

RUDIMENTS OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (VTE) FOR UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE)

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Abstract

The federal Government the UBE in September 1999 for the purpose of achieving compulsory, free and universal basic education. The UBE program, as a policy reform measure is aimed at rectifying distortions in basic education delivery in the country as well as catering for basic education in the formal and non formal sector. This 9 year program requires vocational technical education for all children dropouts of schools to be self-reliant. This paper attempts a discussion on the rudiments of VTE for universal basic education (UBE). The writers focus on attention on the concept of VTE and its objective, overview of UBE, component performed curriculum of UBE, problems of UBE and its strategies for the effective implementation of UBE. Recommendations and conclusion are made for effective implementation of the scheme.

Education solves basic social problems, provide knowledge and power to individuals. A lot of ideas die with the owners without accomplishing any goal (Ikanbi 2002). Nigeria is among the richest countries in the yet about 70 percent of its people wallow n poverty (Federal Office of Statistic). What a contradiction even with the various poverty alleviation and job creation schemes, the ratio of unemployment

continues to be embarrassingly high. The request for white collar jobs is high and more continue to join the labour market, if there is no adequate provision for an alternative to wage employment, then the universal basic education will gradually die down because parents will become reluctant to send their children to school. Children too will become bored to go to school. These are the reasons why the writers recommend the incorporation of vocational-technical education from primary to tertiary levels into the curriculum. It should also be part of informal education that parents, community and other stakeholders in education will cooperate to provide because, the already loaded educational curriculum cannot provide for an in-depth VTE.

Concept and Definition of Vocational/Technical Education (VTE)

Often the twin term, vocational education, and technical education are use interchangeable because, to many minds the line of distinction is rather blurred. The term vocational education mean vocational or technical training or retraining which is given in school or classes under public supervision and control. It refers to systematic learning experience which lead to occupations as semi skilled workers or technical or sub-professionals. It includes guidance and counselling in connection with training and other instructions directly related to an occupation. (Osuale, 1987)

Vocation education is part of the total educational process that provides knowledge, develops skill and inculcates the attitudes necessary for entry and progress in an occupation, the central purpose of vocational educational is to get people into jobs requiring specialized training. Okoro (2007) however regard vocational education as any form of education whose primary purpose is to prepare persons for employment in recognized occupations. Olatain (1995), conceives of vocational education as a highly useful education as its occupational content is such that the trainee acquires skill, attitude, interest and knowledge to perform socially and economically work that is beneficial to both himself and to the society.

Vocational education includes preparations for employment in any occupation for which specialized education is required for which there is a societal need, and which can most appropriately be acquired in the schools. Vocational education is concerned with the whole hierarchy of occupation from those requiring relatively short period of specialized preparation, such as clerk-typist, to occupation required two or more years of specialized education, such as paramedics. It includes the whole spectrum of labour force from semi-skilled workers to technicians and sub professionals whose occupation require less than a bachelors degree. It provides wide ranges of skill levels from basic entry level skill to every technical skills requiring a high degree of specialization and competence. Vocational education program is occasionally offered at the pre-secondary level but generally is offered at secondary and post secondary levels.

Vocational Education covers the following areas:

- ❖ Vocational agricultural
- ❖ Distributive education
- ❖ Home economics education
- ❖ Trade and industrial education
- ❖ Business and office education
- ❖ Technical education

Technical Education

National policy on education (2004) defines technical education as which leads to the acquisition and applied skill as well as basic scientific knowledge. “Technical education is a descriptive term which embraces the wide field of vocationally oriented education from primary to the university level which leads to employment in the private/public sectors of industry and commerce.

There are five types of technical education institutions in Nigeria outside the university:

- The pre vocational, vocational schools at primary level
- The technical colleges
- The polytechnics

The federal government recognizes that VTE is fundamental to national management as it forms the basic for our technical development to the extent that it increase, substantially, expenditure in this field in the third development plan period (NPE, 2004). The recognition led to the restructuring of the curricula at the various levels under the 6-3-3-4 system of education, taking cognizance of utilitarian nature of this type of education.

Aims of Technical Education

The following are aims of technical education

- To provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce particularly at the sub-professional grade
- To enable young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexities of technology.
- To give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsman’s technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.
- To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development and to give an introduction to professional studies in engineering and other technologies.

- To provide people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man.

Objectives of Vocational Education

Objectives of vocational derive from the central tenets of democracy and from a common and deep appreciation of the value and dignity of work. The goals/objectives of vocation education are:

- ❖ To prepare the learner for entry into employment and advancement in his chosen carrier
- ❖ To meet the manpower needs of society
- ❖ To increase the options available to each students
- ❖ To serve as a motivating force to enhance all types of learning
- ❖ To enable the learner to wisely select a career

Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Vocation Technical Education in Nigeria

The federal government under the auspices of the Olusegun Obasanjo launched the UBE on September 30th 1999 for the purpose of achieving compulsory, free and universal basic education. It was also Nigeria's responses to the achievement of education for all (EFA) and millennium development goals (MDGS). The UBE programme, as a policy reform measure, is aimed at rectifying distortion in basic education delivery in the country as well as catering for education in the formal and non-formal sectors.

The purpose of UBE is to help children in Nigerian society to participate in the free 9 years of schooling from primary one to junior secondary school, (2000) observe that UBE implies that appropriate type of opportunities will be provided for the basic education of every Nigerian child of school going age. It is worthy to note that Nigeria is one of the 164 countries that signed the 2000 Dakar framework of action to ensure Education for all (EFA) by the year 2015.

However, the general objectives f universal basic education (UBE) are;

1. Development in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
2. The provision of free, universal basic education for education for every Nigerian child of school going age.
3. Reducing drastically, the incidence of dropout from the formal school system (through improved relevance, quality and efficiency).
4. Catering for the learning needs of young person who for one reason or the other have had to interrupt their schooling through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and production of basic education.

Personal Needed in Curriculum Planning In VTE for UBE

All levels of education must move faster to assume a lot of responsibilities in preparation of both men and to enter into the changed and changing world of technology. In order to achieve the objectives fully the professionally qualified vocational educator should be involved in planning, development, execution and evaluation of all facets of vocational/technical education (VTE) programme. The current situation where professionals in various areas especially in vocational programmes (Agric business studies, Home economics, fine and applied art etc) are preferred to teach the programme carries with it a lot of disadvantages and should be discarded as personal move on. Knowledge of what to teach and how to teach it is very important for any effective teaching/learning process. No matter how much knowledgeable a professional may be in his chosen carrier it does not necessarily mean that he is going to turn up to be an effective teacher, so the teacher should use a variety of methods including (reading assorted assignments, role playing method, well prepared lesson for the students) apart from the teachers, the students should actively participate in the exercise. The teacher should obtain suitable instruction and also make use of the internet to get useful source of information to encourage their learner's depending on the environment, the available materials and funds provided being properly utilized.

A critical examination of junior secondary (JSS) curriculum reveals that the envisage VTE is not directly present completely, Sadia (2009). Although Agric, Business studies, fine and Applied Art, Home Economics etc. are offered as pre-NCE vocational subjects, they should be enriched to incorporate the essential facts and provide for VTE and still be pre-vocational subjects. At the primary level of education, pupils should be given sufficient practical training that emphasize qualities of self reliance, innovativeness and creativeness.

Universal Basic Education (UBE) is a 9 years course, it is proposed that it time for formally be introduced in the 7th year (JSS 1), this will allow enough time for the understanding students t have a lot about VTE.

Problems of UBE Programme in Relation to VTE

The growth of a country depends greatly upon the development of its people and the organization of human activity. Countries are underdeveloped having no opportunity of expanding their potential capacity in the service of society. The following are the drawbacks:

Training Facilities/Infrastructure: These issues are the Variables in training facilities/infrastructure, lack of manpower and poor training facilities, method and technique of instruction do not encourage incentive among pupils/students, outdated curriculum with inadequate content, objective are not for problem solving but for

making project according to laid down rules, no textbook for pupils/student, inadequate library facilities, too many pupils/students in the class, parents have to pay for materials used at all levels of education.

Teaching Staff: This is via inefficacy and poorly qualified UBE staff, most UBE staff in school are just workshop men and have no professional training, lack commitment to duty; poor attitude of UBE, staff caused ineffective teaching and learning to the students/pupils.

Policy Standards and Objectives: The problem in Nigeria is that of inadequate and poor data maintenance which poses planning difficulties and invariably implementation challenges. Unreliable data makes it difficult to make adequate projections in terms of expected enrolment, required use of number of teachers, infrastructural needs and equipment. Accurate and reliable data are needed for evidence based planning and budgeting for basic education.

Other problems are; inter-governmental communications, and enforcement, poor character of implementing agencies, economic, social and political conditions and the disposition of policy implementer.

Approaches for effective implementation of the UBE programme for VTE

The following measures have to be taken for successful implementation of the UBE programme in VTE.

1. **Human Resource:** Training of teachers in the right quantity and quality. Efforts should be intensified with regard to the two-years intensive national certificate of education (NCE) and federal government special teacher certificate programme to ensure that all untrained teachers already in the service upgrade their qualification to at least the minimum required qualification of NCE. Beside the teaching staff, the capacity of all the personnel of UBE implementing agencies such as LGEAs; and even members of the School Based Management committee (SBMCs) need to be improved, as such they should also benefit from training and capacity building (Ejeve, 2011).
2. **Financial Resources:** UBE has to benefit from sustainable funding. Since all the three tier of government have concurrent responsibilities for education provision in the country, financial resources for executing the UBE programme should adequately be provided for in their annual budgetary allocations. Government at all levels should improve the funding of education by legislation on the adoption of minimum allocation of at least 30% to education and approved funds should be released to implementing agencies as at when due without delays.

3. **Infrastructure:** To enhance the learning environment, massive investment in school infrastructure improvement is need. Every primary and junior secondary school should be provided with adequate infrastructure and other physical facilities like laboratories, electricity, furniture, good water, classrooms, libraries, toilets, computers, hospitals, good roads etc.
4. **Social Mobilization and Entrancement:** There is need to ensure sustainable community participation and ownership of basic education, as such public enlightenment and social mobilization should be a continuous process in the UBE implementation so as to engender full participation by all sections of the Nigerian society particularly at the community level. Ejere (2011) affirmed that appropriate legal sanctions as prescribed by the UBE Act 2004 should be enforced on parents/Guidant who refuse to send their children/wards to school. The application of sanctions can only be realistic if the UBE is indeed free.
5. **Quality Assurance:** Quality control through effective monitoring and proper evaluation should be conducted on a regular basis at the various stages the UBE programme. More attention should be paid to school inspection, monitoring and evaluation as a quality control strategy to check the quality of the delivery of the UBE programme.
6. **Data Collection:** Accurate and reliable data should be collected for meaningful planning and implementation at various stages of the scheme. At school level, head teachers and principals should ensure that basic records are kept and maintained at all times. The adoption and use of functional Educational Management information system at all levels of government is a necessary measure for education authorities in Nigeria.

Society's Need for Vocational Technical Education in Universal Basic Education

Osuala (1987) affirmed that every citizen should be equipped to contribute to the welfare of the country. The highest possible welfare is achieved only when an individual produces to the limit of his capacity. Every citizen should therefore be skilled in any society is dependent on the quality and quantity of goods and services available to its citizens.

Most Nigerian workers lack basic training in their respective fields. Modern technology requires a high degree of operational efficiency. Production firms must be maintained by workers who possess managerial skills, knowledge of solids, crops, fertilizers and pesticides. Consumer goods can only be made available by trained men and women in both processes and manufacture, is also need to train individuals in the field of home management, household appliances, clothing and catering.

The society needs VTE to provide the necessary skill for individuals who have chosen trades like, hairdressing, barbing, cookery and catering, plumbing, electrical installation, ventilators, and air-conditioning repairs.

VTE is needed by persons who because of academic, social-economic or other handicaps cannot succeed in regular vocational programmes. At present nearly 70 percent of elementary school leavers fail to enter secondary schools, and about 80 percent of secondary school graduates are unable to obtain admission into universities. The VTE therefore needed to prepare secondary school students for gainful employment after graduation.

Conclusion

The implementation stage of the policy process provides the linkage between policy intension and performance. Hence policy performance is essentially dependent on the effectiveness of policy implementation. The paper highlights the concepts of VTE and its objectives for UBE, component of UBE and its curriculum/personnel of UBE in VTE. A number of constraints to the effective implementation of the UBE program in Nigeria were highlighted in the work. In order to facilitate the achievement of UBE objects, some approaches for the successful implementation of the programme were advanced. An ambitious programme of this nature requires rigorous planning, extensive resources mobilization and prudent use of available resources. This programme requires massive participation of the Nigerian populace if it is to succeed. As such, everybody should be involved and carried along in the implementation process.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were made as:

- ❖ The quality of technical vocational education depends upon the teachers. Teachers should be trained in this special field to meet the standard of for effective delivery.
- ❖ Financial resources for executing the UBE programme should be adequately provided for in their annual budgetary allocations.
- ❖ To enhance the learning environment, massive investment in school infrastructure improvement is needed. To cope with the problem of infrastructural inadequacies it is recommended that schools should run two shifter-morning and afternoon.
- ❖ To increase the level of awareness of the populace, it is also recommended that UBE Act should be translated into the major Nigerian Languages.

- ❖ There should be adequate, reliable and accurate data for meaningful planning to avoid policy breakdown at the implementation stage.
- ❖ A think-tank committee should be set up to give the government professional advice on large term importance of qualitative education. This will help in rejuvenating the government interest and sincerely on policies concerning quality in education.
- ❖ For successful operation of UBE scheme, appropriate legal sanctions as prescribe by the UBE Act 2004 should be enforced on parents/guardians who refuse to allow their children go to school.

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