

ROLE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The most effective way of helping students to learn better about their social and natural environment is to provide for them learning experiences which are real, concrete and are available for them. Therefore, this paper aimed the role of community resources in improving the quality of teaching and learning in Nigerian Schools. The paper examines into the concept of Quality of Education, different meanings of community resources by different authors and types of community resources. Also different ways of utilizing community resources in improving the quality of teaching and learning in Nigerian schools and guidelines for inviting professionals as resource person(s) would be highlighted. Importance for using resources person(s) and relevance of community resources in improving the Quality of teaching and learning would be discussed extensively. Conclusion and recommendations were highlighted.

Introduction

Quality means meeting performance requirement. Quality according to Onocha (2000) can be defined as the level of excellence in performance on the strength of context, inputs, process and output.

Looking at quality in the realm of Education can be referred to as standard or conformance to certain minimum standard (Nwite Onuma, 2008). Also in Onuma, 2008, Oyerinde (1997) sees quality in education as factors such as well articulated national goal; well planned curriculum at each level, assessment procedures and instruments; capacity for processing examination data. Utilization of

assessment outcomes and quality of students enrolled Universal Basic Education,(2002) also associated the quality of Education in schools to quality of learners who have access to school and motivated to learn with the support of the family, quality teachers who possess required entry qualifications, skills and pedagogy; quality teaching with child central and skills based approaches; quality of learning environment which prohibits harassment, humiliation, sanction facilities and quality outcome with define learning knowledge, sanitation attitude skills.

Onuma (2008) identified five aspects of quality in education as follows:-

- Quality as resource inputs of teacher infrastructure and instructional materials,
- Quality as input of academic achievement on the test scores and progress in pass rate.
- Quality as a process e.g. student/teacher interaction level of participation and engagement in learning.
- Quality as content e.g. Curriculum content inclusion of contemporary knowledge coverage of fundamentals.
- Quality as reputation e.g. General public perception and historical image of the school.

Therefore, the quality at global education and the need to compare education standards of one level to another and one country against another has brought about in Nigerian Schools the new emphasis on the use of community resources in improving the quality of teaching- learning process.

Community is the population of people living in an area often of the same cultural background inhabiting a geographical, contiguous area, and is able to act in a corporate way in peace and unity of purpose (Ajelabi, 2005).

Sometimes instructional materials can be classified according to their characteristics. One of these classifications is community resources.

Olowu, (2005) define community resources as locations within the community where learners having been taken away from the classroom environment, goes in order to come into

first hand contact with people, places and things around them.

Also Mkpa (1991) refers to community resources as those facilities found outside the classroom which can be harnessed and use effectively to facilitate the study of some specified subject matter. These enrich the learning experiences of learners.

Community resources can be classified in different perspectives, but to Ajelabi (2005) community resources can be classified into the following:-

- **Human resources** – They are individuals who as a result of their experiences or expertise in their various fields of professions are considered knowledgeable adequately to the useful to the school. Here Adewoyin (2002) classified human resources as follow:
 - **Professionals:** These are specialists in specific subject matter areas such as Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Geography, Home Economics, history etc. They are highly skilled and experienced artisans and craftsman such as painter, carpenters, Blacksmiths, Bricklayer, Radio repairers, Motor mechanics etc. Business magnates such as general manager, managing directors of companies and factories.
 - **Non professionals** – They are those who do not have adequate skills and expertise in the jobs in which they engage. They can be found in all nocks and crannies performing one form of

services in industries, Hospitals, Ministries, Schools. Etc.

- **Para-Professional** – The Para-professionals are the semi-skilled workers. The category of profession has little knowledge of the job they render. They include auxiliary teachers, Para-medical personnel such as ward maids and nurses aides.
- **Materials Resources:** They are products of technology of the people or community that can be used to facilitate the teaching and learning of school subjects. They are abundantly available within the community. They are various types of buildings like Cocoa House Ibadan, bridges such River Niger bridges, roads, food crops, Airplanes etc. that can be found in the community.
- **Natural Resources:** These are resources that are man made but they are available within the community and can be utilized to enhance teaching and learning. These include vegetable, highlands, bodies of water such as river, streams, lakes and dams, types of trees in the bushes and forest animals etc. Ikogosi warm spring at Ekiti and Olumo Rocks at Abeokuta are noted examples.
- **Instructional Resources** – This type of resources exists in various forms such resources, economic, political and social. Students can visit the market, factories, banks, airports, airways to supplement what the teacher has discussed about them.

Ways of utilizing community Resources to improve the quality of Teaching and Learning in Nigerian schools

Onuebunwa (1999) highlighted various ways of utilizing community resources in improving teaching and learning in Nigerian schools as follows:

- The students with the guidance of the teacher can embark on field trips to places of interest such as plantation, factories etc.
- Through the permission of the school head the subject teacher can invite competent professionals to give talks or demonstrations in the school premises.
- Schools with insufficient materials resources can borrow the needed materials resources for the class use from neighbouring schools and this will enhance enrichment of the schools programmes.
- Through the efforts of Parents Teachers Association (PTA) parents can be involved in providing for or taking care of school responsibilities in certain needs areas.
- Provisions of opportunities for learners to practice in a practical environment some of the practicals learnt at schools by visiting the workshops of the artisans and craftsman.

Guidelines for inviting Professionals as Resource Person(s)

Professionals who live in a community may constitute useful instructional resources. The individual

professional who may be identified as prospective experts may come from a wide variety of sources. Resource person(s) may be invited to come to school to give talks or show practical demonstrations to the learners. The following are the guidelines to be adopted when inviting the resources person(s) (James Brown, Richards Lewis & Fred Hardearad, 1983).

- **Engage the expert.** This could be done by phoning or by letter and can be done by the teacher or committees selected by the students to communicate to the resource person informing the topic to be taken on. If the invitation is acceptable then arrangements should be made to get in contact with the resource person. Date and time for the programme should be fixed and at times the resource person may require the use of equipment such as projectors for the presentation and this should be provided.
- **Clarify the purpose of the visit** – Make sure that the resource person understands the purpose or objective of the visit. Provide him or her with adequate information on the class size, age of learners, class or level and furnish him/her about the time limit and possible questions to be asked about the topics to be dispensed.
- **Prepare the Class** – The teacher should make adequate preparation of learners for the visitor. If there is a committee towards the programme the members of the

committee should select the person that will introduce the speaker. All the class members should be prepared to take notes. Questions to be asked from the speaker should be arranged and assign one of them to give the vote of thanks at the end of the programme.

- **Arrange the follow up** – After the departure of the resource person the committee selected or members of the class should send a thank you letter to the speaker. Also, an article could be written about the programme for the school journal. The class can also write personal essays or projects or summaries of what they have learnt in form of reports. This is determining the extent the learners have benefited from the programme.
- **Record information:-** At the end of the exercise, some written records should be made of the visitor's contribution. It is a good idea to place in one file all materials concerning the visitor including all correspondence, records of call and this file should be kept in a special place in the school media centre. It may be consulted in future by those interested in extending an invitation for a repeat visit.

Importance of Using Resource Person (s)

- Olowu (2005) listed some of the importance of resource person(s) as follows:

- The learners learn from experts or those believed to be more knowledgeable on an issue or problem;
 - It makes learning more interesting and inspiring;
 - The learners are exposed to people different from their teachers thereby removing monotony that could lead to boredom on the part of the learners;
 - It gives broader and comprehensive presentation of knowledge and
 - It influences the total change of the classroom situation
- (d) Students are greatly motivated for subsequent learning activities. This makes the students to more interested and willing to learn.
 - (e) It gives room for acquiring basic inter-personal ethnics and
 - (f) It broadens learners, horizon of knowledge.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper summarizes role of community resources in improving the quality of teaching and learning in Nigerian Schools, various meanings of community resources were highlighted. The categories of community resources, ways of utilizing community resources in improving the quality of teaching and learning has been discussed. Not only remote that, guidelines for inviting the resource persons (s) to schools and the importance for using resources person in schools were X-rayed. Relevance of community resources in improving the teaching and learning in Nigerian school were treated in detail. It is expected that teacher cannot do the teaching alone they need to invite resource person(s) to schools to supplement their teaching.

Based on the background and findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (a) It makes possible close observation of a multitude of natural and man made things. As a result it improves learners, observation skills;
- (b) It also provides the learner's with first hand information and real experiences in a real life situation, since they are given the opportunity of observing and seeing;
- (c) It offers an opportunity for planned inspection of administration, organization and procedure in many fields;
- Teachers should be conversant with the local community in which the schools exist and this enables them to know people in that community with different professionals.
- The role of Parents Teachers Association is very paramount. This will enable the parents to play their

Relevance of community Resources in improving the quality of Teaching and Learning in Nigerian schools

Despite various instructional recourses available for teaching and learning, it is possible to state clearly that the relevance of community resources to the teaching and learning cannot be underestimated.

Therefore, the following are the relevance of community resources to the teaching and learning in Nigeria Schools.

role in improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

- Teachers of various subjects should endeavour to take their students on field trip at least once in a term, this will develop their skills.
- The school heads should allow the teacher to invite resource person (s) to schools.
- Teachers should be resourceful enough to make use of community resource materials in teaching the students.
- Students should be encouraged to involve in making on construction of community resource materials as this will enhance their learning and lead to self reliance.
- Schools should create a space on the timetable for resource person(s) to visit the school to discuss a topic relating to their area of specialization.
- The Ministries of Education should encourage the school Heads to make use of community resources to improve the quality of teaching-learning process.
- Students should be allowed to visit the local artisans and craftsmen workshop for the practical demonstrations of their subjects.
- Local Craft should be taught both at the Primary Schools and Junior Secondary Schools.

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