



STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION AT PRIMARY EDUCATION LEVEL.

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Abstract: The paper examined the strategies that can use for the development of business education at primary education level in Nigeria. The need for business education, the importance of infrastructural facilities, the roles of teaching personnel in the development of business education at primary school level and different approaches to be adopted in the achieving primary education objectives were discussed.

Keywords: Three to five key words separated by commas.

Introduction

That primary education is the foundation on which other levels of education rest has never been disputed. In Nigeria, primary school is the education in formal institution for children aged 6 and 11 plus. (NPE, 2003, revised). Primary school education therefore is the key to the success or failure of the entire national education system. The National Policy on Education (2003 revised) indicates a major objective of primary education as giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society.” What the policy is saying is that the primary school education should be made functional that is, education which is not for its own sake but rather, one that has direct relevance to the needs of the people, that makes the learners functions effectively in the society.

To develop and sustain this type of education requires adequate provision of infrastructural facilities, fund, and highly dedicated qualifies, committed and cooperative school personnel.

Against this background, this paper will attempt to

- a. Examine the need for business education at primary education level
- b. Discuss the importance of infrastructural facilities
- c. Identify the roles of teaching personnel in developing and sustaining the development of business education at primary education level.

Needs for Business at Primary School Level

According to the National Policy of Education, 1998, revised) (Business) education is “that aspect of education which leads to acquisition of practical skill as well as basic ‘scientific knowledge.’” This type of education for which there is an anticipated application, one that assumes that the learner has immediate meaning, translatable into action, for his learning activities (Good, 2009).

If there is any educational level at which business education should be solidly developed and sustained, it is the primary school system which forms the foundation of the whole educational system. Business education should be firmly established and sustained in the system. It is when a solid foundation has been laid at this grassroots level that more advanced skills and knowledge can be effectively acquired at secondary and tertiary educational levels.

Not only this, the traditional African education, which predated colonial education, was technical in nature. The children were taught how to cope with their environment. They were engaged in practical farming, cooking, fishing, weaving, carving, and other local activities (Fafunwa 2004). However, with the coming of the colonialists, education process changed. The school does not seem to prepare the child for life in his community. The result of this is the problem of unemployment that has hit the products of our school system. In a situation where graduates of our tertiary institutions roam the streets without jobs, there is nothing that can be more realistic than the call for curriculum transformation in such a way that people will look inwards and do something practical to earn a living.

Infrastructural Facilities

School facility may be defined as the physical element of teaching, learning operating environment which include all properties. Media and materials, it aids the teaching–learning activities in school and at the same time protect the well-being of the users (Adigun, 2002).

On the importance of school facilities for affective teaching-learning process, Ogunsaju (2004) noted that schools facilities and educational goals should be viewed as being

closely interwoven and interdependent. According to him, “Apart from protecting pupils from the sun, the rain, heat and cold, the school building represents a learning environment which has a tremendous impact on the comfort, safety, and performance of the child.

He noted that the quality of education that our children receive is directly related to the availability or the lack thereof of physical facilities and overall atmosphere in which this learning takes place.

So to develop and sustain business education at primary education level, Adequate provisions of infrastructural facilities like good classrooms. Workshops, Laboratories, equipment and consumable are very important.

The roles of Head teacher

The role of the Head teacher in the development of business education at primary education level can hardly be over-emphasized; He or she is the school chief executive responsible for the overall management of the school. He ensures good and balanced academic programmes. See to the pupils and teachers progress and discipline with effective leadership. In the opinion of Udoh (1991), “the head teacher must be an individual of integrity who can command the respect of both the teachers and the pupils and that such individual ought to be hardworking, innovative, an acceptor of responsibility, a seeker of feedback, perceptive planner and organizer of human and material resources.” The above definition available definition clearly show the headteacher as an individual charged with the responsibility of harnessing available resources to achieve efficiently the set primary education objectives.

Generally, most workers do best, those things they are supervised rather than those that they are expected to do. The head teacher therefore needs to put in more efforts in their supervisory functions to ensure that the teachers are punctual, and regular in school and class attendance and that they teach the subjects assigned to them as expected, lesson notes plans have to be checked on a regular basis, records of work must also be checked regularly with the pupils’ workbooks.

The head teacher must plan the school duties to be done and assign them to the teacher with the skills and training to do them. For the assignment to be fruitful, the head teachers must prepare a plan containing what each teaching post involves and the qualifications the holder requires.

Guidance and Counseling Services

School guidance and counseling are advisory services for pupils and their importance in the development of business education at primary school level cannot be overemphasized. Due to the diverse nature of the home background of the pupils within the school system, different types of behaviors are found in school. These may include fighting, bullying, learning disability and interpersonal relationship. These problems could obstruct the learning potentials of the affected pupils. It is the duty of the headteacher to organize and effective guidance counseling services for the pupils.

The Roles of A Classroom Teacher.

Developing business education in our primary schools depends to a very large extent on the Caliber of teachers employed to operate in the system, the system needs teacher who are better trained as regards academic qualifications and professional skills. It needs highly trained specialist teacher to lay the foundation and give the children the proper orientation for life.

The teacher needs to promote teaching-learning process in a way that will make it functional. It is the duty of the teacher to ensure that pupils are mobilized for such activities as Woodworks, local blacksmith, weaving, metal works, farming, poultry, piggery, etc.

Teaching of these subjects could be complemented by establishing a link between the school and the community where local facilities are readily available.

Records must also be kept on pupils to describe the quality and degree of their participation and the level of performance in the school over a stated period. The records may include;

- a. Daily Attendance Register
- b. The Mark Register
- c. Admission Register

d. Graduation Register

The first two records should form part of the day to day activities of the class teacher while the last two records should be kept by the head teachers.

Continuous Assessment

The present policy of the government on the abolition and replacement of primary school leaving certificate with Continuous Assessment makes it necessary for all primary school teacher to undergo a special training on continuous assessment management.

According to the policy statement, the primary school assessment had been graduated to cover the work done from primary three to primary six. In proportion of 10, 20, 30 and 40 percent respectively.

The continuous assessment if properly admonished and supervised will enable the teacher and parent have a true picture of the child school performance. It will afford the teacher the opportunity of testing the child cognitive, effective and psychomotor domains. That is the child's ability to use the head, the heart and the hands.

Teacher Motivation.

The most common form of motivating' the workers is the salary, and various forms of allowances. The salary structure in the school system could be major in maintaining and improving the teachers' morale. Teachers tend to be ineffective when they discover that they are underpaid compared with the salaries of equally qualified workers in other professions. To develop and sustain business education in our primary school system, and authority (Now Federal Government) must ensure that the teachers are paid a just wage and as at when due.

Other incentives like Business/Science teachers allowance may also be introduced to boost the morale of the primary school teachers. Other non-monetary incentives like good working environment and good housing scheme may also do some magic.

Primary Education Supervision

The need for supervision in the national education system has never been in doubt but the criticism; against it have been directed towards the method of operation. School supervision according to Ebhobimen (2009) “is a consciously planned programme for improvement and consolidation of instruction”. The inspection and the supervision unit of the local Government Education Authority (Now Primary Teaching Service Commission under the Federal Government) should see that the supervision is used with the overall assessment of the school to ensure that the rules and the regulations as laid down in the decree setting up the body are obeyed. The inspector should adopt the technique of:

- Supervision through demonstration lessons
- Supervision through group conferences, workshops and seminars
- Supervision through classroom visits and conferences.

The authority should as much as possible discourage the traditional view of supervision which is commonly referred to as “Snoopervision” only meant to find teachers faults

Curriculum Integration

The most obvious curriculum implication of business education at primary school level is the need to pay greater attention on an integration curriculum, the system should not be sent in terms of isolated subjects. For examples, subject like weaving, knitting, setting etc, may be integrated into say. Basic Home Economics, while subjects like Elementary Science, Agricultural Science, Woodwork, etc, may be integrated into Basic Business. It is only when the traditional boundaries between subjects are removed, that we can emphasis on theory learning and see education in relation to life.

Use of Indigenous Language

Another challenge facing the development and sustenance of business education at primary school level is the use of indigenous language for science and business teaching, since business education at primary level is grassroots oriented. It

would be necessary for primary school personnel to be able to communicate effectively with the language of the immediate community, inability to communicate in the functionally of the system is cog in the wheel to progress business education at the primary level, this may even make acquisition of the skills difficult if not totally impossible.

Need for Closer Link between School and Community

The school is established to serve the interest of pupils, parents and the community, the school can develop and sustain business education through the participation of school in community activities and projects and the use of community resource persons to participate in the affairs of the school. For example, some of the facilities lacking in the school may be available in the local community, This may include local blacksmith workshops, weavers, livestock and crop farms, etc. Pupils can visit these places for instruction, observation, and handling of relevant tools of the trade. These local tradesmen and artisans could also be invited to the school to teach specific skills.

Improvisation

It is a known fact that there is no government anywhere in the world that can provide all essential needs of a school system, so the way out is to improvise. To improvise, according to Foreman (1975) is “to make best use of materials at hand”.

The concept has a wider perspective, which includes: production development of materials from available resources. It is also include borrowing, exchange of ideas and consultation. Taking pupils to local tradesmen and artisans or inviting the same premises of the purpose of instruction is a good example of improvisation.

Conclusion

The need for developing business education at primary education level can hardly be over-emphasized. It is when a solid foundation has been laid at this grassroots level that more advanced skills and knowledge can be effectively acquired at secondary and tertiary education levels.

However, to sustain the development of this type of education requires adequate provision of infrastructural/facilities, adequate funding and adequate provision of highly dedicated, qualified, committed and cooperative school personnel.

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