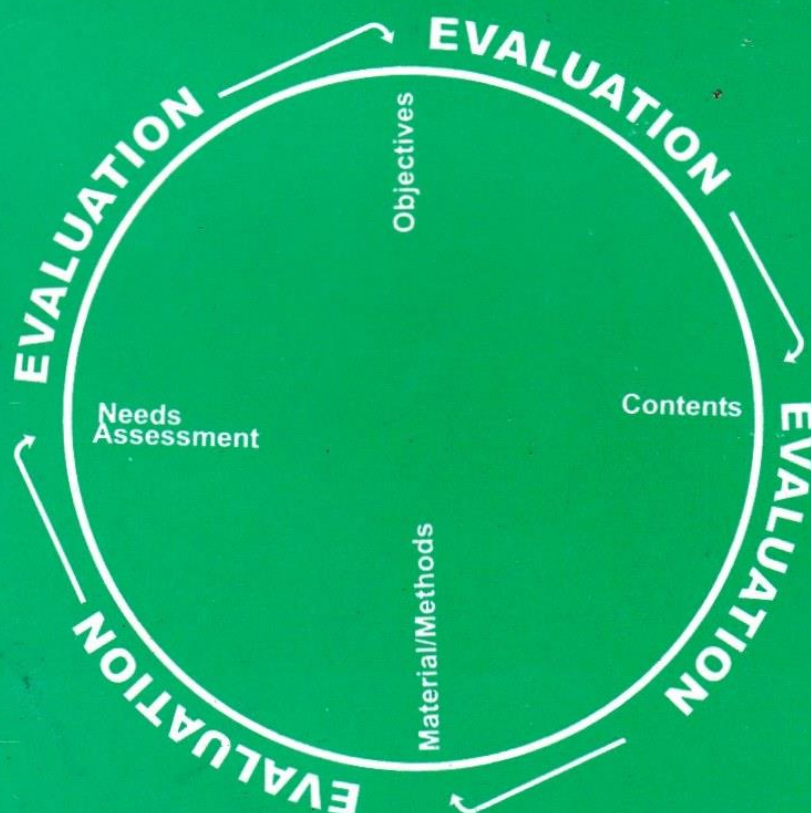


Nigerian Journal *of* Curriculum Studies

Vol. 16 No. 3

2009



Journal of Curriculum Organization of Nigeria (CON)

ISSN: 0189 - 9465

Professional Competencies Needed in Business Studies Curriculum for the Development of a Total Person

**E. B. Usoro
&
Akpan, N. A.**

Abstract

There is the need for competent business studies teachers with communication, interpersonal and intellectual skill to carry out the educating roles of our youth. A competent professional teacher would enhance students acquisition of cognitive, psychoproduktive and affective skill. Therefore, the professional competency of an effective business studies teacher is most desirable.

Introduction

The performance of trained teachers particularly with regard to their possession and demonstration of competencies desirable for intellectual growth of students has been the major concern of teacher educators worldwide. This is so because of the factors that determine the quality of education and students performances. The teacher's professional quality and character, his/her educational qualification and professional competence is the bed rock that determines success of all educational endeavour (Salami, 1994).

Business studies programmes have for a long time seemed to dangle with three sets of problems namely, the balance between content and pedagogy, integration of theoretical and practical components into organized pedagogical processes and satisfaction of non-teaching professional functions. There seems to be non-synchronization of the professional competencies in the training of Business Studies teachers based on the above problem. It therefore becomes relevant to determine the professional competencies of business teachers that could help in the performance of teacher occupational roles effectively and therefore enhancing students performances in the subject.

Performances of Business Studies students in public examinations in recent times have been very poor (Ali 2003). Many reasons have been advanced for this state of affairs include attitude of students towards education in general and Business Studies in particular, others put the blame squarely on professional incompetence of teachers.

Olaitan and Ali (1977), asserted that competency could only be achieved if the teachers acquire desirable knowledge, attitude and skills required for successful performance of a given task. Ekwere (2005) observed that professional competency is the application of knowledge (facts) attitude and skill

E. B. Usoro & Akpan, N. A. are lecturers in the Department of Vocational Education, University of Uyo, Uyo.

acquired in training for efficiency and affective performance of a task relevant to a specific interest. Williams (2004) explained that success in job performance is related to based academic skills. He went further to explain that performance competence occurs through repetitive performance of professionally related task. Chilike and Okwanase, (2001) observed that performance competencies manifest itself in problem solving environment through mental (cognitive) attitudinal (affective) and (psychomotor) manipulative domains.

This study refers to professional competences as those related facts, attitude and skills learnt in trading and acquire through repetitive performance of related task. Auabagal and Ndu (1992) opined that teaching as a profession should be left only for well trained and qualified persons, who should, possess practical training, teaching skill, mastery of subject matter and experiences acquired through learning.

Williams (2003) maintains that teachers should have proficient knowledge of the subject matter as well as adequate professional training to empower them with efficient instructional delivery towards effective learning and performance in Business Studies. In this study, a teacher is that individual who has gone through an approved programme of study, certificated with a professional qualification which enables him/her to teach at any appropriate level of recognized education in Nigeria. On the other hand, a professional is an accomplished expert, a full time specialist cultivating particular kind of skills. A trained and certificate teacher therefore is a professional who has undergone a training to make him/her an expert in the teaching profession.

However, there is no empirical evidence to show that all professional teachers are competent teachers. Formal training therefore, though desirable, does not seem to guarantee competency of the teacher (Williams, 2003). The acclaimed statement that a professional is an accomplished expert seem not to be consistent with the experience in teaching. Most teachers in our schools are trained and certificated and therefore professionals who do not show expertise in the field. Poor performances of students in internal and external examinations may be attribute to teachers' professional in-competency. There seems to be a gap may be the reason for students, poor performances in Business studies and therefore the need for this study.

Professional Competencies

Professional competencies is in this context, defined as the skills needed by the teacher to achieve teaching objectives, the chief of which, according to Odediran (2003) is to ensure that learning takes place. Oyedeji (1992) identifies three distinct sets of skills involved in teaching as communication skills, interpersonal skills, and intellectual skill. Communication skills include vocabulary skills, reading skills, writing skills, and the ability to give clear,

simple and logical lessons. Lawman (2007) states that emotional impact results if lessons are clearly presented.

Interpersonal skill or interpersonal climate according to Flanders (1990) is the social climate created by the teacher in the classroom. It includes the ability of the teacher to interact with the class and manage the classroom and materials. Ogunniyi (1991) observes a positive relationship between classroom climate and student performance. Similarly Ekpo (2001), observes that fostering rapport with Business studies learners arouses interest and motivation.

Intellectual skills of a teacher refers to his mastery of his subject. The teacher cannot enlighten his student if he himself is half-baked. For this reason, the Revised National Policy on Education states, as an objective of teacher-education: to provide teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment. Scannel (1991) asserts that all teachers need breadth and depth in the subject they teach, and this calls for high qualification of the teachers. Ekpo, (2001) states that a Business studies teacher should be a master of the subject in principles and practices of captivating learners interest.

Pedagogic skills therefore refer to mastery in the selection and application of the right methodology in the presentation of a particular lesson topic at a particular time, to a particular group of learners. Ekpo (2001) identifies the teaching methods that could be used in the teaching business studies to include the lecture method, discussion method, questioning method, team teaching and term paper technique. Others are demonstration method, project method laboratory method, assignment method and field trip.

The lecture method has been found to be teacher centred, dull, and wanting in practical skill learning. It could be applied when the lesson is lengthy and time is limited. The discussion method encourages student participation and could be used if the learners are made to know the lesson topic in advance. The questioning technique could be applied at the introductory part of the lesson, as the lesson progresses from one step to the other, and at the end of the lesson. The term paper technique is student centred. Ekpo (2001) recommends that it be used from the second-year Business studies students as they must have developed their communication skills better at this stage.

In team teaching, resource persons are invited to teach, each handling his area of specialization. One teacher may not specialize in all areas, hence the need for team teaching for desired goals. Ekpo (2001) recommends the demonstration method, assignment method, and field trips for fruitful teaching method, when used in theory is often abused by learners as many of them hire others to perform the task or merely copy from their colleagues.

Field trips are necessary to expose the learner to real life situation and reduce abstract thinking. Referring to field trips Ekpo (2001) observes that a 'tour' provides an excellent opportunity for young adult student, to observe production techniques.

Using Objective to Achieve Competence

Business Studies is the formal education that exposes learners to the principles and practices of office practice, accounting and distributive education. The main objective of business studies include:

To provide a sound background for the enhancement of further academic pursuit in vocational skills.

To minimize the dependency and search for white collar jobs by school leavers.

To improve students administrative and management skills for the industrial growth of the nation. (Akpan, 2001)

To achieve these objectives, the teachers should communication skills, interpersonal skills and intellectual skills.

Salami (1994) observes that the performance of teachers, particularly with regard to their possession and demonstration of competencies desirable for communication, interpersonal and intellectual skills in Business Education has been the major concern of teacher educators world –wide. This is so because of the actors that determine the quality of education and the role of the teachers in the education industry . it is the teachers personal qualities, characters, mastery of subject, matter, educational qualifications and creativity that constitute professional competence (Mainwood 1995).

Lydney (1994) pointed out that without competent teachers possessing the qualities which enable them to inspire those they teach, system as a whole will not function effectively and result will be fallen standard. Many teacher training intuitions in Nigeria today are all geared towards producing efficient classroom teachers where efficient teacher is defined as that teacher who shows intellectual and professional competency (Mainwood 1995).

Competency Based Education And Students performance

Presently, the modern and more effective methods of teaching and learning is the use of competency based education. Competency based education programme of instruction in units beginning from simple to complex, The task are systematical and sequentially arranged so that it is impossible for the student to proceed to the next units level without understanding completing and complying with all the skill demands of the proceeding unit. The concept and context of what and how to and what and how to learn are the major structure and design of competency based education.

The salient point about competency based education is that, it is designed to foster practical and self-based learning as opposed to the usual verbal or vicarious approach. Competency based approach permits a large degree of self teaching and learning by students. In order to achieve the much desired objectives of competency based education, (Redstill 1996/97) suggested the

Identification and specification of learners' objectives in behavioural terms. Specification of the means for determining whether performance meets the indicated criterion level; Provision of instruction pertinent to the objective through which the learning activities may take place. Sharing of the objectives, in steps of achievements and evaluating each step with alternative activities; Assessing the learning experiences in terms of competencies; and Placing the learning in a position of accountability for meeting the criterion for successful completion competency level.

Accountability in competency based education is often brought into the planning stage of the programme thereby making the students accountable for his/her learning achievement through self-evaluation. The teacher acts as a facilitator of the learning process or a resource person. Besides the accountability issue, competency-based education creates interest in learning and also boosts motivation of the learner (Salami, 1994).

An appraisal is therefore necessary and essential in order to determine the extent to which each competency level is being realized. This is to ensure that adequate measures are taken to bring about necessary changes in the learner. In this way, competencies in technical and vocational specifically business learning can be implemented.

Teacher Professional Competency And Students' Performances

Waxman and Huang (1997) opined that competent teachers are those who individualize instruction, combined with experience, interact with students and keep them task-oriented. This is because teacher competency is measured by the students' performances. It is the management of the teaching –learning environment to create effective communication interpersonal relationship and intellectual achievement in the learners.

The teaching competency is observed in performance and mastery of the teaching-learning procedure. The result is increased student enthusiasm, recognition of diverse strength, talents, creative expression, creative thinking and skills acquisition by the learners (Kagam, 1993; Debnium, Beneke and Covington, 1998).

Nelson (2004) maintained that a competent teacher is flexible in the utilization of instructional materials, methods, strategies, styles and delivery. He further stated that the ability of the teacher to communicate effectively with the students also facilitates teaching competency and learning.

Research consistently indicated that teachers have greater potential to influence students education. Research study's by Kemp and Hall (1992); Mainwood, (1995) and Sannel (1991). Influence that student achievements were related to teachers competencies, programme and developing functional practical experiences for students.

Other requirements include improvising instructional materials, determining needs and interest of students, directing students' classroom instruction and laboratory experiences. He further recommended using various pedagogical approaches, to facilitate learning; assessing students' knowledge, attitude and psycho productive skills acquisition. Moreover, the competency requirement extended to assessing instructional effectiveness, managing time and resources, assisting students develop positive self-concepts and confidence, initiating the school community relations, providing relevant business studies information and obtaining current information for improved business studies.

Conclusions

On the basis of the discussions highlighted in this study, the following conclusion were drawn. The need for competent business studies teachers with professional skills to carry out the educating role of our youths is indisputable. The competent teachers should enhance students acquisition of cognitive psycho-productive skills. Therefore, the professional competency of an effective business studies teacher is indispensable .

Recommendations

Teacher' competency is observed in skillful professional, proficient and effective performance of the teaching roles and responsibilities. Based on the above stated observation, the following recommendation are envisaged and made according .

1. Business studies teacher education programmes should be redesigned and restructured by curriculum developers to enhance the preparation of competent business studies teachers.
2. Professional competency of business studies teachers should be enhanced through the development of communication interpersonal and intellect skills of the teachers by teachers training institutions.
3. Government should ensure that teacher training institutions are well equipped with modern technological instructional material for the production of highly motivated, conscientious and efficient teachers.
4. Field specialization and professional preparations should be well articulated in the training programmes of teachers for the development of sustainable business studies education.
5. Training should be encouraged through occupational training programmes design for in-service teachers.
6. Constant evaluation of teacher performances should be carried out by inspectorate and supervisory department of educational ministries to ensure that minimum standards are maintained in our intuitions.

7. The current teacher training programmes in our training institutions should be revised to make it more functional and vocational in content and context.

References

- Akpan, V.C.J. (2001). *Administration vocational Education*, Uyo. Dorand publishers and supervision
- Ail E. A. (2003). *Social Psychological Factors Learning In School*. Lagos leads way Books limited.
- Auabagal, Z.E & Ndu L. (1992). *Competency Based Learning*, New York McGraw Bill Book Publishing Co
- Chilike, R. & Okwanasa, M (2001). *Supervised Study For Effective Work In Agricultural Courses*. Michigan state University press.
- Debnum, G. Beneke, T. & Cavington, N. (1998). *Task Oriented Competency Education*. London Oxford publishers.
- Ekpo, T. L. (2001). *Agricultural Science methodology for Schools and Colleges*. Uyo Footsteps Publication limited.
- Flanders, W. A. (1970). *Analysing Teaching Behaviour*. London. Addison Wesley publishing.
- Kagam, O. (1993). *Vocational Art Education*. Kumasi Newsday publishers Co
- Kemp, E. & Hall, S. (1992). *Agricultural Engineering in traditional societies*. www.gricegineriong.org.
- Lawman, J. (2007). *Mastering the Technique Teaching*. San Francisco. Jossey Base Inc. publishers.
- Mainwood, P. D. (1995). *Verification of competences for beginning secondary food management production and services teachers' Doctoral Dissertation*. The Florida state University. Dissertation Abstract international.
- Nelson, T. (2004). *Vocational training in Agricultural Education*. Ibadan. Ayede publishing House.

- Odediran, N. O. (2003). The making of a teacher. Some psychological consideration. Oro. *Nigerian Journal of Educational studies And Research*. (NJESR). Kwaea state college of Education
- Oguniyi. M. B (1991) Classroom interaction relative to teacher-student questioning behaviors. *Journal of science teachers Association of Nigeria* (STAN).
- Olaitan, S. O. & Ali, A. (1997). *Agricultural Educational Principles and Practice*. Onitsha cape publishers international limited.
- Oyedeji, O.J. (1992) Teacher education and the practice of teaching as profession in Nigeria, Kaduna. The Nigerian Teacher Today. National Commission for colleges of Education publication, 1:2
- Rudstill, C.N. (1996); *Science, Technology and Society*. New Delhi, Graward publishers.
- Salami, K. A. (1994). An appraisal of the leadership competencies for administrations in technical and vocational education in Oyo State Nsukka. *Nigerian Vocational Journal*. 7, (2)
- Scannel, D. F. (1991). performance test of teaching proficiency: Rational development and validation. New York, *American Education Research Journal*. Lee and Sons inc .
- Waxman, L. & Hang, C. (1997). Professional and technical agricultural education. *Reading For Science And Technology*. New York. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Williams, P.S.(2003). Effects of poultry production on poverty alleviation, Uyo. *International Journal of Reseat in Agricultural Education*. University of UYo, 1 (1)
- William, P. S. (2004). Effects of vocational agricultural teaching models on students performances in poultry production, Akwa. *International Journal of Educational Research and Development*. Publication of faculty of education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka