

TEACHING HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

Teaching Home Economics is very important in any society with regards to education. Therefore, the selection, training and retention of qualified staff are very important to the realization of quality programmes in Home Economics Education especially at this time when there are changes in societal conditions. This is why many things pose as threats to effective teaching of Home Economics in schools as quality manpower is needed for growth and technological advancement of modern Nigeria. This paper therefore, discusses the problems militating against effective teaching of Home Economics Education and the prospects, with a view to increasing the efficiency and promotes nation building.

Introduction

Obi, (1996) explained that home economics education is an aspect of vocational/technical education. Its teaching is quite in line with that of other departments in vocational and technical education. As at today, there are three major levels of Home Economics education programmes. They are:

1. The National Certificate in Education (NCE) as offered at the Colleges of Education and Polytechnics which prepare teachers for the Primary and Secondary schools.
2. The graduate and postgraduate degree programmes in Home Economics as offered in few universities in the country, and they train beneficiaries for senior secondary schools, colleges of education polytechnics and universities.
3. the Technical Teacher Training Programme (TTTP) which is a special Federal Government Sponsored programme for training technical teachers at graduate and postgraduate levels.

Home Economics at the College of Education and University Levels

Students are trained at both College of Education and University Levels. Obi (1996), says that at the college of Education level, training lasts for a period of three years. Students are exposed to a period of teaching practice that lasts for about three months, and two periods of industrial attachment.

At the university level, about fifteen universities offer Home Economics Education at first degree level, postgraduate level and technical teachers training (TTTP) at degree and postgraduate degree levels.

Students at this level also participate in teaching practice, industrial attachment, and take theoretical and practical course. At the postgraduate level, students are exposed to various areas of Home Economics.

Problems

There are a lot of problems affecting the teaching of Home Economics in schools. McNown (1977), explained that developing nations have special problems that come their ways in the course of planning and implementation of vocational education programmes including home economics education. They include: haphazard implementation, corruption, lack of hard work, etc.

Lack of Tools, Machines Equipment and Infrastructure

Nowadays, there is acute shortage of tools, machines equipment and infrastructure in our institutions. Many of such facilities are now obsolete, and out of tune with modern ones which have vaster functions. This has obviously affected the teaching and learning of students, and as a result, many of them are half-baked.

Poor Societal Attitude

At this stage of our national development, the society has the belief that the course is meant for girls only. Not only (his, people also believe that the course is for the handicapped and the never-do-wells in the society. This is also in line with the view of Ikwuagwu (1992), when he said that the problems must be tackled especially as teachers have poor image.

Corruption

Aina, (2002), has said that Nigeria has become a notorious country in the world through her nation-wide acceptance of corruption in all areas of the economy. This invariably, has affected the full implementation of vocational and technical education programmes in tertiary institutions. This is why nothing works in the Nigeria economy.

Shortage of Manpower

This is the greatest problem facing the teaching of Home Economic Education. The problem is worse in some Colleges of Education and Universities. It is observable in both quality and quantity of the produced manpower. Quality in the sense that it is often difficult to find specialists in some area of Home Economics while in some others there may be a concentration. This shortage limits the number of applicants admitted for training, and some of the teachers in schools are old-timers who are not current with the new technological changes.

The Future of Home Economics Education

Obi, (1996), explained that the Nigeria government and some institutions are making some efforts to develop vocational and technical education in Nigeria, This has resulted in the new awareness while some progress has been made though more needs to be made.

As way of improving the facilities in institutions, local sources of fabrication of tools and equipment should be explored. Communities, industries and individuals, according to Obi (1996), can be used to improve the infrastructures in institutions rather than relying solely on the government. Foreign philanthropic organisations can be appealed to for aid in terms of fund, books and equipment.

Better incentives can be used to attract students to do the course in order to re-direct societal attitudes. This can be done through immediate employment of graduates.

In addition to this, adequate supervision and evaluation strategies should be adopted and students with proven outstanding abilities should be rewarded to encourage others while the truants should be identified and punished, Obi (1996).

Recommendations / Conclusion

The problems facing the teaching of Home Economics in our schools are not new. Some giant stride has been made in some areas. Akin (1996), had expressed that an aggressive policy of training the right manpower must be pursued, planned, coordinated and the trained personnel should be purposefully utilized.

From the foregoing, therefore, the following recommendations are hereby, made:

1. Government, State, and Local Government (including all stake-holders) should provide regular funding in order to sustain the teaching and learning of Home Economics programmes in tertiary institutions. It would stimulate effective training of students.
2. All stakeholders should endeavour to purchase modern tools, machines or equipment used in laboratories. This would keep beneficiaries abreast of modern technological changes in the world.
3. The federal government should evolve a loan scheme that would encourage Home Economics graduates to set up their own business after graduation. It will certainly encourage self-reliance or self-employment.

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