The place of funding in the teaching of home economics programme in Nigeria

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Citation

Abstract
This paper focused attention on the place of funding in the teaching of Home Economics programme in Nigeria. Home Economics is a multidisciplinary field of knowledge that is practically oriented. No practical skill can be acquired without the provision of funds for procurement of consumables and non-consumable resource materials. Funding is the life-wire of any educational programme and the bed rock for any effective acquisition of practical skills in Home Economics. In order to provide answer to the patient question raised on the place of funding in the teaching of Home Economics in schools, the following issues were discussed: the need for funding, sources of funding, problems of poor funding, and the way forward. Conclusively, the value of funds for Home Economics programme is inestimable and funds provided for Home Economics programme is an investment which can lead to quality teaching and the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills for self-reliance.

1. Introduction
Home Economics is an aspect of Vocational and Technical Education which plays vital roles in the development of national economy through quality teaching and learning of skills. Home Economics as aspect of Vocational Education is a skill oriented subject and requires the procurement of human and material resources. Home Economics as a skill oriented subject is capital intensive. Evidently from the above no Home Economics programme can be sustained without sufficient fund. Home Economics has been defined severally by many authors. Arubayi (2004) and Uko-Aviomoh (2005) defined Home Economics as an entrepreneurial-based and skill-oriented field of study that is expected to equip learners with saleable skills that make for self-reliance and paid employment. By implication if Home Economics is to meet the national goals as stipulated in the policy document on Education (2004), the programme should be properly funded.

Funding can be best described as the life-wire of any educational programme and the bed-rock for any effective Home Economics programme. The survival of any educational programme, greatly depends on the amount of funds at its disposal. Funding has been described by several authors; (Levine, 2001; Mbua, 2002 and Eheazu, 2005) as the provision of human and material resources needed for the achievement of educational goals, Okpala (2005) stated that funding deals with how to plan, budget for, secure and allocate financial resources in other to attain institution’s objective, while Obunadike (2007) described funding as raising and using of funds by individual institutions and government. Explaining further, she said
that funding ensures that the resources available are procured, disbursed, accounted for and monitored regularly to ensure their effective use.

Home Economics is an interdisciplinary field of study which is divided into three major areas, namely: Foods and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles and Home Management. All these three major areas of Home Economics cannot be adequately taught without the provision of human and materials resources. Arubayi (2010) opined that without funds these resources cannot be provided for, thus leading to poor quality teaching which has effect on the learning abilities of the individual poor motivation and subsequent frustration on the part of the learner. The resultant effect is indiscipline, examination malpractices, truancy and mass failure. This very important subject when properly funded and taught will lead to the acquisition of entrepreneurial-based skills, saleable skills, life skills needed for self-reliance or paid employment in industries or other government parastatals. Looking at the immense value of adequate funding to the teaching of Home Economics, this research work seeks to proffer answer to the pertinent question, what is the place of funding to the effective teaching of Home Economics in School?

To provide answer to the question raised, this paper will address the following issues: the need for funding; sources of funding; problems of poor funding, and the way forward and conclusion.

2. The Need for Funding in Home Economics Programme

Home Economics as an aspect of Vocation Education, is practically “oriented” and “skilled” based, which requires the provision of human and material resources for its adequate teaching and learning. Funds are needed to hire competent teachers, teaching facilities, equipment, laboratories and instructional materials. Quality teaching is purposeful and expensive; this supports the assertion of the National Policy on Education (2004) that Education is an expensive social service and requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for successful implementation of the educational programmes. The need for adequate funding of Home Economics programmes cannot be underestimated, hence Ajala (2002) and Uko-Avionoh’s (2005) assertion that Home Economics is an entrepreneurial-based, skill oriented field of study which is expected to equip learners with saleable skills that make for self-reliance, self employment and paid employment cannot be neglected. Obunadike (2008) observed that the Home Economics programme is expected to equip the learner with skills in originality in thinking, seeing things differently, creatively solving difficult problems, introducing new approaches and strategies, and catching attention and interest in firm career commitment such as setting up business, marketing services or being productive employees of an organization. These expectations cannot be achieved without adequate funding.

Another need for adequate funding in Home Economics programmes could be summed up in Eheazu’s (2005) assertion that the real essence of educational funding is for the provision of human and materials resources for the achievement of educational growth. Funds are required for recruitment and maintenance of competent staff, procurement of equipment, establishment of infrastructures and its maintenance.

Funds are needed to finance and cater for the human resources required for the effective teaching of Home Economics. Human resources as described by Ogodo (1999) and Aghenta (2000) include all human beings that function to aid teaching and learning such as teaching and non-teaching staff. These categories of people include classroom teachers, subject teachers, members of administrative staff, cooks, learners and security men. Funds are needed for recruiting, selecting, appraising and promoting teachers. Funds are required to organize staff development programmes such as seminars, conferences and workshops for optimal performance of the Home Economics teachers.

Funds are also required for the provision of facilities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, workshops, furniture and the maintenance of these facilities. The Home Economic laboratories need equipment suitable for the skill to be acquired in such laboratories. The laboratories need to be equipped with consumables and non-consumables for practical purposes. The values of well equipped laboratories cannot be underestimated, no wonder Daramola, (1985); Uzoka, (2003) and Arubayi, (2009) observed that the Home Economics laboratories are indispensable tools for learning and acquiring skills and that it is a place where correct mental impressions are created in the learner to prevent subsequent errors.

Funds are also required for providing learning resources or instructional materials. Instructional resource materials are indispensable tools in the teaching and learning process, they are the channels through which, messages, information, ideas and knowledge are given out. Etim (2006) classified instructional materials into Audio media, visual media and audio-visual, whatever the type of instructional materials, funding for the procurement of these instructional resources are crucial for instructional improvement and vital to the attainment of the educational goals.

Learning resource materials are very valuable to the teaching and learning of Home Economics, it will help the teachers to improve on the teaching skills through the provision of stimulating learning environment like excursions, fieldtrips, exhibitions and prize giving day activities. The need for adequate funding of Home Economics programme is of inestimable value, whether they are human or material resources. Funding and procuring of human or material resources will facilitate the acquisition of skills, knowledge, attitudes and abilities needed for technological advancement of the individual and subsequently improve national economy.
3. Sources of Funding Home Economics Programmes

There are many sources of funding of Educational programmes in Nigeria, of which Home Economics is an aspect of education. These sources of funding will be categorized into two groups: Governmental and non-governmental sources.

3.1. Governmental Sources

The Federal Government of Nigeria is the major source of funding of education. Federal government of Nigeria funds education through budgetary allocation of a percentage of her revenue to education, this allocation is shared to States and Local Government Areas. Okeke (2005) enumerated the following as Federal Government sources of funds: Federal taxes duties on petroleum products exports, exports and imports taxes. Value Added Tax (VAT) on sale of commodities, which was introduced in 1996. This VAT is shared between the Federal and State Government according to agreed formula. Apart from Federal, State and the Local Government, there are other sources of funding of education.

3.2. Non-Governmental Sources

Okeke (2005) cited the following as other sources of funding: Education Tax Fund: - This was instituted in 1998, and it stipulates that corporations and companies operating at a certain level registered in Nigeria shall contribute 2% of annual assessable profit to the fund. This fund is normally given as grants to Primary, Secondary and Tertiary institutions at a proportion of 20:30:50 for projects. Other sources of education tax fund are the Industrial Training Fund and the National Scheme and Technology fund.

3.3. Multinational Companies

Such as Shell, Texaco, Chevron, and NDDC (Niger Delta Development Commission), DESOPADEC (Delta state Oil Producing Areas Development Commission) also make contributions to Education of which Home Economics is an aspect as their social responsibilities to their host communities. Some of these multinational companies are responsible for building classroom blocks, building and equipping laboratories and workshops, awarding scholarships to students, motivating teachers through giving of incentives to Science teachers, building of skills acquisition centers, to encourage entrepreneurial skills.

3.4. International Development Agencies

Such as World Bank, UNICEF, (United Nation Children’s Fund), United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), DFID (Department for International Development), FDA (Food and Drug Agency), USAID (United States Agency for International Development) partnering with Nigeria in the provision of funds and materials for the education of fit citizens.

3.5. Community Based Funding

Local communities contribute funds and materials for education from community members in the form of self-help projects. Parents Teachers Association levies are also added fund to augment education.

3.6. Institutional General Funds

Institutions generate funds internally through endowments, school fees, donations from philanthropists or organizations and from economic/income generating ventures. Many universities augment their expenditure with IGRs (Internally Generated Revenues. Notably, the education’s expenditure largely comes from government allocation.

3.7. Special Education Levy

This is a special levy payable by every taxable adult to the amount of N25, 000 (twenty-five thousand naira per annum. Also companies, firms, commercial houses and other parastatal (both private and public) must contribute at least 10% of the annual profit to the State Education Fund.

4. Problems of Funding

Inadequate funding is one of the major problems of teaching Home Economics. Home Economics as a practically oriented field of knowledge and a vocational subject which requires practical work in all areas of the subject. No Practical skills can be acquired without practical exposure to learning experiences. Arubayi (2002) finding revealed that poor funding is one of the major impediment to the effective teaching of Home Economics in schools. She said that poor funding will hinder the provision of adequate infrastructures and facilities, lack of employment of competent staff, poor development and expansion in the school facilities and poor enrolment of students in Home Economics.

Writing on the problems of poor funding in educational programmes in the universities, Aghenta (1985) emphasized that poor funding was responsible for poorly equipped laboratories, obsolete tools, and equipment, lack of maintenance and repairs of tools and equipment. He explained that poor funding has hampered the quality of teachers which invariably has had a long run effect on the standard and quality of education in any society. In another view, Osa-Edoh (2008) sees inadequate funding as one of the major constraint to Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria. In her opinion, no meaningful technological breakthrough can be achieved in Nigeria without adequate funding. The implication of all these assertions by the different researchers is that adequate funding is required for human and non-human development through
adequate provision of infrastructural facilities, competent teachers, functional and useable laboratories, adequate classroom sizes, space and instructional materials.

Another problem of poor funding is inadequate and deteriorating infrastructure and facilities which becomes over stretched as a result of population explosion. Apart from this problem of poor funding is the issue of brain drain. Jega (2007) opined that the resultant effect of inadequate funding is brain drain and that between 15 to 25% of trained and qualified academic staff have left Nigeria to seek greener pastures elsewhere. In his opinion, both staff and students have become unmotivated as a result of poor conditions of service.

Again, the institutional capacity for research has been eroded. Students have become lazy and not willing to carryout practical experiences as a result of the expensive nature of Home Economics and the exploitative nature of some staff. Some staff and students are involved in large scale examination malpractices, by getting some of their practical work done for them by other people. As a result of this, many staff and students are not able to defend their qualifications.

5. Ways of Generating Funds for Home Economics Programmes

Home Economics Education is expensive but the benefit of proper funding cannot be quantified. Aniagbaso (1993) identified the following as some sources of generating funds for financing Home Economics programmes such as school Alumni Association, PTA (Parent Teachers Association) contribution, donations from wealthy business and philanthropist community leaders. Other sources of funding include; sales from students handcraft, funds raising activities through the organization of exhibitions to showcase student’s work. Sales of produced confectionery by the students.

Another way of funding Home Economics programmes is through the payment of fees and levies. This can be a means of internally generated fund (IGR) other ways will be the payment of endowment and development of Appeal fund, special education levy and fund from industrial training scheme. If all these strategies of providing funds are harnessed, then the Home Economics programmes would be adequately funded thus enhancing productivity. However supervision and monitoring is essential to ensure adequate utilization of the funds provided for Home Economics programmes.

6. Conclusion

Funding is the life-wire of any vocational education programme and is the bedrock on which effective skills and abilities can be acquired. Importantly, funds spent on Home Economics programmes for skill acquisition is not wasted but invested to endow young men and women with adequate skills and knowledge needed for technological advancement and self-reliance.

Home Economics is an interdisciplinary field of study which is practically oriented. For quality teaching and learning, funds are required to have competent staff, procure teaching facilities, equip laboratories with tools and equipment, provide funds for the provision of consumables and non-consumables. Build adequate classroom space and provide resources for instructional materials. There are many sources of funding education in Nigeria. Governmental and non-governmental sources. Notably, the major source of funding education in Nigeria is the Federal Government through the State to the Local Government Areas. Regrettable, there are problems of poor funding. Poor funding for Home Economics programme has hindered the adequate provision of infrastructures facilities, lack of competent staff, poor or no expansion of school building and poor enrolment of students in the Home Economics programme, thus affecting the level of skills acquired by the students’ for self-reliance.

References


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