

## Teachers' Values Needed for Producing Competent Business Education Teachers in Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

*The paper discussed the state of preparation of the training institution for the business education teacher to perform professionally in meeting the challenges of the millennium. It examined the quality of the business education teacher envisioned in Nigeria and went further to propose the value to be built in the business education teachers. As a cost-effective business education teacher development strategy, mentorization was recommended. This paper concludes that extra care should be taken in the implementation of the present Universal Basic Education (UBE) the catastrophe experienced during the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the 1970's will be a child's play compared with what may happen with the UBE of the 2000's.*

**Keywords:** Teachers' value, Business Education, Teacher.

### **Introduction**

The issue of professional competence of teachers in Nigeria and anywhere is always a direct reflection of the standard and quality of teacher education curriculum in the country. This is why the national policy on education clearly provides that "teacher education shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum. Teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in profession (FRN 2014).

Logically, it can be summarized that the quality of the business education teacher can be assessed by the quality of the business education programme.

As found in the new millennium, a world in which the computer becomes a productivity tool in nearly workplace, economy, business and lives of individual, business education cannot escape the question of how to respond and be ready for this change. Also in striving towards technological growth and overall national development, it is necessary to recognize the strategic position of the business educator. The business educator must be knowledgeable in the subject, the business education teacher cannot pass on the relevant information to the learners the learners of business education cannot be expected to perform miracles in leading the way towards technological and economic development when the subject is not properly taught. The questions now emerge does business education teacher exist and function in the new millennium to suit with the same business education curriculum?

How ready is the Nigerian business education teacher trained in meeting the challenges of newer technologies in the millennium? What values are required for

developing professionally competent business education teacher in Nigeria for the next century?

### **Conceptualization of Business Education**

Business education is seen as an educational process or context, which has the primary aim of the preparation of people for role in enterprises, such role could be as employee/employer or simply as self-employed (Anao, 2014). Business education at the university level is geared towards helping the student to develop basic understanding of the Nigerian business system and its role in the economic society. The principal objective at the university level is to help students understand how Nigeria business systems operate, and to see some of the problems and the opportunities it provided to each citizen (Gimba, 2013).

Business education at the secondary school level is seen as a component of vocational studies, which is aimed at training people who will have the competencies of being employed or be self-reliant. At the tertiary level, business education is career oriented and aims at preparing people for gainful employment in the world of work.

However, with the challenges of the new millennium, at the individual level, business education need to go beyond equipping the man's physical and economic requirement to developing him as a whole person. This development will add meaning and purpose to the life of the individual. A sense of contribution to a higher purpose introduces fulfillment, which in turn contributes to enhancing the quality of life of the individual.

The objectives of business education generally are borne out of the needs of industry, commerce and society. These objectives are highlighted in the national policy on education (2013) thus:

- (a) Improvement and regulation of career-long professional development of teachers through the provision of a wide range of programmes and multiple pathways to provide serving teachers with regular opportunities for updating their knowledge and skills;
- (b) Setting professional standards for teacher educators who train new teacher; and
- (c) Revamping teacher education curricula and training.

The goal of business education is the production of the requisite knowledge, skill and attitude for harnessing other resources and bringing them into cooperative relationship yielding goods and services demanded by society for the satisfaction of their wants and needs of which there are many. The output of business education are managers, supervisors and the lower tradesmen but at the higher level entrepreneurs (Inyang, 2014). Laudable as the goals are, not much has been achieved because of inadequate number of qualified teachers in business education.

### **The Problem with Teacher Education in Nigeria**

Over the years business education had followed the progress of the Western hemisphere. There is little or no reflection of developmental needs and pace in the design of business education curriculum and the training of business educators. This is very visible in the adaptation of some culture-based programs technologies and systems (CPTS). That is why it is not surprising to find out that most of the developmental programs are abandoned because it is not compatible with the developmental needs.

Take for example, business educators and business education students know what is price make up and price tags but what obtains in real life especially in Nigeria is price haggling.

It will be a little difficult to propose the quality of business education teacher envisioned in the new millennium without briefly relating it to the past or history of education in Nigeria with specific reference to Universal Primary Education (UPE). When UPE was introduced, in order to meet the numerical strength of teachers needed for the programme, all sorts of person, including those who ordinarily would have nothing to do with formal education were registered for that “crash programme” not to become pupils, but to be trained to teach children as pupils in primary schools. When these people finally graduated as teachers after satisfying the demands of the mandatory three, or four years of training session in teachers training colleges or institutes without much changes intellectually, unfortunately such teacher entered the teaching profession. Such teachers without the necessary values of professional education competence incidentally have school children to teach. This trend has continued to date as Mkpa (2012) observed: “They are those who translate classrooms into markets for the state of the wares blouses, shoes, underwear’s and sometimes food items, action reminiscent of the business they were used to before they mistakenly found their way into the teaching profession. These people, masquerading as teachers are associated with all sorts of professional misconduct absenteeism, lateness lack of seriousness, and the like most unbecoming of the teaching profession.

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) which is an off shoot of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) has been launched throughout the federation by the regime of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The mission of the programme is to provide compulsory education for children between the ages of 6 – 18 and from primary and secondary education.

But the question is: Will the UBE programme make a difference from the former UPE? However, whether the programme will succeed or not the dream for the business education teachers for the new millennium are those that will be characterized by seriousness of purpose, commitment and dedication to duty which should manifest in such professionally acceptable behaviour as sensitivity to the felt needs of the learners, punctuality and regularity, respect for the professional ethics, faith in teaching profession, moral uprightness, neatness and overall goodness. Teachers should be versatile and should be able to undertake a number of professional activities within and outside the classroom Mkpa (2012).

The business education teacher of the new millennium should equally guide students towards the goals of realizing the educational ideas of the new educational system. For example students should participate actively towards the production or instructional materials, effective use of computers and other newer technologies in teaching and learning.

### **Retraining the Business Education Teacher to Meet the Challenges of Newer Technologies**

One obvious innovation that has invaded the country in this new millennium is the application of the new technologies in the teaching-learning process. Although, the computer is widely used in the developed world, it is virtually non-existent in most

schools in Nigeria. Undoubtedly, since it is envisaged that all children shall in future, be assisted to utilize the computer in facilitating learning, it is only to be knowledgeable in manipulating the computer.

It must be appreciated here that the teacher is the essential element and the building block that gives life and energy to any educational system. Teachers convert their raw inputs (students) to finished output (graduates) for the benefits of the entire society (Inyang 2014). According to Oribabor (2014), the centrality of the teacher as a human resource to the survival and growth of any educational system can no longer be controverted because teacher has become the strategic resource to be managed in more explicit and proactive manner”.

This veritable resource called the teacher cannot of course carry out transformation or conversion process to achieve quality output (graduate) delivery and add more value to the society without proper training, retraining and development. For any industry including the education industry to remain efficient and effective in contribution to National development according to (Mkpa, 2012), “The teacher must be well trained and equipped and should be made to see himself as a partner in progress with the educational industry”.

Thus, enhanced efficiency and productivity of the business education teachers can only be achieved and sustained through continuous capacity building, training, retraining and commensurate, reward for performance.

One of the important elements of capacity building in any social organization especially educational industry is human development especially the provision of knowledge positive attitude or sub skills that will enhance teachers current or future performance to meet the challenges of newer technologies.

In the word of Chrisman (2013) “human acquisition of knowledge skill and ability that sustain economic productivity amounts to human capital in any organization be it education, manufacturing or service industry”. The business education teacher as human capital in the education industry must be retrained to meet the challenges of time for the transformation of the stagnated educational system into an effective and efficient one.

Teacher as a human capital like other forms of capital is prone to depreciation over time. The obsolescence of this especially faced with the challenges of newer technologies calls for committed planning by way of learning, training and retraining (LTR) of the teachers who in turn will impact such knowledge, skill and ability on others. It has also been observed that the teacher is an essential and significant resource and a source of distinctive competence in the education industry that must be planned for enhanced survival and growth (Inyang, 2014 and Oribabor 2014). Ekpo (2010) adumbrated this point when he stated that “it stands to reason, that any education system or country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its teachers, and utilize such skills effectively and efficiently in corporate as well as national development cannot grow”.

Therefore, teachers are a critical factor in the performance of any education system. This is because teachers who are multi-skilled, self-responsible, visionary and able to learn are critical to national educational success. The boundless potentials of the business education teachers should be discovered and harnessed by the country to achieve sustained growth and competitive advantage by bridging the yawning gap and

‘epoch-lay’ between technological growth and development and corresponding people matching capabilities with the challenges from newer technologies. All these are essential if the business education teacher is to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

### **Values to be built into the Business Education Teacher**

When human behaviour is anchored on sound values, it is bound to witness consistency in sound character. One of the reasons why morality appears to be at its lowest ebb in Nigeria society is lack of focus on sound values in schools. To produce a professionally competent business education teacher, the following prescribed values should be built into the curriculum:

**Patience** – This is the act of waiting a little longer for a particular goal or achievement without being distracted from the targeted goal. Lack of patience is one major cause of the fraudulent practices so common in the society today. The get-rich-quick syndrome finds expression in armed robbery, drug trafficking, inefficiency in workplace, school chop-out, hire assassination as well as examination malpractices. Ekpo (2010).

**Tolerance** – This is the quality which makes us allow people to express their view or do things in their own way though we may not agree with them. It is a virtue of accepting opinions, beliefs that are different from our own. Here the business student teacher should be taught to accommodate other views, ethnic groups, religions/denominations, ideologies, etc. Oribabor (2014).

**Honesty** – The quality of state of being honest, probity, fairness and straight forwardness of conflict in one’s dealings with others. This will eliminate fraud from the socio-economic and political system. Honesty on the part of the business education teacher and the student are vital for the survival of the nation.

**Efficiency** – It is the state of always being accurate, prudent and error-free in a given task. Through the study and teaching of this value, teachers shall become capable of putting in their best to attain the highest level of efficiency in productive capacity.

**Love, Peace and Unity** – This is the ability to create and maintain cordial relationship and mutual understanding with others. Where love prevails, peace is guaranteed and unity assured. This is vital in fighting the present menace of cultism in academic institutions in Nigeria.

**Selflessness** – This is the quality of being devoted to duty. It is an aspect of devotion to duty, that is, doing what you ought to do. As opposite of selfishness, it places the interest of others foremost before that of individual teachers with these value in them will always have the interest of the learners (students) first.

**Justice and Fairplay** – This is the quality of being trust and honest in one’s dealing with others. It is the act of discharging his duty without bias and prejudice. Learners should be taught the need to be straight forward in dealing with people and in all situations. This will minimize or eliminate favoritism, nepotism, crookedness and double standards. These values help teachers to be objective, just and equitable in evaluation of students too.

**Persuasive** – This is the quality or virtue of forging ahead with challenges or problems associated with an assigned work. The business education teacher should be able to teach the student effectively and convincingly through persuasion.

**Teachable** – Teachers should teach with excitement and enthusiasm so that the student will understand and appreciate the subject.

## **Mentorization as a Cost-effective Business Education Teacher Development Strategy**

Mentoring is a practice in which a more experienced (member) takes on a less experienced one for the purpose of guiding, supporting, advising and assisting towards professional development or efficiency. “It is based on the fact that the more experienced teachers is supposed to be more professionally matured and therefore more capable of helping the less experienced one” (Ekpo, 2010).

This approach is one cost-effective strategy to prepare the business education teacher (BET) for the challenges of the new millennium. The less experienced teacher who is attached to the mentor consults the latter on all matters and is properly guided in professional activities. The innovation of mentoring is a very useful staff development strategy because the teacher learns from a mentor all that could have obtained by attending a teacher training institution to learn. The learning here is done on a one to one basis. It is also cost effective because the mentor is not paid by the learner. This relationship would help to improve the professional competency of the business education teacher and at a very low cost to both the learner and the organization.

### **Conclusion**

This paper totally agreed with the policy statement of the National Policy on Education that “no education system can rise above the quality of its teacher”. But an objective consideration of the application of this statement to the reality of educational system leaves one to the conclusion that that policy makers only pay lip service to the educational sector. For example, how can one synchronize this policy statement with the fact that teachers at different interests are owed over three months salaries, in some quarters, schools closed down, while in others leave bonuses and other legitimate claims due to teachers not paid for more than five months? What has been the government response to the ASUU incessant strikes on the issue of poor funding of universities?

The paper has therefore, raised fears that Nigeria business education teachers are ill-equipped to meet the challenges of the new millennium in view of the fact that the application of the computer is still a mystery as most of the teachers are computer illiterates. With the introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) which is an offshoot of UPE, if care is not taken the experience of the 1970’s might resurface itself in a more sophisticated manner that will be disastrous to the entire educational system in particular and the Nigeria society in general.

### **Recommendations**

1. Government should provide the needed facilities for efficient implementation of the new policies on education.
2. Government should motivate business education teachers for better productivity.
3. University training should equip the beneficiaries with the skills and attitudes for the profession. Policy makers in the education sector should muster sufficient political will to abolish the training would-be business education teacher through satellite campuses and distant learning programmes. It is difficult to see how an efficient pharmacist could be trained through distant

- learning process which is characterized by predominant lecture method and doubtful evaluation criteria and procedures and unqualified teachers.
4. Employers of teachers should register with professional organizations, periodic attendance and frequent participation at workshop, conferences, seminars mandatory to sewing teachers. These create opportunities for teachers to meet, share ideas and experiences with professional colleagues and also be able to keep abreast new knowledge in subject matter areas.
  5. Most of these institutions lack proper supervision, hence most activities are taken for granted, there should be effective implementation and compliance to these values.
  6. Since the arrival and effectiveness of both our primary and secondary education system are dependent on the product of this teacher-education, government should provide adequate funding to cushion the effects of some problems faced by school.

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