

Quality Assurance: An Imperative for Effective Implementation of Business Education Programme in Nigeria

AUTHOR(S): OLOWE, Modupe Oluwatoyin (PhD)

Abstract:

The theme of this paper is Quality Assurance: An Imperative for effective implementation of the Business Education Programme in Nigeria. Business Education is a type of Education that is needed by the individual to secure a specific job as well as to provide a general understanding of the business world. Business Education is especially relevant in this era of constant clamour for self-reliance. A country cannot be economically self-reliant without a well-developed program to train its teeming youth. Quality Assurance is a vital mechanism in ensuring the effective implementation of the Business Education Programme. Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational provision to maintain and improve its quality, equity and efficiency. It encompasses school self-evaluation, external evaluation (including inspection), the evaluation of teachers and school leaders, and student assessments. This paper attempted to look at some of the standards expected for proper implementation of Business Education and observed that shortage of qualified personnel, decay of Educational Infrastructures and low level of funding are some of the factors affecting the quality of the programme. The paper recommended among others that, the federal, state and local governments should assist in the development of business Education in Schools and higher institution by funding the programme, practicals should be more than theory and also Teachers should prepare for their lessons and make use of real or concrete materials as teaching aids for students. They should be more committed to their duties.

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About Author

Author(s):

OLOWE, Modupe Oluwatoyin (PhD)

Business Education Department,
School of Social Science Education,
College of Education,
Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology,
Ikere Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.
olowemodupeoluwatoyin@yahoo.com



Introduction

Business Education is a powerful weapon for a country's economic growth and progress in the age of globalisation. One facet of Vocational Education is Business Education, which helps students get ready for a career in business while also teaching them to be savvy shoppers. In order to prepare a person for a career as an administrator, manager, or teacher, or for any other role in the business world, Business Training is a component of education. According to Lambrecht (2023), Business Education is a curriculum that helps students get ready for careers in business.

Quality assurance is rapidly emerging as a crucial strategic instrument for institutions to use in order to maintain competitiveness in today's global marketplace and attain their organisational goals. Stakeholders (including students, parents, employers or workers, and society) have specific demands that must be met, and quality assurance is meant to guarantee that all operations within an organisation are carried out as intended. For institutions of higher learning in general, but especially for those in the field of business education, quality has emerged as a key issue.

Business Education involves teaching students the fundamental theories and processes of business because it prepares students for an occupation in business. The following are the objectives for Business Education;

- To produce well-qualified and competent graduates in business education that will be able to teach business subjects in our secondary schools and other related educational institutions.
- To produce business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of business education into society.
- To produce business teachers who will be involved in the much-desired revolution of vocational development right from the primary and secondary schools.
- To equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the offices as well as for self-employment.

In a nutshell, the primary objectives of business education programmes are to educate students on decision-making processes; the philosophy, theory, and psychology of management; practical applications; and the procedures involved in launching and running a firm. Business education, as defined by Wikipedia (2023), is a field of study focused on imparting knowledge of business practises and procedures to students. The goal of the programme is to generate capable, skilled, and dynamic business instructors, office administrators, and businesspeople who will be able to compete successfully in the workplace. This field of education happens at numerous levels, including secondary and higher education. Students who pursue a business degree gain practical experience and are better equipped to handle the responsibilities of adulthood. It shows you how to make money no matter what your circumstances are. As a result, the goal of this paper is to determine the benchmark that should be met while implementing the Business Education programme at Colleges of Education.

Concept of Quality Assurance

The relevance and suitability of the educational programme to the requirements of the community for whom it is delivered is what is meant by "quality" in the context of education. When compared to other objects of a comparable status, something's quality serves as the benchmark. Clear criteria must be established upon which to base evaluations of performance. The capacity of a good or service to fulfil its intended function or the demands of its target audience is referred to as its quality. Quality is an antonym for quantity, and it is also synonymous with efficiency, excellence, applicability, and value. In order to achieve



quality assurance in the delivery of the information in the course work, the school curriculum includes phases and activities known as quality assurance. Instilling trust and eliminating uncertainty is the goal of the act of providing assurance. Internal and external processes can also be used for quality assurance, according to Williams (2016).

The term "quality assurance" in the context of the educational system refers to an institution's capacity to deliver on the standards set by its students in terms of the skills they have gained. The process of ensuring that educational programmes and services are as effective and efficient as possible in respect to their context, mission, and stated goals is known as Quality Assurance. To promote successful teaching and learning at every step and facet of an educational programme, quality assurance is the continual provision and use of good and high-standard materials. Maintaining high standard in business education calls for both sufficient input and a high-quality output from the teaching and learning process or system. In order to guarantee that a project's service or facility is up to par, quality assurance is a system for systematic monitoring and evaluation of its numerous components. The importance of having clear criteria to use as a benchmark for performance evaluation cannot be overstated.

Quality can be described as standards of something compared to other things, which is the degree of goodness or excellence. High-quality teaching/instruction and examination can be regarded as goodness or effectiveness in teaching which can result in student learning and satisfaction. Quality teaching ensures that candidates possess the knowledge, skills, and competencies that are appropriate for their area of responsibility. These include standards that ensure teachers that know the subjects they teach and how to teach them to the students, understand how children learn and what to do when they are having difficulty, and that they will be able to use effective teaching methods for those who are learning easily, as well as those who have special needs. There is a need to have teaching standards and develop challenging examinations to document and recognize accomplished teaching. It is very clear that the overall goal in ensuring quality is to improve opportunities for high-quality learning. The assessment of teaching quality is an ongoing, multi-dimensional process which should be based on processes and products. Okoro (2013) opined that there is a direct responsiveness between standard and quality (the higher the standard, the higher the quality and vice versa).

Standards in Vocational and Technical Education

Vocational and Technical Education includes Business Education (Accounting and Office Technology and Management; formerly Secretarial Education), Technical Education, Agricultural Education, Home Economics Education, and Fine Arts Education. Okoro (2013) conducted research into the barriers to implementing total quality management in higher education and found that insufficient lecture time, excessive teaching loads, a lack of typing and timing equipment, poorly maintained computers, and a lack of funding for additional training for faculty were all factors. Standards in vocational education have been discussed by several experts. As a foundation for effective vocational education programmes, Prossers (1949) formulated sixteen theorems. He remarked that if these targets were actually met, it would always lead to good vocational training. He stated among others that vocational education will be efficient when:

- The environment in which the learner is trained is a replica of the environment in which he must subsequently work. These dictate that the type, kinds amount, use and arrangement of space, materials, equipment and supplies for a preparatory programme be a replica of those in employment



- The training is carried on in the same way, the same operation using the same tools and machines as in the occupation itself. Emphasized here is that the skills taught should follow the same basic practices as industrial employers would expect, and learners should be able to move from the training situation to the employment situation with little need for adjustment.
- The individual is trained directly and specifically in the thinking and manipulative habits required in the occupation itself. This implies that the scientific or problem-solving method is being developed in students and that manipulative skills are performed with sufficient repetition so that habit formation takes place.
- It permits each trainee to develop his interest, aptitude and intrinsic intelligence to the highest possible degree. This theorem has direct implications for class size, to individualized instruction, instructional methods, effective guidance and selection of learners, and the promotional plan for the programme.
- It is designed for the selected group of individuals who need it, want it, and are able to profit by it. Vocational education is not for everyone and this implies that those admitted should be carefully selected through effective guidance procedures and should be potentially successful as future productive workers.
- The instructor has had successful experience in the application of skills and knowledge to the operations and processes he undertakes to teach. The implication in this case is that the teacher cannot teach that which they do not know, therefore, it would follow those teachers who are recognized as highly competent workers themselves would be most desirable for a vocational programme. It also implies that teachers should update themselves because modern-day experience is of utmost importance.
- The only reliable source of content for specific training in an occupation is in the experience of masters of that occupation. This statement reaffirms the need for occupational analysis as the basic method of curriculum development.
- The content which is peculiar to that occupation and to which has practically no functional value in any other occupation. This statement has direct implication to the close coordinated instructional programme between the related technical construction and the skill development phase of the programme. So-called broad or general areas of instruction in the subject matter unrelated to the problems at hand will have little benefit to the development of a competent worker.
- The administration is elastic and fluid rather than rigid and standardized. Vocational educators should be always alert to possible improvement and be willing to work toward continually adjusting the programmes in light of changing employment requirements.
- Every reasonable effort is made to reduce per capita cost, but there is a minimum below which effective vocational education cannot be given, and if the course does not permit this minimum per capita cost, vocational education should not be attempted. Preparation for employment is generally more costly than general education. This additional cost is usually dependent upon the space, equipment, and materials. And the necessity for smaller class sizes than would be true of normal academic programmes of instruction. However, this statement directly implies that it is better not to attempt a vocational programme than to operate it below the economic level that would lead to success. Vocational education is not cheap education, but it is economically sound to provide it.

The consequence, Prosser said, would be solid, excellent vocational education in nearly every case if every vocational educator responsible for programmes of instruction just kept this list of theorems in front of them and made a real attempt to accomplish these aims. The higher the quality of a vocational programme, the closer it may get to fully realising these axioms in its functioning. The community's vocational education programme will be undermined and



destroyed if any attempt is made to ignore any one of these key ideas. The development of physical facilities and infrastructure, innovations; quality teaching, human resources, and curriculum innovation must be prioritised by higher educational administrators in order to achieve standards that are globally acceptable (Asiyai, 2020). The following are recommended for a sound and quality Education:

Facilities

- **Classrooms:** space that would take thirty (30) students conveniently with sufficient room for passages within the classroom space would be made available for each lecture and seminar for each subject.
- **Laboratories/studios:** At least, one (1) each of typing pool, shorthand laboratory, model/office and information technology room must be available.
- **Staff offices:** Each senior staff should be provided with furnished offices. The HOD should be provided with a computer facility. There should also be an office for support staff (typists, clerks etc) with relevant equipment e.g. typewriters, reproduction machines etc.
- **Books in the library:** there must be enough books to cover all the areas of the subjects to the ratio of one student to ten books. A department library is compulsory.
- **Equipment:** equipment required for the teaching of the skills in the business education programmes are as follows; Manual typewriters, Computers (numbers should be in the ratio of one (1) computer to three (3) students.), shorthand laboratory, model office, Swivel typing chairs, Drop desk, typist desk, instructors table, instructors chairs, Stapling machine and so on.

Personnel

At least one (1) academic staff per subject area with a minimum qualification of a first degree (minimum of a second class lower division) and a minimum of nine (9) lectures (one of whom should be a computer specialist) is required. All lecturers must be computer literate. Thus, computer literacy must be one of the criteria for a fresh appointment. Staff /student ratio for skilled subjects like shorthand, typewriting and accounting should be 1:20 and 1:30 for other subjects like commerce, economics and others.

Factors Affecting Quality in Business Education

Quality must be the guiding principle in order to achieve the goals of Business Education, which is to help individuals advance and profit from it. The prerequisite skills may be taught to students via Business Education. They are independent thanks to these skills. The success of Business Education in our schools will be greatly influenced by the calibre of the professors, labs, and other school facilities. Odesanya (2012) noted that many higher education institutions, including Universities and Colleges of Education that provide Business Education in Nigeria, were unable to improve teaching quality by funding conferences, seminars, workshops, and field trips. Some of the constraints facing the teaching and learning of Business Education are highlighted below,

1. **Shortage of Qualified Personnel:** Shortage of qualified personnel is a very serious problem, the need for manpower in the present stage of development is very important as one strives towards being a self-reliant nation, no meaningful development can take place without a conscious effort to develop manpower. Most of the graduates from our numerous vocational and technical institutions do not like to teach, prefer to work in the industry, and those who are ready to teach are mostly not employed and so they become unemployed.
2. **Lack of Equipment and Infrastructural Facilities for Teaching and Learning** The shortage of equipment and facilities can affect the quality of teaching and learning, quality diminishes when the facilities required for imparting and learning are inadequate or at times not available. Most Tertiary Institutions lack equipment for training, lack workshop and

workshop facilities, and have ill-equipped laboratories and libraries. Business Education is the type of education that prepares its recipients for the world of work and so the student is supposed to be exposed to a work environment which will enable them to fit in and outside the school environment, according to Posser's theory. Government and the school authority should endeavour to provide adequate equipment and infrastructural facilities for teaching and learning. This will help to boost the quality of teaching and learning. The recipients should be exposed to a work environment which will enable them to fit in and out of the school environment.

3. **Low Level of Funding:** The low level of funding for Vocational Education has been a problem in the implementation of quality teaching and learning of business education. The strict implementation of this type of Education will remain elusive without competent Vocational Teachers, many of the institutions of higher learning produce Vocational Teachers due to low levels of funding, lack of equipment, accommodation, (Workshops), training materials and money for the maintenance of equipment. Business Education is practical-oriented, and the absence of equipment and facilities due to poor funding is bound to affect the competence of the products and subsequently the implementation of the vocational of the secondary schools.
4. **Poor Societal Attitude:** This is concerned with the poor image of business education in the eyes of the Nigerian public. The new policy document on education in section 6, subsection 47, recognizes the general public attitude, which regards technical education as somewhat inferior to other types of education, there is still a strong tendency towards white-collar jobs as a result of the low status associated with most kinds of Vocational and Technical Education. Most parents want their children to be medical doctors, accountants, lawyers, administrators and good politicians. The attitude of people towards Vocational and Technical Education contributes to the problems in the teaching of Vocational and Technical Education. In schools, the teacher could be teaching people who are not interested in the subject that is being taught.
5. **Poor Administration and Supervision of Vocational Technical Education Programmes:** Poor administration and supervision hinder the effective development of Vocational Education. There is a lack of coordination between the various federal and state Agencies responsible for the administration of vocational education programmes. This lack of coordination has resulted in costly duplication of efforts and an inability to design vocational curricula for Nigerian youth.

Conclusion

Business Education is a programme that provides a person with practical and appropriate skills and information; it is a tool for development and significantly contributes to the economic development of any country. In order to provide the students the greatest training that will enable them to adapt into the working environment, quality teaching must be provided during the training. The overarching goal of the quality assurance system is for students to obtain the greatest learning results and personal development via relevant education that will equip them for working life and a changing society. The supply of adequate instructional facilities and equipment, as well as the hiring of more qualified teachers, are crucial for achieving these and many other goals of Business Education.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made,

1. The federal, state and local government should assist in the development of business Education in Schools and colleges by funding the programme
2. The welfare of Vocational Teachers should be paramount in the mind of all stakeholders. Payment of salaries allowance, promotions etc. should be attended to without delay.
3. Lecturers should be sponsored financially by conferences and should be encouraged to further their education (In-service training) in Business Education.
4. Practical should be more than theory. It has been observed that there are many courses in



Education without credit units attached to the courses offered. Students should not be overloaded with courses also more periods must be given on the timetable for teaching.

5. Qualified personnel should be employed for quality teaching. Management of institutions should ensure that only qualified and experienced teachers that possess a very high level of theory and strong operational ability are recruited to teach business subjects. The management and administration of business education programmes should not be placed in the hands of imposters (that is, those who are not in the field of vocational and technical education). In Nigeria, the headship of vocational and technical education is often placed in the hands of those who are not vocational business educators.
6. Teachers should prepare for their lessons and make use of real or concrete materials as teaching aids for students. They should be more committed to their duties.
7. The government should make it a point of duty to fund and provide the necessary facilities and equipment for business education, as stated by NCCE standards. Business education laboratories/workshops should be made available and well-equipped with modern tools/technologies. There should be enough books in the business library for the student for private learning.
8. Students should have a positive attitude towards their education and be more focused.

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