

**LAGOS JOURNAL OF
EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION
& PLANNING**

**LAGOS JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING
VOL. 3 NO. 1, JANUARY 2007**

ISSN 1595-7543

**A JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS
AKOKA - LAGOS, NIGERIA.**

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Funding of Vocational Programme In Lagos State Secondary Schools

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This paper investigates the implications of funding for vocational programmes on the teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Lagos State secondary schools. The purpose of the study was to examine some of the factors hindering the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in the state. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and the population comprised secondary school principals, vocational subject teachers and senior secondary school students. A simple random sampling technique was employed and the total sample was 330. Pearson Product Moment Correlation, t-test and Spearman Rank Order correlation were the statistical techniques used for data analysis. Among the findings of the study were that there is virtually little or no facilities and equipment for effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects and non availability of fund to purchase these facilities. The teachers who are the implementers of this laudable programme and the society at large appear to have a wrong conception of what the programme intends to achieve. The study concludes by recommending among others that government at all levels should make available adequate provision of fund to purchase instructional materials and equipment to make the teaching and learning of vocational subjects more effective.

Introduction

In order to alleviate unemployment, reorient students' attitudes towards rural society, half urban migration and transmit skills useful in employment, the National Policy of Education (2004) provided for vocationalisation of the secondary schools in Nigeria. Unfortunately this programme has been bedeviled by implementation problems and one of the major problem is finance. Nwokolo (1993) observed that the problem of youth unemployment still remains persistent. Equally, important is the need for technological advancement and self reliance. Teaching and learning of vocational/technical subjects in secondary schools have been confronted by a lot of problem which are adversely affecting the purpose for which the vocational subjects were introduced. One of the major problems is non availability of fund to purchase instructional materials, facilities and equipment. The Federal Government of Nigeria imported Machineries and equipment from Bulgaria, Roland, etc. to prepare for the take-off of 3-3 system of education and even sent some Nigerians to the above mentioned to be trained on how to operate these machineries and repair in cases of break down. Unfortunately many of them did not return to the country. However most of the equipment are laying waste in the schools because there is nobody to operate them. Some of the school do not even have electricity supply to operate the machineries. Vocational

knowledge about the importance of the contribution of vocational subjects to technological development of the country. Most Nigerians preferred liberal education to vocational/technical education for their children because it provided ready white-collar jobs. Education was indeed regarded as a means to liberate their children from the tedium of farming and other menial jobs. It was therefore not surprising that institutions such as Hope Waddell institution, Calabar and Blaize Memorial Industrial School at Abeokuta received little patronage because of their emphasis on vocational and technical education (Adesola, 2002).

Indeed the old contemptuous attitude of Nigerian to vocational schools still persist. According to Adesola (2002) even if vocational schools are available in the right numbers, it is doubtful that many students would voluntarily opt to go there. Generally Nigerian parents would only consider grudgingly accepting sending their children to polytechnics if they fail to secure admission for them in universities.

The goals of vocational education which are clearly stated in the National Policy (2004) are:

- to provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly art craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- to provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development, and
- to give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically (p.)

All the above mentioned goals can hardly be achieved when most of the secondary schools in Nigeria and in Lagos State in particular are facing a lot of problems in vocational education.

Statement of the Problem

Most of the secondary schools in Nigeria and Lagos State in particular are facing a lot of problems in vocational education. Almost all the secondary schools lack adequate teaching facilities and equipment because of non availability of fund.

There is also the problem of ignorance on the part of the parents, students and even some teachers who are the implementers of vocational education programme. Students are ignorantly wasting time waiting for university admission to read prestigious courses instead of going to the polytechnics to read related courses in vocational and technical education which will enable them to be self-employed and contribute to the economic and technological development of the country.

Lack of proper implementation of vocational education as expected by government and as stated in the national policy of education has negatively affected the technological growth of the country, hence the need for this paper to investigate implications of funding for vocational programmes in Lagos State secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study are as follows:

- to ascertain the level of adequacy of facilities and equipment in the secondary schools in Lagos State
- to determine the number of students offering vocational subjects in relation to non-vocational subjects in Lagos State secondary schools

- to identify the problems militating against effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Lagos State secondary schools

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation.

- There is no significant relationship between adequacy of facilities and students' interest in vocational subjects in Lagos State.
- There is no significant difference in the number of students offering vocational subjects and those in non-vocational subjects in Lagos State secondary schools.
- There is no significant difference in the responses of principals and vocational subject teachers on the problems militating against the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Lagos State secondary schools.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised secondary school principals, vocational subject teachers and senior secondary school students in Lagos State. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the principals, teachers and senior secondary school students. The sample consist of 40 principals, 140 teachers and 150 students bringing the total to 330. Two structured questionnaires for teachers and students were developed, validated and used for data collection. The instrument was divided into three parts. The first part sought information on the development of vocational subjects; problems militating against the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in the state. Third part set out to elicit information from teachers of vocational subjects on the development, how to make vocational subjects teaching effective in Lagos State secondary schools. The second questionnaire sought information from students on the level of awareness and the importance of vocational subjects; progress, reports and problems militating against the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in the schools.

The instrument for the study was thoroughly scrutinized for content validity by experts in educational administration and planning. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted. The reliability coefficient was 0.70 percent.

The questionnaire was distributed with the help of a research assistant. All the questionnaire distributed were collected. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, 't'-test and spearman rank order correlation.

Data Presentation

Data collected for the study were analysed and presented.

Hypothesis 1:- There is no significant relationship between adequacy of facilities and students' interest in vocational subjects.

Table 1: Adequacy of facilities and students interest in vocational subject

Variables	Mean	S.D	Number	r-critical	R-call
Facilities	49.96	5.54			
Students' interest in vocational	46.58	9.44	120	0.178	0.34

Source: Field work Sig. 0.05 probability level

Table 1 above shows the Pearson product moment correlation on the relationship between adequacy of facilities and students' interest in vocational subjects.

From the table, the calculated r value 0.34 is greater than the critical value of 0.178 at 118 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the adequacy of facilities and students' interest in vocational subjects.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the number of students offering vocational subjects and non-vocational subjects in Lagos State secondary schools.

Table 2: The number of students offering vocational subjects in secondary schools

Variables	Mean	S.D	Sig	t-critical	T-cal
Vocational	49.96	50	148 0.05	11.49	1.98
Non-vocational	5.59	100			

Source: Field work

The table above presents the result of the t-test statistics on the number of students offering vocational subjects and non-vocational subjects in the state.

The table reveals that the calculated 't' is 11.49, while the critical 't' value is 1.98. This indicates that the calculated 't' value is greater than the critical 't' value at 148 degrees of freedom and 0.05 significant level. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This shows that there is a significant difference between the number of students offering vocational and non-vocational subjects.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the responses of principals and vocational subject teachers on the problems militating against the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in the state.

Table 3: Principals and Teachers' Responses on the Problems Militating Against the Effective Teaching and Learning of Vocational Subjects.

Variables	Means	df	Std. Dev.	cal-t	crit	sig
Principals response	6.29	12	3.04	0.34	3.11	0.05
Teachers response	4.86		2.27			

Table 3 above shows the t test result of the responses of the principals and vocational subject teachers on the problem militating against effective teacher teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Lagos State Secondary School

Investigations reveals that the calculated t value of 0.34 is less than the table value of 3.11 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted, that is there is no significant difference in the responses of the principal subject teachers on the problems

Discussion of Findings

The result of the first hypothesis reveals that there is a significant relationship between the adequacy of facilities and students interest in vocational subjects. This finding may not be a surprise because in a situation where the vocational/technical education is besieged by many problems among which is inadequate fund which is the major problem to run the programme. There are some other problems like inadequate number of qualified teachers, material and equipment, etc. The students may not see any force of attraction to vocational/technical subjects especially for the fact that people generally look down on these subjects.

This finding agrees with that of Akindiji and Hontoyon (2001) who noted that inadequate supply of instructional equipment to schools and colleges in Nigeria could be blamed on government low interest in vocational/technical education and partly lean financial resources of the state governments. Also National Council on Education Monitoring Committee (1990) reports showed the non-installation of all the introductory technology equipment was attributed to lack of workshops. The report further indicated that in many schools only theoretical aspects of these subjects were taught.

The second hypothesis shows that there is a significant difference in the number of students offering vocational and non-vocational subjects. This finding corroborates the view of Olaitan (1984) that society has taken vocational education to mean education for the mentally retarded students.

Due attention and recognition has not been given to the establishment of many vocational and technical schools. The question is even if they are many, how many students and parents would be willing to opt for such an option. It seems that government could not cope with the high cost of purchasing equipment and hiring experts to teach these subjects. This may be inimical to the government's aim of improving technology in the country and encouraging self employment through vocational and technical education.

Lack of facilities, proper counselling and motivation may be responsible for the few number of students offering vocational subjects. This trend, if not checked could jeopardize the government effort of advancing the country technologically.

The third hypothesis was accepted and that is that there is no significant difference in the views of the two groups on the problems militating against the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects. This finding agrees with Olaitan and Mogaji (1989) who emphasized on scarcity of trained teachers, poor financing, unrealistic curriculum, lack of adequate facilities, poor evaluation technique as some of the major factors militating against effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this investigation, the suggested possible solutions to enhance the effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects are:

Government should encourage the students to study vocational subjects by ensuring that adequate provision of fund is made to facilitate the teaching and learning of vocational subjects. This is because finance is the main integrative part of vocational education programme.

It is also recommended that the public on

parents, students and even teachers seem not to be adequately informed of the importance of this commendable programme.

There is need also for adequate provision of instructional materials and equipment needed for the successful teaching and learning of vocational subjects. Incentives and rewards should be given to students in secondary schools and higher institutions for outstanding performances in vocational subjects.

Qualified and competent teachers should be recruited and vocational teachers should be given special allowances and incentives. They should be encouraged by ensuring that adequate provision of equipment, instructional materials and workshops are made.

The government both at federal and state levels should ensure the successful implementation of this programme since it is the hub of technological advancement of any nation.

A well balanced and relevant curriculum is very important for successful implementation of vocational education programme. Since technology is always changing, vocational education curricula should be subjected to constant review to meet the challenges of these technological changes.

Conclusion

It is evidenced from investigations that there is still much to be done to facilitate effective teaching and learning of vocational subjects in Lagos State and the country as a whole. One could therefore conclude that until government gives recognition both in status and in remuneration to products of vocational, technical and technological institutions, the provision and advocacy for increasing output of this type of graduates would remain mere lip service.

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