OFFICE TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT'S INFLUENCE ON BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract: *This study investigates the impact of office technology management on university business education programs. Business education is an essential component of Vocational Education in Nigeria's tertiary education system. Reforms in the nation's education delivery have resulted in a jumble of programs requiring the use of new technologies. As a result, the impact of office technologies on business education is a major theme. When the influence is positive, it indicates that the goal of integration is worthwhile; when it is negative, it indicates that there is a serious problem that necessitates some action. Because education is now centered on office technologies all over the world, business education cannot afford to ignore the significance of utilizing office technologies. As a result of their findings, the researchers concluded that a worthwhile business education curriculum should provide learning experiences that will equip lecturers and staff with the necessary competencies in the use of office technology, and students should be trained to meet the market demands of various occupations. It was suggested that business educators give their students an experiential foundation so that they can develop the necessary competencies.*

Keywords: *office technology, business education, management, curriculum*

Introduction

Business education is a component of vocational technical education programs that prepares students for business careers as well as being knowledgeable consumers of economic goods and services. Business education prepares students for careers as workers in industries, civil servants, and business owners by providing them with the competencies, skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes required. It is work-focused, skill-based, results-oriented, and technology-based (Ugwoke, 2011). The only constant factor in life is change. This exemplifies the dynamism of a competitive business environment. Education is regarded as a model document for preparing citizens to play effective roles in society. Business education is one type of education that prepares students to adapt to a changing work environment. According to the American Vocational Association (AVA) in Osuala (2009), business education is a two-part instructional program: (a) Office Education; a vocational education program for office careers that includes initial, refresher, and upgrading education that leads to employability and advancement in office occupation; and (b) General Business Education; a program that provides students with information and competencies needed by all in managing personal and business affairs and using business world services.

To remain relevant in meeting the needs of individuals and society, Business Education programs must embrace current trends (new technologies) in academic and economic demands of society. Tertiary institutions, also known as higher education in Nigeria, are

educational institutions that provide education to individuals after they have completed their primary or secondary schooling. Thus, tertiary business education is provided in universities, colleges of various disciplines, polytechnics and monotechnics, and special colleges (Koko, 2010). Some of these postsecondary institutions offer a diverse range of business education programs. Accounting education and Office Technology and Management are the two options available in colleges of education (OTM). Business education is available at the polytechnic as Office Technology and Management (OTM). While in universities, the business education options available demonstrate the diversity of operation in different universities that provide business education.

As a result, the design of business education curriculum in universities is dependent on institutional goals and objectives, as well as the background or affiliation of curriculum designers, or depending on the university involved nomenclature (Koko, 2010). Accounting Education, Office Education (Secretarial Education), Management Education, Marketing/Distributive Education, and Computer Education are among the options. As a result, business education programs do not simply assume that business education should focus on the education of business course teachers; rather, business education includes elements of accountancy, business administration, marketing, finance, cooperative management, and secretarial administration (Okorie, 2001).

For tertiary institutions in Nigeria that offer business education programs to fulfill their mandates, the quality of the training provided to individuals completing one or more courses should be such that it provides adequate skills and information required in the real world. If business education is to serve the purpose of meeting the needs of learners and society, its curriculum should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the quality of education provided is in line with societal demands. This curriculum review will incorporate new technologies that can assist in passing on the desired and required skills to the learner, making him/her employable and relevant in the ever-changing business environment. As a result, the purpose of this paper is to primarily discuss the impact of office technology management in university business education programs.

Business Education

Business education is a branch of education that focuses on the study of topics in connected fields. It combines two fields of study that are primarily concerned with the art of shorthand writing, typewriting, accounting, business mathematics, secretarial work, and office and commercial procedures. Every person has the chance to expand their abilities, skills, and understanding of the various career opportunities thanks to the field of study. The unemployment rate is a significant macroeconomic issue in our economy. Because our educational system was general in character and did not address specific occupational needs, the majority of its graduates hunt for occupations that do not exist. Our national education policy de-emphasizes our liberal education system in favor of a utilitarian type of education in order to meet the needs of society. In response, beginning with junior secondary school, a Business Education program was implemented in our educational system, allowing for gradual skill development and competency.

Business education is crucial to the development and expansion of Nigeria's economy. It also gives information, skills, and competence for individuals to operate well in office occupations and also generate jobs for themselves and others. It enhances personal

attributes and strengthens the attitudes of persons that are important for adjustment to personal and employment conditions (Amoor & Udoh 2008). The nation's economy is still defined by a high proportion of unemployment and poverty despite federal government initiatives to address these problems in society. Therefore, the significance of a curriculum that will aid in reforming the business education program at Nigerian universities by producing people who will significantly advance the country's economic development cannot be overstated. The urgent need to make some changes to the Business Education program's curriculum in Nigerian universities is due to the unchecked rates of unemployment and poverty. This will ensure that students are not only exposed to a particular skill but also to creative thinking that is sufficient to start and operate a business, at least on a small scale. Integrating entrepreneurship courses into the Business Education program in Nigerian institutions is a wise decision and comes at the perfect time given that entrepreneurship education will give Business Education graduates additional skills, resources, and methodologies to turn their ideas into visible and viable businesses. The nation is currently experiencing an economic meltdown, which will in turn increase the rate of unemployment and poverty in the society. If done correctly, graduates won't have to wait in line for a paid job on the labor market; instead, they'll be able to generate jobs for both themselves and others. This will make a significant difference in lowering unemployment and poverty in the community.

It would be required to look at the definitions of business education from the past and current in order to be able to comprehend the idea of business education. This is as a result of how technology has altered how some concepts are defined. Therefore, it suggests that business education as a field of study needs to evolve. As a crucial component of education, business education is known as "functional utility education," giving its students the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes they need to succeed in any line of work. The following specialization options are available in business education:

1. Distribution and marketing,
2. Accounting,
3. Administrative or office.

When asked what business education is, Popham (1975) responded: "Business education is education to produce goods and services," as a business executive retorted. A radical retorted that it was a great way to make a lot of money. One teacher retorted that economic ideas are necessary for survival in a capitalist economy. According to another educator, learning the necessary skills to work in commerce or distribution. "Shorthand and typing," remarked a bystander. Popham's examination of the various perspectives on business education yielded the following results: A course in business education prepares students for employment and advancement in the business sector. It is also important because it prepares students to manage their own business affairs, make informed consumer decisions, and participate responsibly in society in a market-based economy. Nolan, Hayden, and Malsbary (1967) defined business education as "those business programs and courses that are frequently offered at the secondary school level." According to OC Osuala (1989), business education is a critical component of preparing young people for life and living. In 2004, Osuala described it as an educational program with two components: (1) Office education, a vocational program for office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education; and (2) General business education, a program to give students the knowledge and skills necessary for everyone to manage personal business affairs and use

business services. Regarding the definition of business education, Njoku (1997) states that it is the portion of educational instruction that helps people develop practical abilities for daily life. Njoku provided a different definition in 2006, describing an educational program as one that gives a person the practical and appropriate information, skills, attitudes, and values needed to function in the environment in which they find themselves. From the debate above, it is clear that as time passes, the definitions of business education vary. As a result, business education is dynamic.

Any worthwhile program must therefore evolve over time. Business instructors, on the other hand, have long acknowledged that change is a feature of life. The necessities of business have continuously shaped business curriculum from the typewriter to the transistor. Therefore, the ability of business education to adapt and stay up with the needs of its students is constantly crucial to its success and survival. Both the instructor and the pupil face difficulties as a result of these changes. To ensure successful programs in the future, the business educator must be prepared to adjust and handle these difficulties. If the curriculum of business programs across the nation is to continue to satisfy the demands of its students, business education must be a valuable and crucial part of the transformation agenda. From the definitions given above, it can be inferred that business education is both an education for and about business. It blends information that is academic and practical. In a similar spirit, it familiarizes the receiver with his nation's economic structure and gives him lifelong skills that will enable him to exercise sound judgment as a provider of goods and services, an employee, or a consumer of those products and services.

Business education focuses on the empowerment required to handle professional issues in a fast-paced business environment or society. It gives recipients the capacity to adapt to new developments in business and education, where the person is expected to demonstrate all the abilities learned throughout training. As a result, business education is designed to train and develop students so that they are exposed to the business world and can function as professionals. This opens up more opportunities to teach students skills that will help the economy of the society as a whole.

Office Technology

Office technology is the term used to describe the use of networks, computer systems, and software for processing, distributing, and sharing information within an organization. An office is only a term for a formal workspace. An organization may run its operations effectively and gain a competitive advantage thanks to technology. Organizational office technology refers to the technical equipment and tools that organizations use to carry out routine duties including client management, payroll administration, sales analysis, order fulfillment, and communication. An organization needs staff in positions like computer networking, administrators, administrative assistants, and computer system analysts if it wants to use technology effectively. Because of the rapid advancement of technology, businesses must constantly update their office technology. Office technology refers to technology that can be used in an office setting. It may also include leveraged software, managed IT services, and other types of business technology support. Computers, paper shredders, printers, copiers, and phone systems are all included. The office technology of ten years from now can seem completely different because technology is continually

changing. Office technology has changed considerably throughout time and will likely continue to do so. At one point in time, it was equivalent to the stapler or the light bulb.

Management Techniques for Office Technologies in Business Education

According to Nwoji (2012), technology can be defined as the application of the scientific method to everyday problems. However, from the standpoint of business education, technology is the application of the scientific method to address issues concerning the transfer of skills to students in order to meet society's evolving needs and demands. Despite the use of primitive technology in business education, there has been a drastic and significant shift in the approaches taken by the field to meet shifting social requirements. In Nwoji (2012), Olson argues that technology is a complex phenomenon in materials that man has developed to free himself from nature's constraints, but which, when unchecked, enslaves its own creator. This definition states that technology aids in advancing man's course within his environment, but that its use must be directed toward resolving man's issues in order to avoid being misleading.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is primarily the source of the technical advancements in business education. ICT is a driving force in society as a whole, so business education needs to restructure the knowledge and skills it imparts to learners and students in order to stay up with this development. One of the 21st-century developments is the "Electronic Office," or "e-office," which uses computers to complete all office tasks in a paperless environment. Based on this, the majority of business education departments in Nigeria's tertiary institutions are constructing ICT Centers, upgraded computer labs, and providing professional computer studies courses to students and graduates in order to produce people who can easily adapt in their constantly changing business environment. The typewriter is nearly obsolete as computers rapidly replace them.

Office technology management courses in business education are designed to prepare students for a variety of jobs in high-tech workplaces. Developing taxonomy of emerging technologies for business education is difficult due to their diversity and ongoing change in terms of their structures and functions. Different authors have used various typologies to classify new technology. McLoughlin and Clark (1997) proposed categorizing them as process and product technologies. Mazda (1993) claims that there are core and application technologies; new technologies can be divided into four categories, according to Haag, Cummings, and Mc Cubbrey (2002): new technologies for all senses, new technologies for the internet boom, new technologies for the wireless revolution, and new technologies for personal usage.The development of new technologies like the computer, word processor, internet, automated teller machines, reprographic machines, and micrographic machines is without a doubt. In addition to revolutionizing the business setting, accounting machines, contemporary telephonic technologies, including handset and multimedia, among others, have also changed how individuals go about their daily lives. One of the new technologies that is most readily apparent is the computer. Although new technologies are essential for delivering business education programs, the idea of curriculum review is of the utmost significance.

Modern technology is widely used and recognized as a necessary tool for any organization's efficient management. Modern technology's engagement with educational administration has served as an antidote or remedy for educational issues that would have been challenging to resolve with only human efforts. To enhance the teaching and learning of

business education courses, it is necessary for the instructor or students to take an introspective approach and prioritize innovation in the social system (Mashau & Andrisha, 2016). One of the most important contemporary forces influencing the world economy and causing swift social change is modern technology, which has fundamentally altered how people learn, interact, and conduct business. As a result, the nature of education, where and how learning takes place, and the roles of students and teachers in the learning process have all changed. According to Breuleux, Laferriere, and Lamon (2002), it is an improved scientific tool designed to facilitate labor. Multimedia projectors and interactive television are examples of modern technology in this context.

The term "interactive television" refers to learning that occurs through broadcast television. It enables remote, simple education from the teacher to trainees via live television. While the instructor(s) are in a broadcast studio, the learners watch them on a television monitor. Interaction is provided by one or more additional components. They can ask questions and/or make comments to the instructor using a variety of independent and combined techniques (Eme, 2015). An audio conferencing system is typically used for real-time communication. A computerized instructor console can also be linked to students in the broadcast studio via a response pad. Email and fax are two other asynchronous communication methods. Using a lens system, a multimedia projector processes a particular video input and displays the resulting image on a huge screen. In order to display the image, video projectors simulate a very strong light. The image is projected onto the screen by the projector after the video signal travels down a lengthy, specialized digitalized light that is projected onto thousands of internal reflections. The lessons delivered through this medium are vividly depicted in the learners' minds.

Office Technology Management and Universities' Business Education Programs

Modern technical advancements have had a significant impact on contemporary business education programs (office technologies). As an example, the Department of Technical and Business Education at Delta State University, Abraka, offers the following new technologically based business education courses:

1. BED 202/212 Basic Word Processing/Format Typewriting I & II
2. BUS 114 Business Communications
3. GST 112 History and Philosophy of Science and Technology
4. CSC 200 Introductions to Computer
5. BED 304/314 Intermediate Word Processing I & II
6. BED 306 Office Information Systems
7. BED 311 Business Machine
8. BED 317 Secretarial Procedures
9. BED 405/415 Advanced Word Processing I & II
10. BUS 307/317 Data Processing and Management Information I & II

Source: Faculty Handbook, Department of Technical and Business Education, Delta State University, Abraka; Business Education Course Outline.

The following business education courses are available at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka in response to recent technology advancements:

1. Basic Word Processing I & II GSE 101,
2. BED 144/245 appreciation of computers

3. CSE 101/102 Office Information System I & II
4. GSE 201 Computer Programming I & II
5. BED 211/212 Business Machines I
6. BED 334 Computer Programming
7. Office Information System III and IV,
8. ACC 317 Management Information ,
9. BED 345/346 Intermediate Word Processing I & II,
10. BED 415 Applied Word Processing.

Source: Faculty Handbook, Business Education Programme Course Outline, Department of Vocational and Adult Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Business education is offered at the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) level. The new technologies were not given sufficient attention in the business education curriculum at the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) level. New technologies have, however, had an impact on the current National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) business education curriculum with the introduction of such courses as:

1. Computer Appreciation, BED 228,
2. Word Processing I & II, OTM 317/327,
3. BES/BEA 318 Information Technology/Computer Application.

In addition to the aforementioned new office management-based courses, the presence of new technologies was identified in numerous other current courses in the business education curriculum through the inclusion of related themes such as in:

1. BED 125 Office Practice includes, among other things, processing machines, electronic computers, and office supplies.
2. VTE/BED 220 Entrepreneurship,
3. VTE I: Problems and Issues in Business and Technology,
4. OTM/BEA 314: The impact of technology,
5. OTM 315 Secrecy-related tasks: Equipment used in telecommunications, such as phones, fax machines, and email, as well as office supplies like reprographics (National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), 2008).

Conclusion

Business education continues to be the cornerstone of human resource development because it delivers the knowledge, abilities, and understanding necessary to function in the business environment as either a consumer or a producer of the goods and services that business has to offer. The world is a community of nations. Virtually every aspect of human endeavor, including the teaching and learning processes, has undergone transformation in the current era of technological growth. A valuable business education curriculum should offer learning opportunities that will give the graduate the necessary skills for using contemporary office technologies. The economy is evolving, and this article has shown that business education students need to be prepared to fulfill the market demands of the many jobs. As a result of recent technological advancements, a sizable number of new business education courses have been developed. These courses are taught by universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education that provide business education programs. The following suggestions are given after identifying the impact of office technology management on business education programs at universities:

1. To effectively handle instructional tasks for business education, educational institution administrators must supply the necessary office technologies.
2. 2. Business educators should be pushed to give their students the experiential foundation they need to develop the necessary knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to function in a technologically advanced society.
3. The curriculum for business education needs to be adaptable to accommodate these new technologically based courses. 4. Because society is dynamic and develops over time, curricula should change to reflect these changes as they relate to business education.
4. To accomplish the goal of the revised/adjusted tertiary business education curricula, adequate structures and technology should be offered.

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