observed that majority of the NCE teachers do not have time for their students because of their personal businesses outside the classroom (Nwalado 2010). Some of these teachers will wait towards the end of the semester before entering the class to teach because they lack pedagogical skills for teaching. They go about given students area of concentration instead of teaching the students for better understanding of the subject matter. According to Osuala (2004), such teachers are interlopers in the field of business education because they lack the skills and knowledge required for business education curriculum implementation.

For business education graduates to fit into the world of work, the course must be effectively taught by qualified business education teachers. Teaching and learning, according to Urevbu (2001), are opposite sides of the same coin since a lesson is not taught until it has been learned. Hence, Urevbu (2001) sees teaching as a process that facilitates learning. It is widely assured in education that no society outgrows the quality of its teacher. Based on the above statement, there is need to improve the quality of teachers and students by providing them with the necessary skills, equipments and training and making sure that the skills, training, knowledge acquired are being utilized in the classroom.

Quality

Advance Learners Dictionary of current English (1997), defines quality as the standard of something, what it is, compared to other things like it; how good or bad something is. Biose (2012), sees quality to mean the degree or extent to which something, meets with the acceptable minimum standard in terms of function, purpose, durability and aesthetic side by side similar things. This author sees quality as good, worthwhile, adequate, appropriate, relevant, valuable and reliable aspect of a product or programme.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance in the school system is a process of ensuring that every aspect of the school and every teacher is focused at all time in meeting and then exceeding students requirements. Okebukola (2010) views quality assurance as an all-encompassing term that include a host of activities that are put together to facilitate the fitness of input, process system. He further states that the major thrust of quality assurance covers activities an institution engages in “to assure itself that it is on course to fulfilling its vision and mission in terms of quality of input, process and output”.

Quality assurance in the education system implies all the activities that are conducted in order to achieve or maintain a certain quality level in every participant (Kalusi 2013). Cole (1996) illustrates that quality assurance in any educational institution indicates that students learning as well those actively supported with adequate resources and that involved both in school administration and teaching have clear job descriptions and know their job responsibilities. Quality assurance is a planned and systematic review process of an institution or programme to determine that acceptable standards of education, scholarship, teaching, and administration are being maintained and enhanced (Quality Assurance support programme for African Higher Education in Boise 2012).

From the views above, quality assurance is seen as a preventive measure that is geared towards ensuring greater quantity and quality input in the school system.

Concept of Business Education

Business Education has been with man from the origin. For instance, in the pre-literate society people have been engaged in using their business skills and knowledge acquired informally in business situations. People are always involved in such businesses as production, exchange of goods and services (buying and selling), transportation, communication, distribution etc. Business education is a wide discipline which encompasses a number of specialist areas. Such areas include: secretarial studies, accounting, business management, computer studies, marketing and/or distribution education.

Robert in Nwalado (2008) views business education as a programme designed to develop special competencies in marketable business skills and techniques. Ulinfun in Obi (2005) defined business education as education for and about business or training in business skills and competencies required for use in business offices, clerical occupations and policy analysis in business.

Anao in Nwokolo (2002), sees business education as the sum total of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required for successful promotion and administration of a business enterprise. In addition to the above definitions, Obi (2005) states that business education is the preparation of an individual for meaningful living.

Business education is not for drop outs as some people perceived it. It is an educational training that helps the individuals to learn how to acquire knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities that are relevant to commerce and industry and for the development of the society.

According to Nwokolo (2002), Business education is aimed at turning out the right caliber of work force with business and entrepreneurial ability for positions in various sectors of the economy. Moreso, it is the provision of teachers with adequate business skills and pedagogy needed to teach business skills, knowledge, attitudes and competencies to business education students at all levels.

Objectives of Business Teacher Education at the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) Level

The objectives of Business education are summarized in minimum standard for Colleges of Education (NCCE 2008) as:

- (1) To produce well qualified and competent NCE graduates in business subjects who will be able to teach business education in secondary schools and other related educational institutions.
- (2) To produce NCE business teachers who will be able to inculcate the Vocational aspects of business education into the society.
- (3) To produce NCE business teachers who will be involved in the much desired revolution of vocational development right from the primary and secondary schools.
- (4) To equip students will necessary competencies so as to qualify them for a post NCE degree programme in business education.
- (5) To equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the office as well as for self-employment.

Components of Business Education

Business education is a skill and competency-oriented course of study. It is a specific course of study offered at the College and University level. The curriculum of business education should consist of:

General education component; General business subjects; Secretarial component; Marketing and distribution component; Professional education component; Accounting

component; Teaching practice and Industrial work experience/Industrial Training (IT) (Osuala, 2004).

The business education mechanism in its curriculum must have the above components. It is the responsibility of the business education teacher to expose the students to certain fundamental principles, theories and practice of teaching and learning that will enable them to fit into the society where they live. For the graduate of business education to be effectively taught the above components, there must be a proper quality assurance mechanism put in place at every aspect of learning.

Concept of Learning

The ultimate end of effective teaching is an acceptable level of learning. The qualities of a teacher education and training determine at the end, what the learner has learnt. Teaching is grossly irrelevant without meaningful learning.

Denga (1998), states that; learning is a condition that involves the following: development of attitudes, interest, habits, preferences, social adjustment of skills, acquisition of knowledge, role selection, identification, language development, development of values, beliefs and formation of cognitive structure. Learning is a continuous process which goes on and on with improvement as long as one lives within an environment and has to operate within that environment. Urevbu (2002), perceived “learning as a process by which students acquire and retain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills, and capabilities”. When a person learns, he feels, thinks and acts differently because his skills, abilities, understanding, attitudes, and aspirations have changed. The business education teacher is practically trained to ensure that the learners acquire functional education for application in diverse life situation.

Colleges of Education

Colleges of education in Nigeria, as tertiary institutions of learning, came into existence since 1962. Afolayan and Afe in Kalusi (2013), gave a “brief overview” of the origins, evolution, programmes of these colleges, situating their original objectives and role within the context of the dynamic changes that have taken place in the theory and practice of Nigerian higher education since Ashby, to the establishment of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in 1989. Colleges of Education as teacher colleges, are designed to produce quality manpower for the society. Specifically, the mandate for Colleges of Education is to ensure productive and effective teachers for the Basic Education level of our educational system (FRN, 2009). The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) award a certificate through the Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Nigeria certificate in Education, (NCE) is

a certificate a little lower than university degree, but highly qualitative professional certificate in education (Iliyas, 2004).

The NCCE is by law authorized to assure quality at the NCE level. This commission from time to time releases updated and revised minimum standard for NCE programmes. It equally take care of different processes that are involved in the accreditations of academic programmes within and outside the school.

Quality Assurance in Business Education

Quality assurance in business education is a process of ensuring a range of systematic procedures, properly designed to protect business education standards in Colleges of Education. According to Biose (2012), it is to determine acceptable standard of products of Business Education programmes with high value added through quality teaching, administration and infrastructure with continual improvement in all facets of the programmes and so making the products flawless and attaining exceptionally high standards among other products (graduates) at all times. To make this discoursed clearer, quality assurance in business education will be geared towards the following dimension as input, process and output. Okebukola (2009), in his model, assumed that where the input (human, material resources and capital materials) processes are followed, the outputs will be of commensurate good quality.

For Business Education programme to be functional, meaningful, productive and qualitative, care must be taken to consider the input, process and output of every aspect of the programme.

Input	Process	Output
Students	Teaching and Learning	skilled
Teaching	research Activities	Economic and Social
Development		
Non-Teaching	Community	Production of New
Facilities	Participation	knowledge
Expendable	Management	
Materials and		
Others		

Source: Okebukola (2009).

Input

Business education programme is affected by the quality of input. The caliber of students admitted yearly into the institutions to study the course affect the quality of the products (student) upon graduation. For quality assurance in business education to be productive, there are so many factors that affect its input; some of these factors are

examination malpractice product from secondary schools (special centre for WAEC), cultisms, indiscipline, quality of lecturers (unqualified without vocational skills). Business education programme should adopt internal and external efficiency if quality must be assured. The quality of output is affected by quality of input e.g. quality of students admitted, quality of teachers employed, quantity and quality of machines, equipments, teaching materials/aids, teaching and learning environment, students demonstration/unrest, incessant strike action by teachers, absentism etc affect the products (graduates).

Process

Teaching and learning process is targeted towards producing a perfect products (students) who can measure with quality of business education graduates any were. The process should be essential and devoid of repetition, drop-outs, examination malpractices, sorting, sexual harassment and intimidation, cultism, sale of textbooks, missing scripts, missing scores, as well as delays in marking scripts and release of students' results (Biose 2012). If all these are in place, it means that our school system lack quality assurance. Omoregie in Biose (2012), opined that many students come to the knowledge of carryover courses only at the point of graduation. The academia today has been infiltrated by products of corruption, examination malpractice, academic gate crashers etc all these have made the centre of business programme weak as its product cannot exhibit what they do not have. Teachers no longer teach effectively in the classroom. To address these negative vices, the school system must put up quality assurance units in order to check mate, supervise and monitor teaching and learning process in colleges of education.

Output

Graduates of business education are the output of the programme. These refers to the quality and quantity of the products to a great extent that are perfect in their areas of specialization. For the graduate of business education to be flawless, effort must be put in place between the management of the institution, NCCE and quality assurance unit to properly monitor and supervise teaching learning process and provide a conducive environment for learning.

External and Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms at the Colleges of Education

According to Jedjere and Emariaube in Kalusi (2013) the NCCE ensure uniform standard and quality control in all colleges of Education in Nigeria. The following are the standards:

- ◆ NCCE accreditation mechanism includes pre-accreditation visits as well as re-accreditation of programmes with interim and denied status. The accreditation are done every five years.
- ◆ NCCE resources inspection visit on colleges of education.
- ◆ Special workshop on the review of minimum standards which is done every five years.
- ◆ Governing council and expanded management committee of the colleges of education, where NCCE representation is mandatory.
- ◆ Verification exercise to ensure the qualification of staff and students.
- ◆ Minimum standards that spell out the do's and don'ts of the college, irrespective of the ownership and to ensure harmonized curriculum.
- ◆ Standardized measures for consideration of results before issuance of certificates.
- ◆ Consideration of feedback from external assessment.

All these are external quality assurance mechanism that can be used to achieve the quest at colleges of education.

The internal quality assurance mechanism in colleges of education are used to ensure that lecturers teach what they ought to teach, cover the course content both theory and practicals using appropriate materials and technology facilities. There are duties perform by quality assurance units in colleges (institutions). They include:

- ◆ Proper implementation of the business education curriculum.
- ◆ Class attendance of students
- ◆ Assessment of students by lecturers
- ◆ Giving feedbacks to students at all levels
- ◆ Maintenance of admission requirements
- ◆ Guidance and counseling of students
- ◆ Academic progression of students in every semester
- ◆ Continuous interface with external quality assurance agency and professional bodies to keep abreast with latest information (Biose 2012)
- ◆ Promoting the moral of academic and non-academic staff including those of students (Kalusi 2013). The essence of these is to ensure proper implementation of Business Education programme set in the minimum academic standards by NCCE.

Conclusion

There is need for proper implementation of quality assurance mechanism in the school system for quality input, process and output of NCE graduates with the necessary skills, knowledge, ability and competencies in business education. These graduates are expected to be able to teach business subjects, inculcate vocational aspect of business education into the society, develop vocational education, undergo degree programme in business education and engage in a life of work in offices as well as self-employment.

Recommendations

Based on the issues raised and discussed above, it is recommended that:

- ◆ employers in the school system should make sure appointment is properly done by employing qualified teachers into the subject area where they fit in not employing HND graduates to teach business education subjects;
- ◆ management should make sure that teachers always teach their subjects at the right time, with the right materials and methods;
- ◆ management and government from time to time should organize train-the-teacher workshop to equip teachers with new knowledge and information relevant for teaching and learning;
- ◆ government and National Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (NABEN) should make sure that all colleges and universities offering business education have unified curriculum for effective and productive output (graduates);
- ◆ For effective quality assurance, all hand should be on deck, (students, teachers, management, NCCE, government, stakeholders etc) to make sure there is proper implementation of business education curriculum.

References

- Biose, C.A. (2012). Quality assurance in Technical and vocational education (TVE). *Journal of Business and Vocational Education* Vol 1(2).
- Cole, G.A. (1996). *Management theory and practice*. London: DP Publication.
- Denga, D.J. (1998). *Educational and social psychology*. Calabar: Rapid educational publishers Ltd
- Emeh, J.U. & Erukoha, O.I. (1995). The philosophy of teaching” in Uche, S.O. and Erukoha, O.I. (Eds) *professional skills for effective teaching*. Aba: AAU industries

Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2009). NCCE minimum standards for NCE Teachers (General Education) 4th Edition.

Iliyas, R.A (2004). An evaluation of the NCE use of English in Kwara State College of Education Nigeria. Unpublished M.Ed thesis. University of Ilorin, Ilorin.

Kalusi, J.I (2013), Quality assurance mechanisms in colleges of Education: Challenges and strategies for implementation. *contemporary Journal of Educational Research* Vol 3 (1)

NCCE (2008). National Commission for Colleges of Education minimum standard for Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), 4th edition

Nwalado, E.N. (2010): The Role of Chief Inspectors of Education in Maintaining Quality Assurance in the School system. A paper presented at SUBEB workshop organized by Delta State Government for Teachers.

Nwokolo, P.O. (2002). *Instructional strategies in business education*. Ikeja: Tivolick publishers

Obi, C.A. (2005). *Methodology in Business Education*. Enugu: Otek Publishers.

Okebukola, P. (2010). Fifty years of higher education in Nigeria: Trends in quality assurance. A paper presented at the international conference on the contributions of Nigerian universities to the 50th independence Anniversary of Nigeria 27-29 September.

Osuala, E.C. (2004). *Foundation of vocational education*. Nsukka: Fulladu publishing co.

Urevbu, A.O. (2001). *Foundations and methods of education*. Benin: Ilupeju Press

Wayne, M.; Linda, N. & William, T.L. (2001). Effective teaching of commerce. Retrieved from www.waylindedw.org/studentssupport/effectiveteaching.pdf