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QUALITY EDUCATION FOR BASIC EDUCATION

BY

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Abstract

This paper attempts to define the term Education and Basic Education. It also focuses on why some children are not in school, quality teachers and quality learners. Suggestions are made to improve the quality of education by implementing the National Policy on Education, which is still on 'pipe line', employing trained/qualified teachers to teach in our schools. Organizing seminars and workshops for teachers to improve on different skills, and knowledge necessary for teaching, and so adapt to the changing system of education in our country which will help the child to learn and the society at large.

Introduction

For one to succeed in a country like ours today, one must have knowledge through educated. For a child or adult who is not educated, needs to know the basic which is the rudiments of education to fit well into the society. Education provides knowledge to there basic skills in academics, technical, other related disciplines and citizenship. The desire to learn is not a human instinct but through education which is our universal human right.

According to Ikoku (1990), education is a potent socialization process as well as a vehicle for ensuring the appropriate mix of cadres for production, it is easily deduced that the goal, orientation, quality and content of the educational system opted for by any country is a crucial determinant of the direction of national development and the peace of such development.

The goal of education is to enable children to learn, realize their full potentials and participate meaningfully in the society. Education can be either formal or non-formal, with elements that include literacy, numeracy and life skills. Primary education is the base for any rational control in our educational system and it determines the success or failure of the whole educational system (FGN, 1977). The importance of education cannot be over emphasized as the foundation tells on what becomes of one in future.

Basic Education

Basic education refers to the whole range of educational activities taking place in various settings (formal, non formal and in-formal) that aim at meeting basics learning needs. According to the International | Standard, Classification of Education (SCED) basic education second stage while pre- primary education and adult literacy programs are also included in stage comprises primary education which is the first stage and junior secondary education as the one for developing countries. Universal basic education is regarded as a priority for developing countries and is the focus of the education for all movement led by UNESCO (Wikipedia, 2010).

In addition to being a right, basic primary education underpins the success of a society. That is to every year of primary education increases a person's productivity and reduces the education is still the same as early - childhood care and education, nine years of schooling, adult dependence on social resources. Therefore, the core of basic education is primary school. Basic and non -formal education. (Tahir, 2003). Out of school skill acquisition and the education of special groups within our society who for one reason or another cannot take full benefit of the existing provisions are also known as the basic education.

Because of the importance of basic education in Nigeria, the federal Government came with the board called Universal Basic Education to bring out policies which will reform the basic education. The policy reforms will focus on;

1. Improvement of the existing infrastructure and provision of additional ones.
2. Advocacy and social mobilization for greater popular participation and commitment to basic education.
3. Provision of infrastructural material.
4. Training and retraining of teachers and the provision of additional ones.
5. Making the curriculum more responsive to our needs as a nation. In order to actualize the above mentioned fact, basic education was made free and compulsory.

In the same vein, UNICEF has given some core messages for basic education saying for working together and making a difference:

- ✓ All children will realize their right through basic education or good quality education.
- ✓ For young children- enrich their development and learning.
- ✓ For excluded-get all of them into school and help them stay there.

- ✓ For girls ensure that they have full & equal access to, and achievements in basic education.
- ✓ For children in conditions of crises- ensure they can respond to all aspects of the pandemic and have the resources to do so.
- ✓ For all children - help them learn what they need to learn in rights -based, child-friendly, learning environments, effective with children, health for children, inclusive and protective of children and gender- sensitive.

The overall goal of University Basic Education is the provision of access and qualitative education to every Nigerian Child or school going age with emphasis on girls, children, in difficult circumstances, adult, illiterate and early school leavers.

In another development Tanner and Tanner (1980) said that the final analysis and purpose of basic education is centered on social control. This task and function is developed to propagate the view that people need to read and write so that they can communicate knowledge and ideas. Therefore, basic education is for social power and insight, not external social control. Banks and Clegg (1977) likened life- long education in many ways to the curricular issues intrinsic in the Universal Basic Education. They endorsed that a meaningful exposure of individual to the curriculum underpinnings of lite-long education is expected to enable him exhibit certain behavioural characteristics which includes: - an appreciation of nature and law of social life, a display of intelligent and genuine loyalty to high national ideas, a possession of a sense of responsibility as a member of social grop, a display of loyalty and a sense of obligation to intelligence and the will to participate effectively in the promoion of social well-being.

The overall aim of basic education is to expose all. groups of people to boost knowledge leading to social and economnic empowerment. However Lshie (2004) enumerated some problems of basic education as:

1. Low enrolment attendance and retention
2. Infrastructural decay
3. Funding of Education.
4. Staffing and staff morale
5. Qualitative quantitative pespective of teachers
6. Establishment and ownership of schools
7. Pupil's characteristics
8. The politics of primary school management

9. Community Based Education program.

With the implementation of Universal Basic Education, ordinarily one will say that the said objectives have not been made as there are many constraints or challenges also, Tahir (2003) added the following:

- ✓ Lack of an enabling law to give the implementation of muscle it deserves.
- ✓ Threats to teachers salaries which are associated with our declining economic fortunes and its attendant problem of zero allocation to the Local Governments
- ✓ Incoherent pension scheme for teachers
- ✓ Insufficient funds to expand teacher training and provide facilities commensurate with the increasing enrolment
- ✓ The politics of enrolment figures with its attendants problems of unreliable data for effective planning and the overall management of the enterprise at that level of our nation's educational system

Why are children not in school?

Some of the main reasons why so many children are not currently in primary schools include:

- **Poverty**- families have difficulties in providing school fees, books uniforms, food (balance diet) which will help the child to develop.
- **Safety** -Families fear distance, bullying, sexual harassment and violence especially for girls in the school set up.
- **Local traditions** - Families believe emphasis on boys and early marriage hinder children from school because the parents want to maintain the tradition of the society thereby keeping their children at home.
- **Emergencies**- Situations like conflict, economic crises and natural disasters also contribute in keeping the children from school by their parents. (on millennium project, 2006).

Quality Education

Since every extra year of primary education increases a person's productivity then quality education should be given to every child for the improvement of a country economy.

Enhancing the quality of education must be based on developing educational system that are integrated and responsive to the multiple obstacles to children's learning.

Quality education therefore, redresses gender and other inequalities like children's health and nutrition, issues of parental and community involvement and management of the education system itself.

The benefit and impact of quality education also make invaluable contributions to all areas of human development, improving the status of women and helping to alleviate and eradicate poverty. On the other hand, poor quality of education can stop children from attending schools and encourage child labour.

Learners Quality Education

The child needs quality education which will explain his/her achievement in life. According to Qpe pdf secured (internet materials 2010), quality education refers to a system of education that through programming process structure and content enables:

- Learners who are healthy. ; well-nourished and ready to participate, learn and supported in learning by their families and communities
- Environments that are healthy; safe, protective, gender' sensitive and provided adequate resources and facilities.
- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life knowledge in such areas as gender
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centered teaching approaches in- well managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge skills, and attitudes and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

Having seen what quality education is, the next question that comes to mind is how we realize the said objectives? Some steps are outlined as strategies to achieving the goals for learners and teachers.

Quality Learners

1. Healthy well stimulated children: If parents should provide well nourished food to their children as we all know that healthy is knowledge and knowledge is wealth, the children will learn very well.

2. Quality learning environment like:

- School infrastructure

- Class size where the learners will be comfortable.
- Quality psychological environment
- Quality content; child-centered curriculum structures; literacy,
- Numeracy. All of these will make a child to learn well.

3. Life skills and peace education like

- Empathy building
- Communication skills
- Relationship and community building skills - all things are good for the child as his/her basics for learning effectively in the school.

Quality Teacher

Teachers are one of the most important factors in helping children learn. Teachers mould children into what they become in future whether positively or negatively, so qualified and determine teachers are needed.

Teachers should have the following as standards:

- a. Knowledge of the e child and his/her age.
- b. Knowledge of fcontent and curriculum which will be child centred.
- c. Learning environment
- d. Respect for diversity.
- e. Instructional resources.
- f. Meaningful applications of knowledge.
- g. Multiple paths to knowledge.
- h. Honest assessment and evaluation by a teacher can help the child to improve in school and life

The on going training is a critical part of building the teachers capabilities and appropriate instructional style. In fact, investing in teacher training is an assured way to have direct impact on the quality of children education.

Obanya (2004) gives the qualities of the ideal teacher as he/she will have the ability to:

- Get a quick grasp of the needs, abilities and weakness of other persons.
- Recognize his/ her own developmental and learning needs.
- Take appropriate care of such needs, on his / her own.
- Create and manipulate environment which make self- development possible.
- Get along with others, especially persons of a variety of personal and social characteristic. When the inborn qualities and the learner's qualities are put to action, definitely a quality teacher would come to be. But when it is not, the reverse sets in. It is believed that when we have quality learners and quality teachers, we will have quality outcome that will be for betterment of the society.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made

1. Government should improve school education system management by implementing the National Policy on Education which will help the child and the community to grow.
2. Government should increase the number and quality of teachers in schools by employing qualified teachers in our schools to teach our students.
3. The teachers should be abreast with the skills necessary for teaching by allowing the teachers to go for in-service and also organizing seminars/ workshops for them.
4. Learning materials should be provided to the learners for effective learning.
5. Accessible schools should be built by government for all groups (advantage, disadvantaged and marginalized) which is one of the objectives of NPE.
6. There should be awareness campaign about the link between education, poverty and development. With the above mentioned suggestion if achieved, Nigerians education will be one of the best in Africa and the world at large.

Conclusion

Looking at the prospects and challenges of access, quality basic education and quality teachers in Nigeria, we still have a long way to go as most of the requirements are half met. As a way of conclusion, reference to the submission of Ogbonna (2002) which stated that: the understandable point has often been made that the resources at government disposal are limited and are other contending needs. This is why the prioritization of programmes makes sense. Investment in education benefits the individuals, society and the nation as a whole. Broad-based education of good quality is among the most powerful instruments known to reduce poverty and inequality.

With proven benefits for personal health, it is also the foundation for sustained economic growth for individuals and nations, it is the key to creating, economics; also fundamental for constructing democratic societies. Which other national applying and spreading knowledge to the development of a dynamic, global competitive priority could be nobler than above?

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