

POVERTY ERADICATION THROUGH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: THE HOME ECONOMICS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper looks at vocational education as a means of eradicating poverty through Home Economics as a subject. The concept of Home Economics poverty and poverty eradication were clarified, causes of poverty were highlighted and adequate recommendations were made. The paper concludes thus: Home Economics therefore, is a strong and important tool for the thorough eradication of poverty in our society.

Introduction

The National Policy on education (FRN, 1981), defined vocational Education as the aspect of education that is skilled and having basic scientific knowledge.

Maduka (1994), believes that vocational education is not all the aspect of general education but an integral part which could stand for a view point outlook or perspective in which it provides another opportunity of expressing our educational endeavours and enterprises

Vocational Education is Aimed at:

1. providing trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce particularly at sub professional grades.
2. to give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self reliant.

Home-Economics is a broad field of study which covers all phases of home life. It is seen as education for the living. It can also be defined as the study of human and material forces affecting the home and families and the utilization of knowledge affecting mankind.

It is the study of all the elements of family living individual family development and interpersonal development. It is believed to be a field of knowledge and service concerned primarily with the strengthening of family life. It is a study that provides the necessary knowledge for guiding, and assisting human beings towards a more self rewarding and fulfilled life impartibly with their society.

Anyakoha and Eluwa (1979). Define Home-Economics as a wide discipline that covers all areas of family living such as clothing and textile, Home-management, child development and family food and nutrition, consumer education etc.

Home Economics seeks to utilize modern science to improve family living and the study of humanity to improve family life, the development of sound education to promote intellectual thinking. The use of research to increase information on the facts of life and use of all resources to make the home and family life effective of the social life.

Rich and poor people have co-inhibited the world from time immemorial while the number of poor people in the advanced countries of the world have reduced considerably over years, the reverse is the case in developing countries especially Nigerian. Just as there are multiple causes of poverty, there can be no single solution, no silver bullet to addressing the problems of poverty. Rather, it is important to facilitate those local, modest activities that deal with one or another pieces of world problem.

Eradication is the process of complete rid of something such as a disease or a social problem. Poverty eradication is the act of getting rid of poverty. One of the implementation of poverty eradication in the developing world is the use of internal motivation and ingenuity to fight poverty at the right time and in the right place.

Over the past two decades, much struggle has been made by different tiers of government in Nigeria to reduce poverty and raise the living standard of the poor. In doing this, government has embarked on several projects and programmes aimed at increasing productivity in the rural sector. A significant proportion of investment has been channeled through the Agricultural Development Project (ADP). Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRR1), River Basin

Development Authority (RBDA). National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP) etc.

Government has also made tremendous efforts in this regard through public credit institutions like the Nigeria Agricultural and cooperative Bank (NACB). Unfortunately, poverty has not been significantly reduced as the rural sector where the poor has remained largely backward and apparently irresponsive to all these efforts.

Economic growth alone is not sufficient for poverty reduction; growth must be accompanied with equity, promoted by participation such as nutritional status of health. A country can only be counted rich if over 70 percent of its population is engaged with hard work in order to eradicate the worst disease of our time-POVERTY. Poverty can only be eradicated through engaging the youth in vocational and self reliant activities. One of the equalities of good governance is to alleviate poverty if not the total eradication.

Home-economics is believed to have come a long way to better man with the little resources in his contemporaries. Home-economics education creates opportunities for the learner to study aspects of family living, child development, family and social relations, managing resources, consumer competence, food and nutrition, clothing and textile, housing the

family etc. in this age of technological development. Home-Economics education -creates a link between the family and the changing society.

Anyakoha, (2000), maintained that Home-Economics is concerned with the use of local material in improving family life by:

1. preparing people for family life by:
2. finding out the needs of individual and families.
3. finding ways of meeting these needs.
4. improving goods and services which families use for example food, clothing housing etc.

With the same belief that Home Economics uses local, materials in improving family life which has a link with the words of President Olusegun Obasanjo, in his speech during poverty Eradication programme in 2001: he said the earth is big enough to provide human and mineral resources to eradicate poverty in our states.

Home-Economics is being looked at as woman career and that is why Petti (2000), outlined that the role of women in community development and in eradication of poverty in Africa depends on factors that range from democratization and economic reform to the specific of soil and seeds. He said, women make up the most of the illiterate and the poor. They receive one-tenth of the world wages. Besides, women take care of children, meals, home or housework and also take part in community affairs. They do 70 80 percent of the agricultural work planting, weeding, watering, harvesting and storage which are related to the function of home-economics in poverty eradication .

Cleaver (1993), is of the view that majority of people choose to be poor because they refuse to engage in skills acquisition activities like clothing and textile, baking, interior decoration, catering etc.

What is Poverty

Cleaver (1993), defined poverty as a state of being with noting or little materials bounded with disease and low access to education. This means that a person suffers because he cannot get what he needs and lives below standard of life.

Poverty deprives a nation the opportunity of providing the basic needs of the people which includes housing, food, security, basic education, infrastructure etc. poverty is not just a problem of low income, it is multidimensional in that it includes low access to opportunities for human development, good health, food security and good nutrition.

Poverty is a living condition in which an entity is faced with economic, social, political, cultural and environmental deprivations. It is a state of involuntary deprivation to which a persons, family, community, state or nation can be subjected. The effects of poverty can be seen in social indicators, high infant mortality, low literacy rates, malnutrition etc.

Causes of Poverty

A world Bank Programme and mission on poverty eradication in Nigeria (Poverty and welfare in Nigeria) identified the basic causes of poverty as follows:

A country is said to be over populated if its existing population is in excess of optimum population (that is population when combined with available resources and the existing level of technology results in maximum output per head of the population).

Maduka (1994), sees over populations as a situation in which the standards of living of the citizens fall as more people are added to the existing population.

Unemployed

This is a state where young and able-bodied men and women have nothing to do. They depend on other or relations. This could be as a result of population growth if economic growth is not rapid. When a greater percentage of the country's population is unemployed, then the country is gradually heading towards poverty.

Non Access to Quality Education

Education is the acquisition of skills and knowledge. One must be educated to acquire this basic knowledge. Quality education could be seen as the basic standard education given to an individual for the totality of the mind and body.

Omotseye (2003) is of the view that quality education is a lifelong process that depends on social and intellectual horizon to enable us acquire some relevant skills and knowledge applied to the needs as they arise. Quality education gives us a state of mind of conscientious activities that leads to higher productivity, sound moral judgment and efficiency in performance.

Fafunwa and Omortseye (2003), said if Nigerian is to move rapidly from the 15th century to 20th century, she must place education into the main stream of economic, social and cultural development. Otherwise, no major industrial revolution can either take place or be sustained nor can . a new society be built or maintained".

Any country, where the masses are held down by ignorance, disease and poverty cannot survive. Where there is no access to quality education there is a possibility that the required skills for_ self-reliance may not be available and poverty will set in. Other include: lack of ideas for creativity, laziness etc.

The Role of Home Economics in Poverty Eradication

Home-Economics as a broad field of knowledge and skills can be divided into various area through which poverty can

be eradicated in our society. Such areas include: 1. Home Management

Home-Management is seen as the process of using the families resources to meet the families need or goals. It requires mental work and physical power of family members . good management of family resources leads to the improvement of the quality of living within the family.

Anyakoha (2000), is of the view that Home Management considers consumer education, housing, interior decoration and child development and care. Experts in Home-Management must have acquired skills in areas like weaving of fabrics making and painting of flower buds, decoration of houses and venues for various occasions. These experts can also be employed as interior decorators¹ designers. Laundry specialist, stewards housekeepers etc. generates these services to make money and so drive poverty far 1. home maker the responsibilities of a homemaker include

- a) intelligent and responsible use of family resource (human and material) to meet family needs.
- b) Guiding and caring for family members.
- c) Pinning selecting and construction of family clothing etc.

Interior Decoration

This is the act of beautifying rooms and other interior areas of the house Decoration makes the home attractive, comfortable and useful . As an interior decorator, she can create and render services and get money in return. An interior decorator can:

- a. Plan and decorate interiors, not only for homes but also for hotels, hospitals, libraries, officers, schools, banks, church etc.
- b. Device harmonious colour scheme and sketch plans of rooms showing the arrangement of furniture etc.
- c. Select and purchase decorative and functional materials e.g. furniture. Fixture etc.

Institution Management

The Home-management graduate can hold a managerial position in different in different types of institution such as college and university. These various skills when properly displayed will help to reduce poverty in our society.

Food Nutrition

This is another aspect of Home Economics that deals with poverty without fear. This aspect according to Anyakoha (2000), teaches the purchasing, Preparation, serving, presentation and composition of foodstuff and the function of different food nutrients in the body.

Oyegbeda (2000), maintains that food and Nutrition deals with meal management and services and prepares people for employment. When one is gain fully employed, the issue of poverty would have been forgotten

Nwabah (2001) is of the view that Food and Nutrition prepares boys and girls in colleges for different job opportunity

Dietetics

A dietician works in the hospital by helping to plan meals for patients following the doctor's recommendations the right type of food helps in the treatment, recovery and prevention of disease. Dieticians also work in the keep fit clinic where they give counsel to their clients.

Food Magazine Editor

A food Nutritionist can work as a food magazine editor where she can feed the media with information on food and run programmes to educate the public.

Food Technology

They research and exchange scientific and technological information towards alleviating the ravages of human starvation and contribute to the advance of food science.

Teaching

A food Nutritionist can be teacher and so she inculcates the knowledge and skills acquired in the subject to her students.

Catering

A caterer render services by cooking for people in hospital, schools, old people, hotels, hostels, offices etc.

Hotel Management

Food nutritionists can manage a hotel as a business. Meals and accommodation are planned to meet the needs of customers.

Researcher

Food researchers work on food carrying out experiment and test to find out the relationship between on food and the other, utilization of food industrial waste processing and preservation of food etc. when one is employed through, any of the jobs. Poverty is said to have been lost in transit

Clothing and Textile

Clotting and textile according to Egbo (2002), is the study of textile materials and the use arid care of each. She maintained that skills acquired under this heading include pattern construction dree- making, knitting, crocheting making of handicrafts. Poverty can be eradicated from one's life by making a living out of any of the above.

Skills can be acquired in clothing and textile through formal and informal educational system but it is always better through formal education. Expert in clothing and textile can do the following jobs to eradicate poverty as prescribed by Anyakoha (2002).

Designing

Designers create new styles or designs for garment/dress. They also design fabric and clothing accessories. They can be called fashion designers.

Hair Dressing and Beauty Care

These are hairdressers and beautician who run hair salon where they take care of people hair perform other skin or body treatments.

Modeling

A model works in fashion homes or industries where she can display different dress styles for the public to see and buy.

Dyeing

These people do the dyeing and basic designing to produce fabric like Adire and other locally dyed material.

Teaching

They can teach clothing and textile in schools and colleges other avenues of eradicating poverty under clothing and textile include:

- ❖ Researching
- ❖ Weaving of fabric
- ❖ Fashion merchandising
- ❖ Pattern illustration etc.

Child Development Care

Child development means to look after a child or body by providing all his needs Oyegbeda (1 999),. Such needs include bathing feeding and caring for his equipment.

Anyakoha (1 999), sees development as the qualitative changes in a child which result is an increase in skill and complexity of function e.g. trying to get hold of a toy. Child development can be different types or ways e.g. physical development which is the most visible development as its progress can be easily observed and measured. Mental development refers to activities which involve thinking, understanding etc. social development is any form of behaviour that involves relations with others.

Experts in child development and care can successfully earn a living through doing the following jobs.

a) **Child Care:** A child care give can work in child care centers where parents bring their children for care while they busy .

b) **Baby Sitting:** A baby sitter is an individual employed by parents to care for their children in their absence . in some places, baby-sitting is a traditional teenage occupation.

Child development and care can prepare teenager for this occupation. Responsibilities involve in a baby sitting job include:

- ❖ Feeding the child
- ❖ Bathing the child
- ❖ Dressing up the child
- ❖ Playing with the child
- ❖ Putting the child to sleep

Day-care Attendants: A day-care center is a special place where babies are taken care of while their parents go to work or any other business. Most working class mothers make use of day care centers. The job of the attendants resembles that of a baby sitter but the attendant will normally have many children to look after at a time.

Responsibilities of the Day-care attendant include:

- ❖ Feeding the babies at appropriate times.
- ❖ Changing the babies nappies or clothes when necessary.
- ❖ Playing with the babies etc.

d). Nursery School Attendants; A senior secondary school graduate who has studied child development and care in the Home-Management aspect of Home-Economics and work as a Nursery school attendant and her responsibilities include:

Assisting the teacher in looking after the children in the classroom and playground.

Helping the children with the use of toilet and other school facilities.

Serving the children their snacks.

Helping the children develop good eating habit.

With all above skills and jobs opportunities acquired through Home Economic, one can earn money either by being self employed or employed by others so as to make life worth living for himself and then eradicate poverty in our homes communities and the society at large.

Recommendation

1. Home Economic as a subject should be taught in all levels of education and should be made a core subject.
2. the society should be encouraged and exposed to the raining of Home Economics which will help them acquire skills that would help them survive in these times of Economic hardship in the country.
3. Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) should help in funding Home-Economics programmes so that there will be enough infrastructures for the training.
4. There should be periodical training and re-training of Home-Economics education staff so as to meet up with new challenges.

Conclusion

Home-Economics is skill acquisition oriented as it exposes people to a lot of skills and so it goes a long way to eradicate poverty in the lives of the people and the society at large.

Home-Economics plays an important role in the eradication of poverty in our society because a lot of Home-Economics graduate are self employed and employers of labour due to the various skills they have acquired from all the areas of the subject.

Home Economics makes you a master of your-self as it helps one to become independent. It provides you with income which helps one to live his or her life without being in want or lack. Even though the study of home economics is expensive because of its nature, the dividends cannot be compared to its expensive nature.

Home Economics therefore, is a strong and important tool for the thorough eradication of poverty in our society.

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