
REPOSITIONING SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

Akande, Muhibat Abiola and Tihamiyu Hussana K.

School of Vocational and Technical Education

Home Economics Section

College of Education, Azare

E-mail: omooke83@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Home economics education contributes substantially to economic empowerment of individual in the society through acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences. The paper focuses on the needs for repositioning the senior secondary school home economics curriculum so as to cater for differences in talents, provide varieties of career opportunities available to students after completing their course of study through intensifying effort on practical aspect. Finally, paper also noted the negligence of pedagogy aspect of home economics education, and entrepreneurship education needed to make school learning self-reliant. The paper therefore recommends among others that a range of value, knowledge, skills and idea should be developed by school administrators by collaborating with local talents within their respective communities to boost creativity and invention.

Key words: curriculum sustainable development, entrepreneurship, home economics vocational education

INTRODUCTION

A six year secondary education is not entirely new in Nigeria educational system. A close study of the various education edicts in Nigeria indicated that different structures had been operated at different periods in Nigeria, since the education code of 1926. The school is one of the agents of education which transmits societal education from one generation to another in order to realise the goals of society based on progressive educational systems anchored upon what are perceived as values and norms Danladi (2006). One of the objectives of National policy on education (NPE, 2004) is to inculcate the right type of value and attitude for the survival of the individual and the Nigeria society. The classroom teacher is expected to provide learning

experience through the process of curriculum implementation.

Curriculum is a series of experiences provided to students and developed using element of the curriculum processes, STAN (1988). Dalandi (2006) noted that principles of school curriculum include comprehensiveness in providing different kinds of experience which enable learners to acquire different skills such as information processing, intellectual skills, social skills, motor skills, aesthetic capabilities and pedagogical skills. It can be seen here that curriculum aims at the total educational development of the individual through the acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitudes.

The senior secondary school curriculum is designed with a comprehensive core curriculum structured to broaden student's knowledge and outlook. Home economics as a vocational subject is one of the basic subject which can provide necessary background for students wishing to offer vocational subjects in higher education. As noted by international council for science, one of the biggest challenges facing government today is how to build human capacity to achieve the goal of sustainable development (Yiljika 2014). The situation must be addressed and the curriculum be repositioned in such a way that learners will be exposed to various careers opportunities by laying more emphasizes on practical aspect in home economics education and the entrepreneurship education needed to make student learning self-reliant. Uko- Aviomoh (2006) emphasized that vocational aspect of home economics includes proper skill development, financial education and effective time management, prudence planning and human relations.

Ilojeje, (2000) states that the different areas of home economics have career options that can keep the graduates gainfully employed where they cannot find paid employment. These include interior decoration, toys and gift shop, dress making clothing merchandising, tie and dye, food caterers, snacks and confectionaries etc. Home economics institute of Australia (HEIA 2002) noted that Home economics embodies the dynamics of change as we move through the new millennium, society and indeed individuals need the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in the study of home economics for sustainable development. According to women in colleges of education (WICE, 2013) sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Yiljika (2014) opined that sustainable development improves the quality of life for all the earth's citizens without

increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely. This expectation can only be achieved through appropriate curriculum design.

HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM REPORTS-

Home economics is a field of knowledge that provides the learners with sense of belonging through acquisition of various skills during the course of study. The philosophy of home economics is centered on the acquisition of knowledge and skills that can be applied for purposeful living. The present senior secondary school curriculum is not capable of providing quantitative and practically skilled minds that is much needed for the realization of the nation's quest for development. Tiamiyu and Okonmah(2001),asserted that a functional curriculum has such qualities as integrative relevant, comprehensive, balanced, functional and instructional flexible and evaluate in nature for changes to occur in learners. These can be obtained and attained if only the curriculum is repositioned. Hipkins, Vaughan, Beal and Ferral (2004), shared same opinion by saying in order to increase students ability to demonstrate competence and confidence in home economics and provide transparent links to vocational and academic learning pathways, there is need to restructure new achievement standards that can be used to assess some types of knowledge and practical skills that seems currently to be mainly assesses by unit standards.

Danladi (2006) viewed curriculum as an attempt to build the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that is opened to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice. From the definitions, curriculum is not syllabus of intention but what happens in real situations. The senior secondary school curriculum should aim at the total educational development of the individual through the acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitudes for

school leavers that are terminating their education at secondary school level. Home economics curriculum should adequately prepare students for gainful employment in a number of services that are essential to the functions of present day society. Curriculum experts however, suggested a structure which begins with concepts, skills or patterns of ideas that serve as framework for the development of objectives.

THE PRESENT STATE OF HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

There is a burning desire for national development as envisioned in the mission and purpose of the National Economic Empowerment and Development strategy (NEEDS, 2006). Education is centered to sustainable development and strengthen nation. Home Economics Teacher Association in Nigeria (HECTAN) advocated for home economist to teach vital and culturally integrated theory for human capacity building. It also identifies the present challenges for home economists as sustaining a better quality of life and conveying life competences; the learning experiences should meet the needs of the students who should be both male and female.

Home Economic education is dynamic as it provides the necessary balance in bringing together theoretical understanding and addressing every day problem practically. It contributes to empowering people to become active and informed members of society with respect to both living independently and having good interpersonal relations students develop an understanding of the interdependence of their everyday living with that of other human being and broader issues related to ecological sustainability.

THE STATUS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM IN NIGERIA

i. It is relevant to the societal needs but the practical aspect need to be intensified in order to develop skills and competence of learners, even though practical hours are spelt out, but time allocated for it is inadequate and that had limited many teachers from giving in their best (Alabi, 2006). Also Smith (2006) in support noted that without adequate practical work, the theoretical knowledge gained may be of little value.

Hipkins et al (2004) cautioned that home economics is academic, the practical's should not become subservient to the theory when designing programme of learning to ensure relevancy and enjoyment of students learning to be retained.

ii. In Nigeria Home Economics students' enrolment still reflects sex stereotype only girls offer home economics particularly at the senior secondary schools, if the number of students who wanted to offer Home Economics is encouraging and societal perception change positively towards home economics education. This is in line with Hipkins et al (2004), low number of students in senior Home Economics classes is a potential barrier, as low student number affects course viability and sustainability.

iii. The problem of teaching and learning in our school is alarming. Many secondary schools either have shortage of qualified home economics teachers or do not offer it as a subject. The whole situation is summarized by Olaitan (2001) who put it

- that there are insufficient number of teachers in home economics with specialization in particular areas and who are adequately trained to teach technical skills.
- iv. Home Economics students are also disadvantaged in their progression of study of home economics because it lacks the status of an approved 'subject' for entrance to university and does not have a scholarship examination. This add to the societal perception that the subject is of little academic value, and provide a system, intentional or otherwise, for the traditional streaming approach to operate where home economics courses are identified with vocational pathways.
- v. Home Economics is equipping individual with skills for self-employment. However, it is not laying enough emphasis on craft development which is pedagogy aspect of Home Economics curriculum. Dada (2007) documented that craft is a skill oriented area of home economics noted for its capability of equipping learners for self-reliance and paid employment. He stressed further that craft affords individual opportunities to make wealth, attain financial security achieve or enhance status, recognition and fame, freedom among others. Therefore, for home Economics to realize its potentials in making students self-reliant and contribute to intellectual development of the nation, teaching and learning of craft should be repositioned at the senior secondary school curriculum.
- vi. Many schools do not have standard home economics laboratories.
- vii. Computer literacy is now a requirement in most jobs, more especially in home economics curriculum. However, the intended curriculum established broad guidelines for instructions and teachers implementing it using textbooks. In textbooks, the scope of the subject matter is defined and the sequence for instruction is laid out. Tihamiyu et al. (2008) observed that the curricular presented in some textbooks are very often poorly designed. They stressed further that some textbooks suffer from factual inaccuracies, inappropriate illustrations and have problem with readability. Therefore, they fail to reinforce the development of higher order thinking skills that is problem solving skills and critical thinking.

SUMMARY

Acquisition of western education in Nigeria does not necessarily guarantee automatic employment in private and public sectors. This is because the labour market is already crowded with many unemployed graduates. The principles of secondary school curriculum include comprehensiveness in providing different skills such as intellectual skill motor skills, aesthetic capacities and pedagogical skills (Danladi 2006). Home Economics is a unique vocational course because it has a dual function of preparing persons for certain wage earning occupations and open doors to many job opportunities for its graduates juts to the numerous skills acquired during the course of study which avert unemployment (Akande 2013).

The content of senior secondary curriculum is adequate for achieving the set objectives but practical aspects needed for learner capacity building is inadequate. Although practical hours are spelt out, but time allocated for it is inadequate and that had limited many teachers from giving in their best. Many schools do not have standard home economics laboratories. Pedagogical aspect (clothing and textile inclusive) is also being neglected.

In order to achieve the goal of sustainable development, senior secondary school home economics curriculum needs to be repositioned to cater for differences in talents and bringing together theoretical understanding and addressing everyday problem practically.

CONCLUSION

Home Economics is a combination of personal development, healthy lifestyles, social responsibility sustainable development and use of resources and cultural heritage. A well implemented curriculum within the school system is a sure guarantee for national development. The philosophy of home economics is centred on the acquisition of knowledge and skills that can be applied for purposeful living. If the societal and professional trends are ignored, the home economics curriculum will become out dated and irrelevant, ceasing to help individuals and families cope with changes in their lives. In order for us to become positively functional and prepare students for the job of today's technological changes, home economics curriculum need to be repositioned so as to enable students examined issued that affect individuals, their families and the community while developing knowledge and skills that help them think critically, make decisions for themselves and family.

The development of an entrepreneurial oriented curriculum will eventually fight the economic

and social changes occasioned by unemployment. There is also need for philosophical shift in practice pedagogy of home economics curriculum. The present curriculum may be good for producing teachers, but it is inadequate for sustainable development and for learners to be self-employ. The theoretical aspect is appropriate, but the time allocated for practical's in our schools is inadequate for proper acquisition of skills. To increase students' ability to demonstrate competence and confidence in home economics and provide transparent links to vocational and academic pathways, there is need to restructure new achievement standards so that they can be used to assess some types of knowledge and practical skills that seem currently to be mainly assessed by unit standards. (Hipkins, et al. 2004).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Towards improving the post primary home economics curriculum, the following recommendations are hereby proffered:

- i. Home economics curriculum developers should reposition home economics curriculum from a predominantly theoretical contents to a practical orientation responsive for sustainable development.
- ii. There is need to incorporate entrepreneurship education into the new home economics curriculum that equip the students with saleable skills.
- iii. Emphasis should be laid on the pedagogy aspect of home economics as it assists individuals to make wealth, enhance status fame for sustainable development.
- iv. Home economics future image should be redeemed by making the subject compulsory at the senior secondary school level.

- v. A range of value knowledge, skills and idea should be developed by school administrators by collaborating with local talents within their respective communities to boost creativity and invention.
- vi. A more generous allocation and imaginative use of resources on programme of research and development that seek to evaluate post primary curriculum.
- vii. Home economics is very costly programme to operate, and thus the three tiers of government should ensure that up-to-date equipment and facilities are installed for the use of home economics department throughout the country.

REFERENCES

- Akande M. et al (2013) Home Economics Education; A tool reducing unemployment in Nigeria. A Paper presented at the 4th National conference of Home Economics Teachers Association of Nigeria. Benin City.
- Alabi, B. (2006). A Journal of inter-disciplinary studies .A publication of fed college of education, Zaria.9(2).
- Dada, (2007) small scale enterprise available in clothing and textiles Education for Economic Empower of the family. Journal of Home Economics Research Vol. 6, NO 1.
- Danladi, (2006) Introduction to curriculum and instruction. Joyce Graphic printers and publishers.Co Kaduna Nigeria.
- HEIA (2002): TK/NZ, curriculum marautanga project (Health and physical Education) Home Economics Education in New Zealand, a position statement.
- HipkinsVaughan, Beal and Ferral (2004) Learning curves, meeting students learning curves: meeting students learning needs in an evolving qualifications regime shared pathways and multiple tracks <http://www.nzer.org.nz>. Retrieved on 12th March 2014
- Illoeje C (2000) career options and wealth creation in Home Economics Education, Macmillan publisher lagos
- NEEDS (2006).National Economic Empowerment Development strategy. A conference held at on wealth creation for sustainable developmentAbuja Nigeria.
- NPE, (2004) National policy on Education Lagos NERDC.
- Olaitan, S. O. (2001) Building dynamic research initiatives in Home economics in 21st Century. Research imperative and challenges for Home economics in Nigeria: Home economics Research Association of Nigeria (HERAN), pp 68.
- Smith. S, (2006) Entrepreneurship concept of small business management Ekwulobia; theoOnwuka and sons publishers.
- STAN, (1988) Science Teachers Association of Nigeria: Science Teachers handbook, Ikeja, Longman Nigeria Limited.
- Tiamiyu, H. K. and Okonmah, F. (2008) Repositioning of vocational and technical Education in Nigeria primary school curriculum Being a paper presented at the 1st national conference of school of vocational and technical Education, college of Education, Azare 2008.
- Uko-Aviomah, E. E (2006) Promoting Entrepreneurship through Food and Nutrition Education, *Journal of Home Economics Research, Vol. 7 (Special edition)*
- WICE (2013) A Publication of women in colleges of education on strategy for wealth creation and sustainable Development Vol. 4.

Yiljika J. D. (2004). The need to strengthen curriculum of Biology education for Bio-entrepreneurship and sustainable development. A paper presented at the 1st National conference organized by school of science college of education Azare. Bauchi State.