Comparative Programmes of Business Education In Nigerian Universities
(A Case Study of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and Delta State University, Abraka)

1F.O. Ohiwerei and 2N. Azih
1Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria
2Department of Business Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Abstract: This paper is aimed to critically x-ray the business education curriculum of Nigerian Universities a case study of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and Delta State University, Abraka. It was observed that in Ambrose Alli University business education is housed in the department of Vocational and Technical Education with two options namely Accounting Education and Secretarial Education while it runs a specialized system right from 100 to 400 levels. On the other hand the Delta State University runs a 100 to 200 levels broad based system. Specialization is done in 300 and 400 levels. Here business education is a unit of its own; housing accounting option, secretarial option, management option, but unfortunately computer education options is not functional. It was observed that the objectives, philosophy and admission requirements of both universities are the same. While courses offered are different in nature. Conclusion and recommendations were made.

Key words: Business education, curriculum, effectiveness, programme, teaching, university

INTRODUCTION

Education is the totality of life experience that man acquires and which enables him to cope with and derive satisfaction from living in the word. This is because it enables him to achieve social competence and optimum individual development. Broken down, business education which is a subset of the general education can be seen as the development of person’s head, heart and hands for his self fulfillment and optimum services to humanity.

To achieve this according to the National Policy on Education (2004), computer education was integrated into the primary school curriculum, a welcome development but sad to note that subjects like shorthand, typewriting, commerce, and book-keeping are integrated together to form business studies thereby losing their original identity.

Experience has shown that most people are not interested in business education as a profession with the mind set that it is education meant for the less privilege or a programme, which upon graduation, there is no opportunity for securing a job.

This is so because Business education curriculum planners who are not professional members in the field could not design a uniform curriculum that will house all the universities offering business education courses in Nigeria. The incompetence on the part of business education graduates also lays on the curriculum not properly designed to reflect the psychomotor nature of our noble profession.

Pitman (1974) defined curriculum as a prescribed courses of studies. While Hornby (2006) says curriculum are the subjects that are included in a course of study or taught in a school, college, etc.

According to Okoye (1991), the process of curriculum development and planning is continuous. It does not end once and for all time. According to Uwaifo (2006) a close look at the current Vocational and Technical Education curriculum generally reveals some problems that border on inadequate course content. Uhumuavbi and Ebomhen (2006) in their own vain stated that irrespective of the level of education and training given during the pre-colonial days in Africa, it was functional because the curriculum was relevant to the needs of the society. Unemployment if it existed at all was minimal and very few young men roamed the villages and towns with nothing to do.

According to Snyder (2008), a flexible curriculum is important because there is no single curricular path to career success. We are giving students more flexibility; this is not a radical departure from our curriculum. Robert and Booth (2008) stated that the curriculum changes allow students to increase the intensity of their studies.

The present Nigerian Universities business education curriculum has overstayed, therefore, it is important that they be modified to meet today’s needs. This is very essential from the standpoint of academic integrity. One will be tempted to ask at this juncture, is there anything wrong with the present Nigerian Universities business
education curriculum? The researchers answer is “YES’ but that does not mean that the present curriculum on ground can not be improved upon.

The reasons for the reformation of the business education curriculum is aimed to help create tomorrow’s competitive workforce by inspiring and engaging businesses to work in partnership with schools to raise the levels of achievement of young people, especially those in disadvantaged circumstances. Business education has advanced the level of “garbage in, garbage out words system” but a leadership role.

The importance of the business educators is increasing as the business world becomes more complex. Through this programme, individuals are educated to become skilled employees who can contribute meaningfully to the overall effectiveness of an office, teaching and learning in schools. It is on the basis of this therefore; the researchers attempt to examine, compare and contrast the curriculum of business education programmes of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and Delta State University, Abraka with a view to scientifically reform it to meet the ever increasing technology development.

This study will be of benefit to the teachers, students, parents and government. Through this study, students’ competency for work placement will be achieved. The teachers will be properly informed on what should be included or excluded from the curriculum for effective teaching and learning. The parents will have a sign of relief that upon graduation from the university their children will be gainfully employed or self-reliance. The government will appreciate the programme, as it will help to reduce unemployment and crime rate in the society.

LITERATURE REVIEW BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY, EKPOMA AND DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY, ABRAKA

Business education programmes offered by Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma are:

- Accounting education option
- Secretarial education option

While the business education programmes offered by the Delta State University, Abraka are:

- Accounting Option
- Secretarial Technology Option
- Management Option.
- Computer Education Option.

In the actual sense, Accounting, Secretarial and management options are operational.

Programme title: Secretarial Studies/Office Management: Both universities have the same philosophy, specific objectives and admission requirements as described below:

Philosophy: The introduction of the office automation, by the use of electronic equipment has not only brought changes on office procedures and competencies, but also has created new functions in the business offices. In order to meet the changing office skills, educational have also changed their business education programmes to cater for the new requirements by introducing office management programme. In Nigeria, office automation has become a reality and all levels of government are requesting educational institutions to include computer literacy in their curriculum. This programme is designed to meet the requirements of the changing office environment and the call by the governments in Nigeria.

Specific Objectives: This programme is designed to give the students the liability to work in modern business offices and to teach modern office skills in secondary schools. Specifically, the programme will give the students the skills to perform the following functions in the office:

- Planning and organizing office operations,
- Written communications and telecommunications in the office,
- Information and records management in the office,
- Leadership and Human Relations in the office,
- Controlling office operations.

Admission requirements: (Four-year programme- UME): West African School Certificate (WASC) or General Certificate of Education (GCE O/L or NECO with at least credit passes in five relevant subjects which must include English Language.

Direct entry:

- Passes at merit level in relevant Diploma programme of a University or any other institution recognized by Senate in addition to four O/L credit passes which must include English Language.
- Passes in two relevant subjects at A/L in addition to three C/L credit passes or its equivalent which must include English Language.
- Passes at merit level in least two subjects in NCE in addition to three credit passes in GCE O/L or its equivalent, in not more than two sittings.

No student shall qualify for the award of an honours degree of the University if he/she spends more than two sessions (four semesters) beyond the normal period allowed for the degree programme.
Accounting Education Option of Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma

**FIRST SEMESTER 100 LEVEL**

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<td>EDU 102</td>
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<td>ECO 101</td>
<td>Economics Principles I</td>
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<td>Principle Of Accounting</td>
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**SECOND SEMESTER 100 LEVEL**

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<td>BED 211 Intermediate Shorthand I</td>
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BED 101 Introduction to Secretarial Education in Shorthand I
BED 102 Introduction to Secretarial Education in Typewriting I
BED 104 History of Education
BED 105 Principles of Economics I
GST 101 Use of English and Library
GST 102 Philosophy and Logic

SECOND SEMESTER 100 LEVEL

BED 111 Introduction to Secretarial Education in Shorthand II
BED 112 Introduction to Secretarial Education in Typewriting II
BED 113 Principles of Business Education
BED 114 Introduction to Vocational & Technical Education
BED 115 Principles & Practice of Cooperative Education
EDU 112 Introduction to Social Studies Education
ACC 111 Introduction to Accounting II
BUS 114 Business Communication
ECN 111 Principles of Economics II
GST 111 Nigeria People and Culture
GST 113 Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution
GST 114 Communication in French

FIRST SEMESTER 200 LEVEL

BED 201 Basic Word Processing: Shorthand I
BED 202 Basic Word Processing: Typewriting I
BED 203 Marketing Management Education
EDU 200 Principles of Instruction
EDU 201 Philosophy of Education
EDU 202 Curriculum Development
ACC 201 Financial Accounting I
ACC 202 Quantitative Financial Analysis
BUS 201 Principles of Management I
CSC 200 Introduction to Computer

SECOND SEMESTER 200 LEVEL

BED 211 Basic Word Processing: Shorthand II
BED 212 Basic Word Processing: Typewriting II
BED 213 Office Management
BED 214 Leadership Behaviour
BED 215 Finance and Economics of Business Education
EDU 211 Business Education Method
EDU 212 Test and Measurement
EDU 213 Sociology of Education
ACC 211 Financial Accounting II
BUS 211 Principles of Management II

Accounting Option 300 Level of Delta State University, Abraka

BED 302 Business Education Statistics I
BED 303 Banking Education
EDU 300 Teaching Practice
EDU 301 Educational Administration and Planning
EDU 302 Educational Technology
ACC 301 Corporate Accounting I
ACC 303 Cost Accounting I
ACC 305 Auditing
BUS 301 Business Law I

SECOND SEMESTER 300 LEVEL

BED 312 Business Education Statistics II
BED 313 Human Resources Management in Education
EDU 311 Educational Psychology
EDU 312 Research Methods and Data Processing
ACC 311 Corporate Accounting II (Accounting Option)
ACC 312 Taxation
ACC 313 Cost Accounting II

FIRST SEMESTER 400 LEVEL

BED 400 Research Project
BED 402 Project Evaluation
BED 403 Admin. Of Vocational and Technical Education
BED 404 Business Finance
EDU 401 Teaching Practice
EDU 402 Guidance and Counseling
EDU 403 Continuous Assessment
ACC 402 Advanced Financial Accounting

SECOND SEMESTER 400 LEVEL

BED 411 Organization Of Primary And Secondary Education
BED 413 Comparative Education
BED 415 Educational Psychology
VTE 411 Professional Seminar
BED 411 Office Dictation II
BED 412 Word Processing II
BED 413 Human Relations And Personnel
BED 414 Record Management II
ACC 415 Management Information System

BED 401 Office Dictation I
BED 402 Word Processing I
BED 403 Personnel Management

SECOND SEMESTER 300 LEVEL

BED 203 Marketing Management Education
EDU 200 Principles of Instruction
EDU 201 Philosophy of Education
EDU 202 Curriculum Development
ACC 201 Financial Accounting I
ACC 202 Quantitative Financial Analysis
BUS 201 Principles of Management I
CSC 200 Introduction to Computer

SECOND SEMESTER 200 LEVEL

BED 211 Basic Word Processing: Shorthand I
BED 212 Basic Word Processing: Typewriting I
BED 213 Office Management
BED 214 Leadership Behaviour
BED 215 Finance and Economics of Business Education
EDU 211 Business Education Method
EDU 212 Test and Measurement
EDU 213 Sociology of Education
ACC 211 Financial Accounting II
BUS 211 Principles of Management II

Accounting Option 300 Level of Delta State University, Abraka

BED 302 Business Education Statistics I
BED 303 Banking Education
EDU 300 Teaching Practice
EDU 301 Educational Administration and Planning
EDU 302 Educational Technology
ACC 301 Corporate Accounting I
ACC 303 Cost Accounting I
ACC 305 Auditing
BUS 301 Business Law I

SECOND SEMESTER 300 LEVEL

BED 312 Business Education Statistics II
BED 313 Human Resources Management in Education
EDU 311 Educational Psychology
EDU 312 Research Methods and Data Processing
ACC 311 Corporate Accounting II (Accounting Option)
ACC 312 Taxation
ACC 313 Cost Accounting II

FIRST SEMESTER 400 LEVEL

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BED 413 Comparative Education
BED 415 Educational Psychology
VTE 411 Professional Seminar
BED 411 Office Dictation II
BED 412 Word Processing II
BED 413 Human Relations And Personnel
BED 414 Record Management II
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BED 415 Educational Psychology
VTE 411 Professional Seminar
BED 411 Office Dictation II
BED 412 Word Processing II
BED 413 Human Relations And Personnel
BED 414 Record Management II
ACC 415 Management Information System

BED 401 Office Dictation I
BED 402 Word Processing I
BED 403 Personnel Management

SECOND SEMESTER 300 LEVEL

BED 312 Business Education Statistics II
BED 313 Human Resources Management in Education
EDU 311 Educational Psychology
EDU 312 Research Methods and Data Processing
ACC 311 Corporate Accounting II (Accounting Option)
ACC 312 Taxation
ACC 313 Cost Accounting II
The objectives, philosophy and admission requirements of both universities are the same. The course description of Computer education option of Delta State University was not stated in their handbook, an indication that the programme is yet to take off. It was also observed that the present curriculum being operated by the Business Education of Delta State University became operational in 2006/2007 academic session to date.

Differences in course units were observed. For example, according to Ambrose Alli University, Faculty of Education handbook (2000), shorthand, which is 3 units in Ambrose Alli University, is 2 units in Delta State University. Title differences were observed e.g. in Ambrose Alli University BED 205 and BED 215 is Business Communication, while in Delta State University Business Communication is coded BUS 114. BED 400, which is research project in Delta State University, is EDU 400 in Ambrose Alli University. There are some courses that are offered in Ambrose Alli University that are not offered in Delta State University. Also, there are some courses that are offered in Delta State University that are not offered in Ambrose Alli University, such as BED 113 Principles of Business Education, GST 114 Communication in French, BED 203 Marketing Management Education, BED 214 Leadership behaviour, BED 410 Small Business Development, BED 413 Business Education and Industrial Relations BED 414 Manpower Training and Development.

DISCUSSION
While the following are courses offered in Ambrose Ali University that are not offered in Delta State University; BED 111 Office Practice; BED 114 Fundamental of Business; ECO 111 Economics Practice; ACC 208 Business Law; VTE 301 Time Management; VTE 201 VTE in Nigeria and other countries; BED 203 Planning Organizing Office; BED 303 Record Management, and BED 415 Management Information System.

CONCLUSION

It is our responsibility to plan, implement, and update programmes so that students can attain a satisfactory level of achievement appropriate to either immediate employment or advanced education in preparation for later employment. Opportunities are abundant for students in the business world if their preparation is complete and if their attitudes are positive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The authors hold the view that to be relevant in the 21st Century, business educators should be trained based on the following courses:


300 and 400 level accounting education: (1) Record Management (2) Time Management (3) Company Law (4) Small Scale Business (Introduction to Business) (5) Industrial Attachment (SIWES) (6) Practical Teaching (7) Business Ownership/Applied Economics (8) Human/Personnel Management (9) Marketing (10) Industrial and Labour Relations (11) Record Management II (12) Seminar (13) Project work. Accounting courses from Accounting Department should be added to the above. This is however subject to regular revision. Other recommendations are:

- National University Commission should regularize the curriculum of business education in all Nigerian Universities.
- Curriculum planners should be careful while planning in order not to remove some essential recipes from the existing content. Such as the issue of shorthand to be or not to be.
- All business education students should be allowed to offer all courses in 100-200 levels and specialized in 300 levels.
- National University Commission should take it upon her self to redeploy those lecturers who are not business educators specialist to their specialized departments.
- Regular review of the curriculum of our educational system is urgently required. This view is supported by that of Snyder (2008) which stated that flexible curriculum is important because there is no single curricular path to career success. While Kaplan (2008) says giving students more flexibility, is not a radical departure from their curriculum.
- Government should provide funds and equipment to assist holistic regular curriculum designers for the smooth running of business education programmes as this will encourage parents, teachers and students. This is in line with Omo-Ojugo and Ohiwerei (2008) that stated that local, state and federal governments should assist by providing funds and equipment for teaching and learning of business education.
- More courses should be incorporated in the business curriculum to provide more job opportunities for graduates as recently carried out by the University of Chicago Graduate school of Business as confirmed by Snyder (2008).

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