

THE ROLE OF HOME ECONOMICS IN UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Igbemi, M. J.

Abstract

Education is a process of developing a functional man for national development. Basic education is a stepping-stone to sustainable national development. Home Economics has a role to play in a sustainable national development. This paper therefore, examined basic education, the role of Home Economics in sustainable national development and problems facing effective teaching of home Economics in the Basic education. Based on the above, recommendations were made.

Introduction

Education is the cornerstone of every nation development. Education in the broad sense according to Sango (2006), means an increase of skill development, of knowledge and understanding as a result of training, study or experience. In order to survive according to Sango, a society must pass a basic skill, information and beliefs from one generation to the next. Basic, according to Horny (1998), is forming a base from which something develops or on which something is built. The success or failure of any nation's educational system depends on the type of foundation laid in the basic education, which in turn, reflects in the development of that nation. If the basic education is sound, the nation's development will be fast and be sustained. Where this happens, the nation is said to have a sustainable development.

Horny (1998), defines sustainable as that, which can be kept going or maintained. A sustainable development is a product of a sound basic education. What then is basic education?

Basic Education

Basic education known worldwide is primary education. Primary education refers to education given in institutions for children aged 6 to 11 years plus (FRN, 2004). However, a basic education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria tagged "Universal Basic Education" (UBE) was launched on the 30th of September 1999 by President Olusegun Obasanjo. This basic education extends beyond primary education. According to FRN (2004), basic education shall be of 9-year duration, 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. It shall also include adult and non-formal education programmes at primary and junior secondary education levels for the adults and out-of-school youths. The document also stated in section 3 sub-section 16 that the specific goals of basic education shall be the same as the goals of the levels of education to which it applies (i.e. primary education, junior secondary education and adult and non-formal education).

The goals of primary education among others are to:

- give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity. - provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality and
- give citizenry education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society.

In the implementation guidelines for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, the following objectives are stated:

- developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
- the provision of free universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school-going age.
- reducing drastically the incidence of drop-out from the formal school system (through improved relevance, quality and efficiency)

catering for the learning needs of young persons who, for one reason or another, have interrupted their schooling through appropriate forms of complementary approaches provision and promotion of basic education. ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for a solid foundation for life-long learning.

The Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme could not stand the test of time because inadequate preparation and poor implementation of the programmes. The poor standard exp; in overall educational system in Nigeria today may not be unconnected partly with the failure ;:1 Scheme to meet the standard it was set for.

The UBE scheme is supposed to be revitalized UPE that would repair the damage done educational industries. For the UBE to serve this purpose, it has to be made functional. A fur education, according to Igbemi (2002), is the form of education that develops the ini physically, mentally, socially, intellectually and provides skills that makes him produce: functional education, Igbemi added, focuses on development of individual's talent, interest, skills and attitudes that enable him produce goods and services for use in the society.

Home Economics is one of the subjects in UBE curriculum that will help to achieve objectives of the UBE programme to make it a functional education for sustainable develop-effectively implemented. Fortunately, the factors that led to the failure of the UPE program-well known. This is confirmed by the statement made by the FRN (2000), in the Impleme-: Guidelines for the Universal Basic Education programmes "In seeking to achieve the objectives programme... vigorous efforts will be made to counter the factors which are known to have h:r: the achievement of the goals of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme tried two c?; ago." This however, can only be possible if the saying that "it is better said than done" is not applicable here.

The Role of Home Economics in Sustainable National Development

Nwankwo (2004), defines Home Economics as a field of study that provides the necessary knowledge for guiding and assisting each human being towards a more self- rewarding, fulfilled I compatible with society. The development of any nation starts from the development individuals through education. This is the reason why Home economics focuses on the develop: of the individuals.

Onyeyinka (2001), defined sustainable development as the development gained which continue even after outside expertise and resources are withdrawn. Sustainable development is a of a sound educational system given to children at their formative stage of life. Bebebiafiai (2003) Igbemi (2006), noted that the primary school level is the appropriate age in the formative years *at* child... Whatever a child is taught at this level is what he grows up with... Therefore, a sound Universal Basic Education is very important for sustainable development.

Home Economics taught at the basic educational level will play a very important role in I development of the individual and the consequent development of the nation. Home Economics to create avenues for acquiring skills and knowledge for enhancing self-reliance and gab employment in order for individual to be able to cope with the chances of our time (Igbemi, 2(Home Economics education, according to Igbemi (2002), builds a good society through the family, teaches pupils to know and appreciate their responsibilities as members of the family and inculcate them values, attitudes and skills for survival in the society. Saka (2001), in (Igbemi 2003,opined Home Economics as a vocational subject has a lot to offer in salvaging individual families and indeed the nation from the present economic predicament because it aims at preparing the individuals family and career opportunities.

Edet (2001) in Igbemi (2003), on the other hand noted that Home Economics education is a necessity for a sound development of today's child for the future. Anyakoha (1998), is of the viewthat Home Economics teaches people how to live a good, healthy and happy life in the family community, nation and the world. In fact, a sustainable development is ensured if the citizenry are healthy and happy.

If Home Economics is properly taught at the basic educational level, it will play a very important role in making our national education relevant and sustainable development will be attained. However, there have always been problems militating against effective teaching of Home Economics at all levels of education. If adequate attention is not given to solving these problems, the role of Home Economics in UBE for relevance and sustainable national development will be a mirage.

Problems Facing Effective Teaching of Home Economics in Universal Basic Education Programme

The failure of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was associated with inadequate human and material resources. Ahia (2001), noted that Home Economics is a subject which is concerned with using and managing human and material resources for families, individuals and communities. Effective teaching of Home Economics can only be possible if the necessary and adequate provision of human and material resources is given priority. Igbemi (2003), observed that lack of resources which is a common problem to vocational education programmes has restricted Home Economics education from performing its roles effectively.

The issue of human resources in relation to Home Economics at the universal Basic education (UBE) level lies with qualified Home Economics teachers and resource persons. In any nation's educational system, the teacher remains the key actor whose quality could mar or improve the education results. He is the axle on which the whole educational reforms rotate for he translates the lofty ideas into reality, (Adeh (2000), in Igbemi (2003)), Ajagbaonwu (2000), in Igbemi (2003), observed that many teachers who teach in our primary schools are really not qualified to teach even though they possess the Teacher's grade II certificate or the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE). These teachers lack dedication and are ill equipped to teach at this level of our education where a sound foundation is supposed to be laid.

It is assumed that more than ninety percent of the teachers in primary schools are not Home Economics teachers and yet these teachers teach Home Economics in their different schools. Since these teachers are not Home Economics teachers, they cannot handle the teaching of Home Economics effectively. It is only those that read Home Economics that can teach it very well. Secondly, most posting of teachers to schools favors schools in the cities at the expense of schools in the rural areas. Qualified Home Economics teachers posted out concentrate in schools in urban areas. This leaves the teaching of Home Economics in most rural schools to any available teacher.

Material resources include well-equipped laboratories and funding. Some primary schools in some urban areas are serviced by Home Economics centres which were equipped decades ago and where qualified teachers teach the pupils. Most of these centres may be having equipment that are not functional at this time of UBE programme because of the low maintenance culture in our educational institutions. It is believed that the teachers in those centres are not even teaching effectively as a result of lack of equipment. The primary schools that are far from the Home Economics centres are not taught with equipment at all, as it is hard to see any primary school that has equipment for the teaching of Home Economics. The schools are not even adequately funded.

Ihunmwangho (2005), observed that quality education at all levels requires quality resources and consequently, adequate funding. He noted that, money is the bottom line of any system of education, but unfortunately, it is always the government that must provide for the citizens. Funding of education in Nigeria has not always been adequate which has made the achievement of the objectives of the laudable policies made in the past impossible. For any educational objective to be achieved, adequate plans for funding need to be put in place. Ihunmwangho (2005), opined that, first, it is necessary to be sure that the funding leads to the achievement of acceptable educational objectives. He noted that when education is well funded, education development is high.

Talking of education funding policy and politics as regards UBE, Ihunmwangho (2005), noted that the policy was announced by the Head of state in Sokoto in 1999 before the Bill was sent to the National Assembly in the year 2000 and passed into law in the year 2002. Therefore, according to him, the policy was announced even before planning and funding arrangements had been completed. Universal Basic Education funding is still a political issue, he concluded

It is necessary to avoid the mistakes made in the past concerning the funding of education if the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme must succeed. Pupils and students of UBE

programme need to acquire the necessary foundation skills that will help them in their consequent educational progress. This will only be possible if all the schools that are running UBE program are adequately funded and equipped with qualified teachers employed to handle the teaching. Home Economics in particular requires adequate human and material resources for effective teaching to take place. If these resources are made available, Home Economics will play an important role sustainable national development.

Recommendation

In order for Home economics education to play effective roles in sustainable national development through UBE programme, the following recommendations are made:

1. Only N.C.E. Home Economics teachers should be allowed to teach Home Economics in programme.
2. All UBE centres should- be provided with Home Economics Laboratories so that adequate foundation skills will be taught and learnt.
3. All Home Economics centres should be equipped with modern equipment and adequate facilities made available
- 4'. Adequate funds should be provided so that teaching materials will be available whet required and for maintenance of the equipments
5. Adequate number of Home Economics teachers should be posted to all primary and jjiuniorsecondary schools in both rural and urban areas.
6. Home Economics teachers posted to rural areas should be motivated through payment of inconvenience allowance attached to their monthly salary to encourage them.
7. There should be regular supervision of the teachers of Home Economics lessons under programme.
8. Home Economics centres should be provided for rural schools.

Conclusion

Education is seen as pre-condition for national development Therefore, for a nation to be developed, education must be a priority and given adequate attention. Universal Basic Educative introduced so that Nigerian children will be given sound foundation education that will be relevant national development. There is, therefore, need for government to provide all schools with adequate human and material resources. Home Economics can only be taught effectively if teaching material are available. It is when Home Economics is effectively taught, that it can be relevant and contribute to sustainable national development.

References

- Edet A.V. (2001) in Igbemi, M.J (2003). The need for qualified Home Economics teachers in primary schools as a means of achieving and maintaining quality education. Unpublished paper presented at the national conference of the primary and teacher education held at Asaba, 2003.
- Ahia, C.N (2001). The UBE primary school practical Home Economics and problems of relevant resources. A publication of the Association for Promoting Quality Education in Nijgeria (APQEN), x1,P80.
- Ajagbaonwu, L.(2000). In Igbemi, M. J. (2003). The need for quality NCE Home Economics teachers in primary schools as a means of achieving and maintaining quality education. Unpublis paper presented at the national conference of the primary and teachers education Held at As 2003.
- Anyakoha, E.U. (1998). *Home Economics for junior secondary schools, i-iii*. Onitsha: Africana Publishers ltd.
- Bebibiafi, LA. (2003). In Igbemi, M.J. (2006). Refocusing on the skill development area in primary school home economics curriculum. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development*, P85.

- FRN (2000). Implementation guidelines for the UBE programme. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.
- FRN (2004). *National Policy on Education*, Yaba: NERDC .
- Hornby, A.S. (1998). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Igbenu, M J. (2003). A functional home economics education in Nigeria. *The Nigerian Academic Forum*. 9(4), 51,57.
- Igbemi, M. J. (2006). Refocusing on the skill development area in primary school Home Economics curriculum. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development (MULJORED)*, 7(8), 85.
- Ihunwuangho, S.O. (2005). Problem of financing higher education in Nigeria. *The Nigerian Academic Forum*. 9(4), 51, 57, 61.
- Nwankwo, J. N. (2004). *An introduction to Home Economics education*. Ughelli: Eddy-Joe Publishers Nig.
- Onyeyinka, R.A. (2001). The use of appropriate technology as a panacea to sustainable poverty alleviation in Nigeria. *Association of Teachers of Technology (NATT)*. Proceedings of the 14¹ annual conference, Umunze, 2001. 9.
- Saka, F. (2001). In Igbemi, M.J. (2003). A functional Home Economics education: implication for national development. *Omoku Journal of Women in Colleges of Education*. Maiden Edition, 171.
- Sango A. (2006). Repositioning of the teacher education through the use of modern approaches, Methods and Techniques of Teaching. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development (MULJORED)*, 7(8), 27.

