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## Making Learning Real By Using Learning Resources to Enhance Qualitative Education

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By

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### **Abstract**

*Teachings with learning resources have positive results by way of enhancing academic achievement, retentions, transfer of knowledge and quality education. This paper discusses making learning real by using learning resources to enhance qualitative education. Transfer of knowledge can only be possible when curriculum content is made real to the learner during teaching-learning process. Learning resources make the teacher to be effective, efficient and practical in delivering the lesson. Learning resources include human beings and materials used in teaching and learning to achieve educational objectives and improve quality of education.*

Learners learn in different ways and use different modalities to take in information and demonstrate knowledge. Learners' learning styles are as different as the colour of rainbow. On this note, accomplished teachers use multiple paths, variety of resources to help students learn, strengthen understanding and ensure equal opportunity to learn. Resources refer to some people or something that provide sources of help and support when needed. They can also be regarded as human beings or material things obtained from the environment to satisfy human needs and wants. Hornby (2007) defines resources as something that can be used to help achieve an aim. Resources in school system are those aids that enable the teacher and school administrator to do their work effectively to achieve quality education. When selected human and material resources are applied to enhance effective teaching and learning process, they are referred to as learning resources.

Learning resources also known as educational materials, educational resources, curriculum materials, instructional resources are all forms of information carriers that promote effective teaching and learning activities (Oforma, 1994). They are in form of

textbook, laboratories, journals, specimens, computers, telephones, real objects, televisions, models, projects, tapes, real life situation etc. For Nnaka (1990), learning resources is anything or anybody to which or to whom the learner turns for help or support while he is learning. According to Idam (2005), learning resources is anything or anybody that will facilitate and promote teaching and learning such as the teachers, chalkboard, books, models, charts, tables, chairs, workshops, libraries, laboratories etc.

Learning resources can be regarded as anything or anybody that helps the teacher in his goal-seeking activities to make teaching and learning process easy, effective, meaningful and real. Learning resources in this context refers to teachings staff, non-teaching staff, members of the community, printed materials, laboratory equipment, physical equipment, television, radio, charts, models, mock-ups, libraries, computers, video etc.

To promote sound and effective teaching and learning to achieve specific instructional objectives in three domains, suitable and appropriate varied learning resources should be provided and applied in teaching-learning exercise. This reflected what the National Policy on education (2004) stated that there should be improvement of the quality of teaching and research at all levels of education in Nigeria through the provision of current books, Journal, library services and other information resources using digital technology. It adds that government shall provide facilities and necessary infrastructure for the promotion of information and communication technology (ICT) to ensure that the benefits of virtual library permeate all levels of education in Nigeria.

Making Learning real involves active classroom practices that support the intellectual development of the learner which nourishes their spirit, touches their hearts, increases students' motivation, effort, and engagement in a high performing community of learners. This is in line with Lieber (2011) that making learning real is organized around seven core practices. They are: developing positive relationships among and between students and teacher; personalized students' centered learning; multiple ways of knowing and learning; establishing clear norms and boundaries; building a cohesive community of learners; providing high expectations and high student support; affirming diversity in your classroom.

Learning resources can only be useful and achieve the objective for which it was designed and selected through the help of the teacher. Teacher's competence, intelligence and skills in handling the learning resources matter much. They either promote or hinder effective classroom instructional activities. For example, unless the teacher using these resources in teaching-learning situation directs the learners' attention to what they should look for, or areas of interest they might not achieve much as intended from the resources. It is then expected of every teacher to appreciate the need of learning resources, learn how to use them to achieve meaningful and qualitative education.

### **Classification of Learning Resources**

Learning resources refers to all those things applied in teaching and learning situation to achieve positive permanent change in behaviour of the learner. They take different forms but no matter their forms, all are geared towards achieving educational objectives.

Agun in Oguranti (1988) referred to learning resource as educational resources. Agun classified learning resources into three broad forms. They are human resources, material resources and facilities. The human resources include the teacher that converts learning theories to practice, the learner who is the centre of all curriculums, the school authorities that administer the affairs of the school system, the resource persons, facilitators, the technologists, the craftsmen. While the material resources (Non-human) include printed and non-printed materials like texts, journals, magazines pictures, charts, posters, boards, films, film-strips, slides etc. The facilities include library, learning resource centres, laboratories, classrooms etc.

Idam (2005) outlined the most important resources needed to enhance teaching and learning as teacher, materials and equipment. Idam further itemized learning resources thus: chalkboard, books, models, maps, pictures, charts, tables, chairs, desks, audio-visual communication gadgets and infrastructural facilities like libraries laboratories, workshops, games and sports ground, school farms and garden.

According to Okeworo (2012), learning resources exist in the following forms: Human resources, materials resources, institutional resources, and environmental resources. Human resources refer to people or persons that can be employed to facilitate teaching and learning; such as teachers, learners and resource persons. These sets of people have skills, energies, talents and abilities which enable them contribute substantially to effective teaching and learning. Material resources according to Ajalabi (2000) are products of technology of people which the teacher can apply to facilitate learning such as printed materials, like text books, newspapers and magazines and non-printed materials like maps, charts, radio, television, video, chalkboard, etc. Institutional resources refer to those resources that exist in the community where the school is located like churches, mosques, shrines, markets, banks, industries etc. Nnaka (1990) refer to environmental resources as those things constructed or set up by man in his environment for special purposes such as buildings, classrooms, libraries, science laboratories, and assembly halls. These can be used for teaching-learning purposes.

Onyejemezie (1981) outlined the following as learning resources: games, real objects (area) and specimen, symbolic and pictorial representation, textbook and chalkboard as learning resources. The view of Onyejemezie has some limitation for not including human beings that supposed to present and benefit from the curriculum content and materials for lifelong learning to take place.

In the opinion of Harrison (2011), learning resources refers to materials to support teaching and learning in a variety of contexts like overhead projectors, video

problem based learning, study guides, logbooks and clinical skills laboratories. Harrison is more interested on material resources excluding human and other conventional resources that are indispensable in teaching-learning situation. According to Offorma (1994), learning resources could be classified into human and material resources. The human resources consist of the teacher, the learners, the resource persons and the entire tutorial and non-tutorial staff. Human resources also include the members of the community, facilitators, technicians, parents, technologists, craftsmen and school administrators.

Nwaka and Ofojebe (2010), outlined four learning resources to establish efficient and effective teaching and learning. They are materials resources, human resources, financial resources and time resources. Material resources include textbooks, teachers, guide, charts, audio-visual aids, classroom furniture, kits for science, school infrastructure, library books, library furniture, sports and sewing equipment, water supply etc. Human resources include teachers, students, ancillary staff, resource persons, PTA/community members. They are different categories of personnel that provide different services in teaching-learning process. Ofoegbu (2009) grouped them into professionals such as specialist in specific subjects matters, highly skilled and experienced staff, resource persons and non-professionals such as casual workers, auxiliary teachers etc. The financial resources are the cash, PTA support funds, donations levy etc. while the time resources refer to the school day, subject period's allocation etc.

It will be right to broadly classify learning resources into three: conventional resources, electronic resources and human resources. Conventional resources in this context consist of charts, boards, furniture, improvised materials, maps, module and texts. Electronic learning resources deal with video, television, internet, computer, computer software, hardware, e-mail, telephone, overhead projector, printers, flash drive, compact disk writer (CD writer), films, film strips, slides, transparencies, radio, etc. These are now available for larger and small group teaching as well as for individualized instruction. Human resources include teachers, learners, school managements, resource persons, technologists, craftsmen, facilitators, members of P.T.A that contribute in one way or the other to facilitate instructional process. All forms of learning resources are useful in making a contemporary learner actively involved in teaching-learning situation.

### **Sources of Learning Resources**

There are various ways to obtain learning resources to enhance effective teaching and learning. Throw-about, items like bottle caps, empty cartons, old calendars, sand and clay obtained from our immediate environment serves as primary, local and improvised learning resources. Learning resources can also be designed, constructed and produced by the teacher, students or resource person; for example, mock-ups and models of earoplane, television, telephone, cars, shapes, kits, clocks,

cards, charts, etc. In this respect, teacher and students' or both skills, resourcefulness, creativity and knowledge in production, classification and use of learning resources are of great importance. These items can be used to improve teaching-learning activities in the absence or scarcity of ready/commercially made learning resources. These types of learning resources do not cost any money but teacher's knowledge and resourcefulness.

Learning resources can also be bought with money, such as television, video, radio, overhead projector, computer, telephone, laptop, typewriter; sewing machine, tap, first aid box/kit, Javeline, discus, cardboard sheet/paper, printed materials, table, gum, pen, pencil, colouring kit, needle, razor, knife etc. The problem with commercially and readymade learning resources is that they are expensive and not everybody or institution can afford to buy them.

### **Enhancing Qualitative Education by Using Learning Resources.**

Learning resource is the backbone of the whole aspects of instructional communication. Conventional learning resources such as information board, texts, charts, magazines, models, mock-ups, pictures, flash cards, maps, newspaper etc. make it possible for the teacher to combine words with other things that are very closely related to what he/she is teaching to make it clear and effective. Conventional learning resources sensitize only the sense of seeing because they are only seen with the eyes and for that, they are referred to as visual aids. Some technological devices (ICT) fall in line with visual learning resources. They are teleconferencing, computer, internet, electronic mail (E-mail), photocopier video conferencing, etc. These ICT facilities help the learner to source instructional information at his/her own pace, anytime, place and as they really are. Visual aids are of great importance and benefit to the hearing impaired learners.

Two reasonable heads is said to be better than one. In educational sector and in teaching-learning situation, there exist different people that can make things work perfectly well such as, resource persons, and with the help of the classroom teacher. The services of these categories of people can be employed at a given point in time to make the lesson content understandable, concrete, interesting, practical and real. According to Eze (2009), these type of people possess expertise knowledge, information or skills, and are able to communicate information to target audience. They operate the instructional facilities like projectors, filmstrip, slide, video tape, camera, television (close circuit television), and micro-teaching laboratory. They design, construct or produce as the case may be learning resources that look like theready or commercially made. They also train personnel on the practical aspect of educational technology.

Scientists believe in proof or result. This is line with the statement that; "seeing is believing". Effective teacher should combine theory with practical to proof the authenticity of what have been thought. Learners can be taken to the real life situation to see natural settings of what have been taught in the classroom. In the light of this,

excursion, field trip or field work is necessary. This type of trip gives the learner the opportunity to interact with the learning content naturally and it gives wider knowledge.

For the benefit of special students (the visual impaired) audio learning resources like video conferencing, radio, radio cassette, tape recorder, phone, should be incorporated in their instructional exercise. These resources will help the learner to hear or listen to the lesson over again in place of text/visual materials or teacher whenever the learner wants lifelong learning to take place. These resources make teaching and learning interesting.

### **Importance of Learning Resources**

There are evidences of falling standard of the quality of education in Nigeria at all levels for some years now. This gradual falling quality of education and students poor performances can be improved by using learning resources in teaching-learning process. Learning resources enhance ultimate attainment of both specific instructional and curriculum objectives. They provide the basic information required and considered important in the teaching-learning process.

Learning resources enhance communication between the teacher and the learners. They are means through which the teacher transfers his or her idea to the target audience -the learner.

According to Nnaka (1990), the importance of learning resources in schools cannot be over emphasized. Nnaka summarizes the general importance of equipment and infrastructural facilities as follows:

1. Instructional facilities help to make teaching and learning more comfortable, effective, and realistic.
2. They help to improve students' academic performance.
3. They make students to focus their interest on their studies and therefore reduce the habit of loitering, truancy and sneaking out from the school.
4. Since infrastructural facilities and equipment induce students to settle down and learn, they help in the achievement of educational goals.

Man is naturally endowed with five sense organs (the sense of smell, sight hearing, taste and touch). In effect, learning resources help in sensitizing these senses to establish positive permanent change in behavior of the learner.

Learners learn much when they have interest and motivated in what they are learning. Learning resources arouse interest of and motivate the learners to learn.

Too much talking on the part of the teacher can reduce teaching and learning to teacher-centered, but application of learning resources in teaching-learning process, aids teacher's presentation of learning task, explanation, illustration and make teaching-learning activities clearer and learner-centred. In effect, when properly integrated and appropriately used, learning resources can help the teacher to teach more efficiently and

effectively and the learner to learn faster, better and retain longer and transfer knowledge to new situations.

To sum it up, learning resources develop continuity of experience, offer reality of experience, make learning more permanent, supply concrete basis for conceptual thinking, arouse and sustain learner's interest. The above mentioned values of learning resources no doubt, are products for quality education. But not minding the importance of learning resources to teaching and learning, it should not be made to replace the teacher by according undue attention to them.

### **Conclusion**

Learning resources are indispensable in teaching learning process. They enhance teacher's effectiveness, efficiency and competences in the classroom activities and at the same time, promote students' interest, active participation, performance and retention in teaching learning situation. For learning resources to be fully in use in teaching learning situation to achieve qualitative education, teachers need to have basic knowledge and skill of how to operate the available resources.

### **Recommendations**

To improve quality education worldwide, the following recommendations are made to encourage the application of learning resources:

1. School management at all levels of education should endeavor to provide the commercially made resources to enhance lifelong learning.
2. Education students should be properly exposed to education technology practical while in school to acquire the skills, competences, knowledge and technicalities on how to design, construct, produce, select and use learning resources to achieve qualitative education in teaching field.
3. Teachers should be interested in making use of those resources within their immediate environment to improve their teaching exercise as commercially made ones are not always available.
4. Teachers should see the need of employing the services of other people like technologists, resource persons, craftsmen or facilitators to improve quality education.
5. There should be workshops for academics on the need of learning resources to enhance lifelong learning and quality education.
6. Educational technology as a course of study and educational technology centres throughout the country should be handled by professionals and experts that will train student teachers and re-train in-service teachers practically on how to design, construct, produce, select and use learning resources to improve quality teaching in schools.

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