

Prospects of Teaching Office Management in Business Education Curriculum for Effective Management of Organization Among Students of College of Education in Ogun State

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Abstract

The study was to examine examining the prospects of teaching office management in business education curriculum for effective managing of organization among students of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State. The study is a descriptive survey research design where questionnaire was used to acquire necessary data for the research work. Simple random sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of one hundred (100) respondents consisting students of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered in this study. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha and data collected were analyzed using simple percentage. Findings revealed that most of the facilities required for the training of office managers are lacking and sometimes inadequate in most of the institutions in Nigeria. Office Management education is a subset of business education programme that is designed to prepare students who are interested in developing careers in keyboarding operation, stenography, office management, establishment of business training school, computer centres, data processing, small or medium business enterprises and teaching through the acquisition of appropriate skills, knowledge abilities and attitude that will make them enter and progress in their economic endeavor. Therefore, it is highly recommended that, enough instructional facilities for effective office management programme among students of FCE Abeokuta, Ogun State to help business education students improve in the like of profession. Business education lecturers should be well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State and Government should assist the lecturers on the materials need to bring the effective teaching of office management education for achieving greater goal in the business line.

Keywords: *Teachers, Office management, Business education, Curriculum, Organization*

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Background to the Study

An office is a crucial and an essential part of every organization, large or small. Whether it is a government institution, trading or manufacturing organization, a hospital or an educational institution, the existence of an office is vital for the appropriate functioning of any kind of organization. The office acts as a storehouse and a nervous system of every operation within a business organization. A well-managed office is an essential assistance to the management and administration. It assists the management to plan its operations intelligently and to put them into action in a competent manner. The office co-ordinates all the activities and functions of the business. Without an effectual and a well-organised office, the business activities and functions cannot be implemented in a methodical and a systematic manner. The significance of an office arises from the fact that modern business, with its varied and complicated operations cannot be managed without the clerical and technical assistance and other functions such as record keeping, hence, office is an integral part of any organization or an institution. Without a well-organized office, it is not possible to implement all the activities and functions. Production, marketing, finance and personnel are the primary functions of any organization and office is stated to be the place where these functions are adequately put into operation. Information, knowledge and awareness are the key aspects that the workforce is required to possess, hence, office is an area where collecting, processing, storing and distributing of information is carried out. Therefore, it is vital to understand the concept of office management.

Office is considered to be an important place or section or an area for the conduct of any works, jobs, businesses or transactions. By the term business, it is understood, any work that is related to the office. The meaning of the term office is a place for the operation of business, the room or department, where the clerical work is done, or it can be stated that it is a place where professional and commercial transactions are implemented, or it is, a place where all sorts of activities within the organization are dealt with. Office is the centre of an organization (Upadhyay, Ladhe, Rai, Bhatkar and Upadhyay, 2015). Within an organization, there are various kinds of departments such as financial, production, clerical, technical, personnel, managerial, manufacturing, advertising and marketing, sales, training and so forth. The activities and functions of all the departments are implemented in places that are termed as offices. In educational institutions also, there are various kinds of clerical and technical jobs that are implemented by the office workers, hence, office is stated to be an integral part of any organization or an institution.

Commercial office acts as a central directing and coordinating organization of the various activities of any business. Efficient office management comprises a number of vital functions, including time management, organizing the paperwork in an adequate manner, workspace, managing multiple projects simultaneously, and being in control of all the job responsibilities (Upadhyay, Ladhe, Rai, Bhatkar and Upadhyay, 2015). Office is stated to be a place from where an organization plans, implements, controls and co-ordinates all the activities and functions; therefore, for this basic reason, efficient office management is regarded to be a crucial aspect that all the individuals employed within the organization are required to understand.

There are three different options in the field of business education as practiced in Nigeria. They are accounting education, marketing/distributive education and office management education formerly known as secretarial studies. Generally, the ultimate aim of business education, as an integral part of technical and vocational education and training programme (TVET) is to provide graduates with the appropriate skills that will enable them to be versatile in their business endeavor to meet the economic needs through engagement in the world of work as employees as well as self-employed. Thus, the national policy on education in Famiwole and Akindula (2016) defined vocational education as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technology and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

Also, Osuala (2004) defined business education as a programme of instruction, which consists of two parts, office education which is a vocational programme for office workers and general education which is a programme that provided information and competencies needed for managing business. He explained that business education (of which OM is part) prepares individuals for teaching business subjects as well as provide them with the knowledge skills and attitudes needed for successful business. In the realization of this, business education programme was designed in a way that all business education students offered all the core courses in the first two years to have general knowledge of the content of business education before specialization on one of the options where they are trained in the related skills.

This is to achieve of the objectives of National Commission on Colleges of Education (2008) which states that business education graduates are to be equipped with the right skills that will enable them to engage in the world of work as well as for self-employment. In order to achieve this objective, there are some skill and core courses that must be offered by office management (OM) students. These include keyboarding, shorthand, computer appreciation and application, office management small business, office practice and entrepreneurship education in business education among others. The technological development in information communication technology has increased the array of opportunities available for people who possess adequate mastery of the knowledge of keyboarding and other ICT skills. By this, keyboarding skills have become one of the important skills required in the world of work as the use of computer has tended to dominate today's business environments. It has been observed that most of the OTM lecturers were trained in the traditional learning environment mostly with the use of manual typewriters, carbon papers, correcting fluid, typing erasers, stencils and all the likes, including the rigors of calculations and setting involved in tabulation works. The use of these obsolete technologies has paved ways to the new technologies which needed to be learnt by business educators for improved knowledge and skills that will match today's business environments.

Thus, Nwosu and Ojo (2014), state the main goals of manpower training to include the need to increase the average skill level of the labour force and provide workers with the

specialized skills necessary to meet future industrial needs. In line with this, Onwuachu (2014), Joshua and Nwabufo (2014), and Uwuanyi (2010) observe that some computer/ICT skills that business education programme to groom students as global workers include computer skills, skill in instant messaging, e-port folio, competency in the use of Microsoft words, Microsoft excel, power point, internet skills, word processing, among others. In the same vein, perspective OTM education graduates are expected to teach all the components of business studies at the nation's junior and senior secondary school levels and as well teach some trades or entrepreneurship subjects like stenography and data processing. Thus, Aliyu (2000), observes that training of business education teachers need to be oriented in view of the new development in the business world as a result of technological development. Also, the knowledge acquired in courses like keyboarding, office management, small scale business and entrepreneurship education are expected to prepare OM graduates for self-employment and as knowledge workers in public and private organizations.

However, Nnaji and Bagudu in Ikegwani (2015) observe that most of the facilities required for the training of office manager are lacking and sometimes inadequate in most of the institutions in Nigeria. Office Management education is a subset of business education programme that is designed to prepare students who are interested in developing careers in keyboarding operation, stenography, office management, establishment of business training school, computer centres, data processing, small or medium business enterprises and teaching through the acquisition of appropriate skills, knowledge abilities and attitude that will make them enter and progress in their economic endeavor. To effectively make a success of these opportunities, OTM students must be taught under a conducive and well-equipped environment that is a replica of where they are expected to perform after graduation. Supporting this view, Prosser in Ibidapo, Fagbemi and Aina (2013), remarked that principles of vocational education include the followings among others: Vocational education will be efficient in proportion as the environment in which the learner is trained as a replica of the environment in which he must subsequently work. Effective vocational training can only be given where the training jobs are carried out in the same way, with the same operations, the same tools and the same machines as in the occupation itself. Vocational education must recognize conditions as they are and must train individuals to meet the demands of the market.

Effective office management education can only be given to the selected group of individuals who need it, want it, and are able to profit by it. These principles underscore the need to provide necessary equipment, exact teaching environment, consideration of employers' skills need and student's interest or attitudes towards the programme. In view of the above, most business education scholars, such as, Owojori (2008), Akintonde (2008), Fadare (2015), Adebayo (2013) have expressly reported that business education programme as a vocational endeavor is cost effective if competent OTM graduates are to be produced for the private, industrial and educational sectors of the nation. In his contribution, Onojetal (2014) reported that the mandate of business education curriculum is the production of graduates for self-employment, and careers in other occupations.

Such graduates are needed in the industry, but that they lack ICT skills and competencies when employed by local and multinational companies is a serious problem. Justifying this, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) recently embarked on strike on the need to improve the funding of university education in order to reduce the production of half-baked graduates. There is the need to provide new technologies such as computers, scanners, printers, shredding machine, internet, intranet, teleconferencing device, ipad, multimedia projectors, e-library, etc which are e-learning tools that motivate student centred and interactive learning environments. The role of these new technologies in training OM education students is rapidly becoming an important issue in the contemporary education. Supporting this, Yelland (2001) reported that traditional educational environments are not suitable for preparing learners to function or be productive in the workplace in today's society. This is buttressed by Onojetah (2012) when he asserts that the functions of ICT in business education curriculum are to increase skills, speed, accuracy, production and quality of study by students.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study is to examine the prospects of teaching office management in business education curriculum for effective managing of organization among students in Colleges of Education in Ogun State. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

1. Find out if there are enough instructional facilities for effective office management programme among students of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State
2. Find out if there are business education lecturers well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among students of FCE. Abeokuta, Ogun State

Research Questions

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, the following questions were raised for the study:

- i) Are there enough instructional facilities for effective office management programme among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State?
- ii) Are the business education lecturers well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises all students of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred (100) students of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State as sample for study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire contained items on the main title of the study. The instrument was given to experts for construct and content validation. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage statistical tool.

Presentation of Data Analysis and Results

Research Question One: Are there enough instructional facilities for effective teaching of office management programme among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State?

Table 1: Instructional facilities for effective teaching of office management among students of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State

S/N	Items	No		Yes		Total	
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %
1.	There enough facilities for effective teaching of office management in the school	70	70%	30	30%	100	100%
2.	Facilities for effective teaching of office management are tools for student to explore in business education.	85	85%	15	15%	100	100%
3.	Implementation of instructional facilities for effective teaching of office management among student is the best way of adding value their level of education and course of choice.	90	90%	10	10%	100	100%
TOTAL		235	78%	55	22%	300	100.00

Source: Field Work 2022

The table above shows the percentage of respondents. In item 1, 70 respondents representing (70%) disagreed with the statement while 30 respondents representing (30%) agreed with the statement. In item 2, 85 respondents representing (85%) disagreed with the statement while 15 respondents representing (15%) agreed with the statement and in item 3, 90 respondents representing (90%) disagreed with the statement while only 10 respondents representing (10%) agreed with the statement. 235 respondents representing 78% disconcerted while only 55 respondents representing 28% concur with the statement. This shows that there are not enough instructional facilities for effective teaching of office management programme among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State. This statement was in line with Nnaji and Bagudu in Ikegwuani (2015), that clearly observed that most of the facilities required for the training of office manager are lacking and sometimes inadequate in most of the institutions in Nigeria. Office Management education is a subset of business education programme that is designed to prepare students who are interested in developing careers in keyboarding operation, stenography, office management, establishment of business training school, computer centres, data processing, small or medium business enterprises and teaching through the acquisition of appropriate skills, knowledge abilities and attitude that will make them enter and progress in their economic endeavor.

Research Question two: Are the business education lecturers well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State?

Table 2: Business education lecturers well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %
1.	Have attended business education lecturers institution-sponsored training conference on OM curriculum contents	50	50%	50	50%	100	100%
2.	Is there competency in the use of self-developed instructional software packages by the lecturers	36	35%	64	65%	100	100%
3.	Are business education lecturers ready to teaching office management effective with the available facilities possessed	49	50%	51	50%	100	100%
TOTAL		135	45%	155	55%	300	100.00

From the table above. In item 1, 50 respondents representing (50%) agreed with the statement while 50 respondents representing (50%) disagreed with the statement. In item 2, 36 respondents representing (36%) agreed with the statement while 64 respondents representing (6%) disagreed with the statement and in item 3, 49 respondents representing (49%) agreed with the statement while 51 respondents representing (51%) disagreed with the statement. 135 respondents representing 45% concur while only 155 respondents representing 55% disconcerted with the statement. This table indicates that business education lecturers are not well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State. This statement was in line with Aliyu (2000) observes that training of business education lecturers needs to be continuous and target oriented in view of the new development in the business world as a result of technological development. Also, the knowledge acquired in courses like keyboarding, office management, small scale business and entrepreneurship education are expected to prepare OM graduates for self-employment and as knowledge workers in public and private organizations.

Conclusion

Office management is a vital area to understand and research upon, the reason being that in any kind of organization or an institution, the various functions with regards to management, administration, personnel, clerical, technical, finance, marketing, production, advertisement and so forth are carried out at a place, which is known as office.

The purpose of the office is mainly to provide services of communication and of record; office is in fact a processing medium; it is responsible for directing and co-ordinating various activities and functions of the organization. An office in an organizational structure is just like the brain in the human body. Office directs and co-ordinates the activities of the various departments, the policies of the business are planned and their implementation is ensured within an office. All the records of the business are preserved; financial, client, employees, production, stock, inventory etc. All the internal and the external transactions and dealings, all kinds of correspondences are the major office functions. The maintenance of accounts, balance sheets, production records, sales information, advertising and marketing concerns, event management, statutory and non-statutory books are the major functions that are carried out within an office.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

1. Enough instructional facilities for effective office management programme among student of FCE Abeokuta, Ogun State to help business education student improve in the like of profession.
2. Business education lecturers should be well prepared to teach the office management curriculum contents among student of FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State.
3. Government should assist the lecturers on the materials need to bring the effective teaching of office management education for achieving greater goal in the business line.

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