

AVAILABILITY, ADEQUACY AND UTILIZATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS IN EKITI STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study sought to determine the level of availability, adequacy and extent utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools. The study adopted descriptive survey research design and was carried out in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The population for the study comprised 560 secondary school principals and vocational subject teachers in the state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 120 respondents made up of 100 vocational subject teachers and 20 school principals in ratio 5:1 per school. A 14-item structured questionnaire tagged “Availability, Adequacy and Utilization of Community-Based Resources Questionnaire (AAUCRQ)” was used to elicit responses from the respondents. Cronbach Alpha was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study and analyzed using a real limit of number at criterion mean of 2.5 for independent item analysis to answer the research questions. A t-test statistic was used to test two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that community-based resources such as natural, human, material and institutional resources for instructional facilities are abundantly available and adequate for teaching and learning of vocational subjects but slightly utilized in some cases and in most cases not utilized at all. Finally, constructive recommendations on utilization of community-based resources for the transformation of teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State and Nigeria at large were made.

Keyword: Utilization, Vocational education, Community-bases resources, secondary school education.

Introduction

Global advocacy and quest for the type of education that will provide individuals with the saleable occupational skills for self-employment and career advancement has become a major concern to every developing country, particularly Nigeria. This is because National Policy on Education (2004) stated that one of the goals of vocational and technical education shall be to give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically. To

achieve this goal, government is now concentrating attention on the provision of vocational education programmes at all levels of Nigeria education system by restructuring the curriculum to be vocational and academic in the secondary schools to encourage creativity rather than learning by verbal memorization without occupational skills.

Vocational education is a generic term often used together with technical education as vocational and technical education by various authors although Okoro (1985) had opined that in Nigeria, technical education is used more widely to refer to secondary vocational and pre-vocational education programmes whereas vocational education includes technical education. This accounts for one of the reasons why the federal government of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (2004) did not provide direct meaning for vocational and technical education but rather adopted the UNESCO (1978) definition as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to the general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. It enhances attainment of the expected creative quality that will make individuals self-reliance and contribute effectively to the development of the society.

According to Adama (2006), vocational education is the totality of knowledge, skills and methods needed as preparation for work and self-reliance. This is because it is a form of education with the primary purpose of preparing persons for functional skills and employment in recognised occupations. Okorie (2002) observed that it is a programme of study that, if properly and adequately delivered, is capable of opening a wide vista of opportunities for people. This could simply be called education for work and self-reliance, and where education policy does not reflect the indigenous needs of the people, such society or country is bound to exist under the dictates of foreign human and material resources. In secondary schools, vocational education programme is organised as prevocational and vocational subjects to be taught at junior and senior secondary levels respectively.

Prevocational subjects at the junior secondary school level include Agricultural Science, Business Studies, Home Economics, Local Crafts, Computer Education, Fine Arts and Music; while at the senior secondary level, the vocational subjects also include Agricultural Science, Applied Electricity, Auto-Mechanics, Book-Keeping and Accounting, Building Construction, Computer Education, Electronics, Clothing and Textiles, Food and Nutrition, Home Management, Metal Work, Technical Drawing, Woodwork, Shorthand, Typewriting, Fine Arts and Music (NPE, 2004). Teaching and learning of these vocational subjects in secondary schools provide marketable skills that offer means of self-reliance for youths at an early age.

Vocational subjects in secondary schools attract large number of youths who do not have much interest in the academic rigour by lending dignity to non-academic pursuits with self-employment and an opportunity for easy career advancement at his or her pace. Ihebereme (2008) stipulated that skill acquisition subjects through vocational education programmes act as a rehabilitator, motivator, reorientation and empowerment to the under-privilege youths in the present economic reality of unemployment. It holds the key to Nigerian students becoming technologically relevant, intellectually competitive and budding economically prosperous entrepreneurs like developed countries such as United States of America, China, Japan, Germany, Singapore etc who are now reaping the benefits of successful implementation of vocational and technical education.

The success or failure of vocational education programmes depend majorly on the implementation or teaching and learning process at the school level. The implementation process

involves the school, teachers, learners, instructional materials and methods, communities and government. Government must ensure conducive and well equipped learning environment with competent vocationally trained human resources such as vocational subject teachers and school principals. In this study, vocational subject teachers refer to the well trained, competent and qualified secondary school teachers that are employed by the government to teach any of the vocational and technical education subjects as prescribed in the National Policy on Education while the school principals are heads of secondary schools that have educational training or qualification in vocational programmes. Hence, vocational subject teachers and principals need to be highly motivated and readily committed to impart relevant skills based on the needs of the students and the society at large so that instructional materials or facilities could be adequately provided as well as ensuring its effective utilization.

Also, communities and school must interact such that they embrace vocational education programmes in the schools while the school must also ensure that the societal needs and resources are incorporated into the curriculum. It is however sad that despite the abundant community-based local craft institutions, human and material resources, teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools lacks instructional facilities that are primarily built on the indigenous socio-economic and cultural lifestyle of the citizenry. Hence, most of the government educational policies in the State and Nigeria at large aimed at providing quality vocational education are often stalled as a result of over dependent on imported materials which are inadequate for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in our secondary schools. Scholars such as Okorie (2002) and Okebukola (2008) have decried dangers of inadequacy of infrastructure/facilities in the teaching and learning of vocational and technical educational programmes.

Consequently, vocational subjects are taught theoretically and in some cases, are not taught at all for lack of necessary facilities and equipment. In schools where foreign instructional materials/facilities are available, they are under-utilized because they do not reflect on the competency skills required for indigenous technology that both teachers and students are familiar with. Babat (2007) observed that most Nigeria secondary schools do not have enough instructional materials for vocational subjects and the existing ones are outdated. The scholar also maintained that lack of adequate material resources has led to theoretical method of teaching rather than emphasis on the practical aspects that help to build the much needed vocational skills because the implementation of vocational education programmes with regard to the supply of instructional facilities/resources has remained unsatisfactory.

This suggests the need to explore other possible and inexpensive ways of securing needed instructional resources/facilities within the communities. Olayanju (2006) explained that the best approach for quality teaching and learning of vocational subjects is the utilization of community resources. The author maintained that school as a sub-part of the community ought to constantly make use of indigenous facilities so that students' learning experience can be enriched through well familiar instructional materials that reflect the socio-economic needs of the society. It is observed that most Nigerian communities are blessed with various indigenous resources that can be improvised to teach vocational skills. In doing so the challenges facing instructional materials or facilities for teaching and learning vocational subjects in secondary schools ought not to surface again.

According to Azuka, Nwosu, Kanu and Agomuo (2006), community-based resources refer to facilities, materials and opportunities in our immediate local environment that can be used to expend and enrich the teaching and learning experiences of learners. The authors argued that

hardly would a teacher make a successful teaching career in the absence of the use of at least cheap locally made resources and submitted that the use of local materials save the teacher time, effort and much words, facilitate learning and retention, clarify complex concepts, keep learners busy, concretised abstract ideas and stimulate creative imaginations as a result of constant touch and familiarity of students with the community resources. Community-based resources can be classified into four major types namely: natural resources, material resources, human resources and institutional resources (Azuka, et al., 2006).

Natural resources are resources that are not man-made but exist naturally within the community and can be used for instructional purpose such as river, vegetation, mountain, waterfall etc. Material resources include all the products of indigenous technologies that can promote teaching and learning such as locally made materials, equipment and gadgets, architectural designs, and so on. Institutional resources are social, religion, political, economic and traditional institutions such as markets, banks, factories, craft and entrepreneurship centres, and so on. Human resources on the other hand are individual resource persons, apart from the school teachers, who as a result of their experiences and expertise can assist teachers for effective utilization of other resources.

Utilization, according to Alabi (2014), is the use of available resources, tools or instruments to achieve a particular purpose. In this study, utilization of community-based resources refers to the consistent, practical and effective use or employment of indigenous resources/materials within the society to complement or replace foreign/imported instructional materials for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in secondary schools. It requires that teachers must first know what instructional resources that are available, where they are located, quantity needed for adequacy, how they can be acquired and utilized. The community must also be willing to always allow the school to utilize these resources. It is expected that government should fully integrate the utilization of community-based resources to enhance qualitative teaching and learning of vocational subjects in the secondary schools curriculum provided they are adequately available as instructional facilities/materials.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the level of availability, adequacy and extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.
2. determine the extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

Research Questions

1. What are the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools?
2. To what extent are community-based resources being utilized for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 probability level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and school principals on the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational

subject teachers and school principals on the extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

Methodology

The study was conducted using descriptive survey research design. This design is suitable because a descriptive survey research design involves collection of detailed description/fact of public opinion on existing phenomena with the intent to justify the current conditions and practices and to make better plan for improving the phenomena (Osuala, 2005).

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Ekiti State of Nigeria. Ekiti State is one of the six States located in the south-west geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Ekiti State is regarded as ‘fountain of knowledge and land of honour’ in Nigeria because of the level of literacy in the State, although much have not been done in the area of vocational subjects which this study attempts to address.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population for the study is comprised of 560 respondents made up of 26 secondary school principals and 534 vocational subject teachers in Ekiti State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 120 respondents made up of 100 vocational subject teachers and 20 school principals in ratio 5:1 per school.

Instrument for Data Collection and Analysis

The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled “Availability, Adequacy and Utilization of Community-Based Resources Questionnaire (AAUCRQ)” developed by the researchers was used to elicit information from the respondents to answer the research questions. AAUCRQ contains a 14-item structured questionnaire in four-point response options designed in two clusters. The first cluster used SA, A, D and SD to elicit responses on the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects; while the second cluster used HU, AU, SU and NU to elicit responses on extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects with assigned weights of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for both clusters. The instrument was validated by three experts; one from the Department of Computer Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka; one from the Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti and one secondary school vocational subject teacher. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items and a reliability coefficient of .82 was obtained. 120 copies of the questionnaire were personally administered to the respondents and duly completed copies of the instruments were retrieved for data analysis. Mean was used to answer the research questions; hence, any item with mean value greater than 2.5 was taken as high availability, adequacy and utilization of community-based resources while any item with mean value less than 2.5 was taken as low availability, adequacy and utilization of community-based resources by the respondents. A t-test statistics was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 probability level of significance, hence, any item whose p-value is less than .05, the null hypothesis will be rejected but where p-value is greater than .05, the null hypothesis will be upheld at appropriate degree of freedom.

Research Question 1

What is the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) Ratings of the Responses of Vocational Subject Teachers and School Principals on the Level of Availability and Adequacy of Community-Based Resources for Teaching and Learning of Vocational Subjects.

N₁ = 100, N₂ = 20

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Vocational Subject Teachers			School Principals		
		\bar{X}	SD	RM	\bar{X}	SD	RM
1	Local materials/facilities for enriching students' learning experiences	3.6 7	0.4 7	SA	3.33	0.49	A
2	Local craftsmen as resource persons to complement teaching of practical skills	3.9 1	0.3 0	SA	3.57	0.50	SA
3	Indigenous entrepreneurship centres/institutions for students excursion and after school training	3.8 3	0.3 8	SA	3.67	0.49	SA
4	Local gadgets, equipment, machines and tools improvised at low cost for teachers and students	3.8 9	0.3 2	SA	3.91	0.29	SA
5	Books written by indigenous authors for teachers' instructional guide or delivery	3.4 4	0.6 2	A	3.52	0.52	SA
6	Informal apprenticeship training workshops accessible for both teachers and students	3.2 8	0.6 7	A	3.16	0.69	A
7	Free natural resources for enhancing students' creativity and independent practice	3.7 3	0.4 7	SA	3.63	0.51	SA
Overall Cluster Mean		3.6 8	0.4 6	SA	3.54	0.50	SA

Keys: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, RM = Remarks, SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, N₁ = Vocational Subject Teachers, N₂ = School Principals.

From the Table 1, the mean responses of vocational subject teachers showed strongly agreed for items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7; agreed for item 5 and 6 while the mean responses of school principals showed strongly agreed for items 2, 3, 4, 5 and agreed for item 1, 6 on adequacy and availability of community-based resources for teaching and learning vocational subjects. The overall cluster mean of 3.68 and 3.54 is indicative that the respondents strongly agreed to the items. This implies that community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects are adequately available in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and school principals on the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

Table 2

A t-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of the Responses of Vocational Subject Teachers and School Principals on the Level of Availability and Adequacy of Community-Based Resources for Teaching and Learning of Vocational Subjects.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	P	DF	t-Cal	t-Tab	Decision
Vocational Subject Teachers	100	3.68	0.46	0.05	118	1.16	1.96	NS
School Principals	20	3.54	0.50					

Keys: N = Number of Respondents, \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, P = Probability Level of Significance, DF = Degree of Freedom, t-Cal = t-test Calculated Value, t-Tab = t-test Table Value, NS = Not Significant.

Data presented in Table 2 revealed that the t-test calculated value 1.16, at 118 degree of freedom and 0.05 probability level of significance, is less than the critical table value 1.96 indicating that no significant difference exists in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and school principals on the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools. Hence, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted as postulated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of vocational subject teachers and school principals on the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

Research Question 2

To what extent are community-based resources being utilized for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools?

Table 3

Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation (SD) of the Responses of Vocational Subject Teachers and School Principals on the Extent of Utilization of Community-Based Resources for Teaching and Learning of Vocational Subjects.

S/ N	Questionnaire Items	N₁ = 100, N₂ = 20					
		Vocational Subject Teachers			School Principals		
		\bar{X}	SD	RM	\bar{X}	SD	RM
8	Intentional use of local materials to reflect indigenous technologies even when foreign materials are provided	3.22	0.68	AU	1.2 0	0.4 6	NU
9	Involving local craftsmen as resource persons to participate in instructional development and delivery	1.35	0.51	NU	1.2 9	1.0 7	NU

10	Regular visit to indigenous entrepreneurship centres/skill acquisition centres for practical experience.	1.46	0.71	NU	1.2 2	0.6 4	NU
11	Making improvised local gadgets, equipment machines and tools globally competitive for national development	2.92	0.45	AU	1.9 5	0.5 9	SU
12	Informal apprenticeship training as part of in-service training programme for vocational subject teachers	1.43	0.61	NU	1.2 3	0.6 7	NU
13	Intensive use of immediate resources without waiting for government to supply materials	2.42	1.11	SU	2.3 0	0.9 1	SU
14	Indigenous strategies for instructional delivery and motivation of students towards economic self-reliance	2.34	0.63	SU	2.1 0	0.8 7	SU
	Overall Cluster Mean	2.16	0.67	SU	1.6 1	0.7 5	SU

Keys: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, HU = Highly Utilized, AU = Averagely Utilized, SU = Slightly Utilized, NU = Not Utilized, N₁ = Vocational Subject Teachers, N₂ = School Principals.

Data presented in Table 3 showed the mean responses of vocational subject teachers on items 9, 10 and 12 as not utilized; items 13, 14 as slightly utilized; items 8 and 11 as averagely utilized. Also, the table further revealed the mean responses of school principals on items 8, 9, 10 and 12 as not utilized; items 11, 13 and 14 as slightly utilized. Meanwhile, the cluster means of 2.16 and 1.61 were found to be below the criterion mean of 2.5, thus indicating that the community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects are not well utilized by the vocational subject teachers and principals.

Hypothesis 2

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and school principals on the extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

Table 4

A t-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of the Responses of Vocational Subject Teachers and School Principals on the Extent of Utilization of Community-Based Resources for Teaching and Learning Vocational Subjects.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	P	DF	t-Cal	t-Tab	Decision
Vocational Subject Teachers	100	2.16	0.67	0.05	118	3.10	1.96	S
School Principals	20	1.61	0.75					

Keys: N = Number of Respondents, \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, P = Probability Level of Significance, DF = Degree of Freedom, t-Cal = t-test Calculated Value, t-Tab = t-test Table Value, S = Significant.

Table 4 revealed that the t-calculated value (3.10) at 118 degree of freedom and 0.05 probability level of significance, is greater than the critical table value 1.96 thus indicating that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and the school principals on the extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in secondary schools in Ekiti State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected; hence, a significant difference exists in the opinions of the vocational subject teachers and the school principals on the extent of utilization of community-based resources.

Discussion of the Findings

The data presented in Table 1 showed that the responses of vocational subject teachers had an overall cluster mean of 3.68 indicating that the respondents strongly agreed on the adequacy and availability of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects. This view was also upheld by the responses of the school principals with an overall cluster mean of 3.68 and 3.54 respectively which is above the criterion mean of 2.5 indicating that vocational subject teachers and principals agreed to the adequacy and availability of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State. The result of null hypothesis one presented in Table 2 showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and school principals on the level of availability and adequacy of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects. The null hypothesis one was therefore not rejected and this implies that community-based resources for teaching and learning vocational subjects are adequately available. This finding is in consonant with the submission of Uyoata (1997) that community resources enhance the number of human resources, equipment and physical facilities/materials available for teaching science, technology and pre-vocational skills in a depressed economy. The finding of the study is also in line with Onipede, Oke and Kolawole (2012) who asserted that local resources for teaching prevocational subjects in junior secondary schools are adequate.

The data presented in Table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed that community-based resources are slightly utilized by vocational teachers and principals as shown in the overall cluster means of 2.16 and 1.61 respectively which confirms that community-based resources are not well utilized in teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State. The result of null hypothesis two in Table 4 showed that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of vocational subject teachers and the school principals on the extent of utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects. Thus, the rejection of null hypothesis two implies that community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects are not well utilized. This finding is in consonant with the submission of Olayanju (2006) and Balatu (2012) that vocational teachers should focus on the education advantages inherent in community-based resources since integration of indigenous resources serve as a strategy for improving teacher preparation programme for effective transformation of teaching and learning of vocational education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Vocational subjects in secondary schools offer saleable skills, early employment opportunities for self-reliant, career advancement in recognised occupations and enhance indigenous technologies needed for economic productivity. The implementation of vocational education in Nigeria has, however, suffered gross inadequacy of instructional facilities. The study therefore determined the availability, adequacy and utilization of community-based resources for teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Ekiti State secondary schools in order to explore other possible ways of securing functional and inexpensive instructional resources/facilities that

reflect indigenous technologies that students are familiar with in the communities. The findings of the study showed that community-based instructional resources particularly human and materials resources required to enhance effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in secondary schools are not only adequately available but are slightly utilized by vocational subject teachers and principals.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. There is need for curriculum review of vocational education programmes to integrate community-based resources in the teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Nigeria.
2. Secondary school teachers should be well motivated to constantly explore local environments for instructional facilities so that both theory and practice can go together.
3. School principals should design effective ways of harnessing instructional resources available in the community to complement the effort of their teachers.
4. Government should as a matter of fact, make policy declarations to encourage maximum utilization of community-based resources by teachers for effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in secondary schools.

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