
CORRELATE OF UPPER BASIC SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION AND SKILL ACQUISITION FOR SUSTAINABLE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper focused on correlate between the Upper Basic Social Studies Education and skills Acquisition for Sustainable Development in Delta State, Nigeria. Contents of the curriculum of the Upper Basic Social Studies are geared towards making the learner to become self reliant by exposing the leaning to skills of the head and those of the hands. Knowledge and skills gained at this level of education are in turned put to use and assists the learner to navigate through his social, physical and spiritual environment. Social Studies Education is one of the School subjects that prepare the young adult to become independent. Practical skills taught in the Social Studies classroom enables learners to deploy their skill to engage in a meaningful employment. Skill acquisition empowers the youth with the objective of employment generating. The value of youth empowerment led to the introduction of skill acquisitions in Delta State.

Through the programme, the youths are trained into becoming Entrepreneurs, Business Owners, and Job and wealth creators. Therefore, the paper concludes that sustainable youth empowerment is made possible through skills acquisition. Social Studies Education is a veritable education programme for preparing young adults with relevant skills. It was suggested that youths should apply to the various empowerment programmes of the States. This will enable the youths to acquire the valuable Skills that would make the youths self reliant. In addition, teachers of Upper Basic Social Studies Education should emphasize contents that would encourage skill acquisition during classroom teaching and learning of the subject.

Keywords: Upper Basic Social, Skill Acquisition, Sustainable Youth Empowerment.

Introduction

The upper Basic Social Studies Education is one of the educational programmes in the school curriculum in Nigeria. It was specially designed with the development of the young adults in mind. This is to the effect that the three domains of knowledge could be enhanced. That is, training in social studies education would make learners to gain cognitive, effective and psycho motor knowledge and skills respectively. Knowledge and skills gained at this level of education are in turn used by the learner to navigate through his social, physical and spiritual environment. The curriculum not the social studies education at the upper Basic programme was structured in such a way that it could prepare the learner academically and practically. Thus, at the end of the programme, the learner would have been prepared to become independent and be able to contribute meaningfully to his immediate environment and be able to engage in a gainful employment or become self employed by deployment or become self employed by deploying the practical skills acquired from social studies education. It implies that the upper Basic Social Studies programme contains orientation geared toward entrepreneurial elements. A close look at the definition and objectives of the subject at this level seems to capture this view.

Concept of Social Studies Education in Nigeria

Definitions of Social Studies education are developed based on the basic rationale for basic rational for Social Studies Education in Nigeria. One of the basic rationale according to Akinlaye (2003) was that prior to the introduction of the subject to school curriculum in Nigeria, pupils was exposed to knowledge outside their environment. In addition, pupils were trained in basic literacy and numeracy which were hardly related to life of learners. Whereas education is meant to prepare the learner how to live together and participate in the life of the society. Guided by this notion, Osakwe and Itedjere (2005) defined Social Studies as a subject that is concerned primarily with the study of people, their environment, and the society on which they live, and the resultant interaction of these elements. In addition, the authors say that, as a field of study, social studies attempts as synthesizing and applying the knowledge and skills obtained in it to promote effective citizenship. The authors imply that learning in Social Studies Education will result in equipping the learner with the needed knowledge and skills that would make the learner relevant in his environment. This definition agreed with the description of the term by Akinlaye (2003). He says that the main aspiration in Social Studies is to get young learners to have a better understanding of the intricacies of man's existence on earth. He says that with such an understanding, learners would then be better equipped to live and interact more effectively and meaningfully within their own environments. It means that social studies Education has the capacity to make learners survive, achieve quality life wherever the learner would find himself. The objectives of the discipline have made the subject most desirable in the school system.

Objective of Social Studies Education

Many of the objectives in Social Studies Education are relative to making the individual capable to handle life's problems. One of such objective of the subject relating to skill acquisition is contained in the study by Akinlaye (2003). He says that learning in Social Studies Education among other objectives is to ensure the acquisition of that relevant body of knowledge and information which is essential per-requisite to personal knowledge as well as to a positive personal contribution to the betterment of mankind. The objective also involved the development of Capacity to learn and acquire certain basic skills including not only those listening, speaking, reading and writing and calculation but also those skills of hand and head, together with those of observation, analysis and inference which are essential to the forming of sound social, economic and political judgement. Despite the fact that Social Studies has the objective of inculcating in the learner the acquisition of skills involving the hands and heads of the Learners, it appears that instructional methods in the subject has not achieved this specific objective.

Process of Skill Acquisition

The acquisition of skills of the hand and of the heads contained in Social Studies learning are obtained through a define scheme and systematic processes. The term skill acquisition presupposes that a method I'd involved in achieving the type of skill the individual would acquire. Pawners (2022) says that skill acquisition is the art of learning to do something in order to earn a living and or to survive. This means that skills acquisition involves learning. In other words, Learners are provided a scheme that they have to go through. It takes instructions of the part of the one providing the training based on practical knowledge. A model is often utilized to simplify the learning process, between the instructor and the trainee facilitate practical knowledge and skills acquisition.

Inna (2018) described skill acquisition we the ability to acquire practical knowledge in new conditions and on the basic of the abilities and experiences a person had previously. The author agreed to the fact any skill to be acquired must involve a process. This is because the process is linked to mastering skills characterized by applying these skills in particular situations. It means that when skills are acquired by an individual, the skill can be used to benefit the individual in terms of positioning the individual in an earning capacity. It is against this back drop skill acquisition is seen as an important aspect of youth development. According to Inna (2018), every person becomes an expert in a chosen field of life endeavor when he acquires a skill. This makes the process of skill acquisition very important. Therefore, it is a Worthy investment. It is important to note that skill acquisition helps the individual to adjust to the realities of the employment market, it enables the individual to meet immediate requirements in the work place, it assists the person to adjust for the future needs of the labor market, and acquired skills enhance earning power of the individual. Therefore, seeking to obtain a relevant type type of skill is very important because it makes the

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individual to become self reliant, employable and also become creator of employment respectively.

The process of skill acquisition entails at least six steps. An outline of the steps is replicated from Agile, Offshore and Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition in the study by Inna (2018), as follows:

- Skill acquisition required that the individual would analyze, compare and wright his current skill deficit and potential. This will enable the individual to select the appropriate skill that will align with his ability.
- Skill acquisition demands goal setting. The pursuit for skill acquisition is not carried out vaguely. The individual needs to set comprehensive goals for both his learning schedule and the expected learning outcome. This will determine the entry and exit point of the programme.
- The process of skill acquisition requires that the interested person should choose the trusted training providers with relevant studying programme. It will make the trainer to avoid waste of time, money and potentially become discouraged. Frustration often results where the programme enrolled for is not being judicially persecuted by the offering organization. This unnecessary delay can be avoided when the party chooses with care, where to receive this training for skill acquisition.
- The person needing skill acquisition has to intensify the process. This will allow the person to increase the impact of adoption. It is not enough time acquire a skill. When it has been acquired, it has to be put to work so that the benefit can be realized.
- The process demands that the individual must measure or carry out an assessment using specific means in the measure. It will assist the person to define or determine the progress made, the obstacles encountered and the perspective on the process.
- The sixth step is the ability of the individual to predict the future roles that would suit the newly gained skills to the requirements or the job market.

Hitesh (2021) complemented these six steps in the process of skill acquisition by his three stages of skill acquisition model of:

- i. Cognitive stage of skill acquisition.
- ii. Associative stage of skill acquisition.
- iii. Autonomous stage of skill acquisition.

These three suggested model are veritable approach to the execution of skill acquisition training plan and programme. The model is useful for both parties- Instructor and trainee. This is because; training for skill acquisition has to be achieved in progression, beginning with the cognitive stage which focuses on things that need to be done. At this stage, the learner tries to learn a skill by renewing verbal or visual knowledge. The feedback matters and that is why he will be paying close attention to his instructions that include information related to errors he has been making his lack of consistency.

The associative stage of the approach toward skill acquisition is the stage where the learner starts improving his performances after lots of practice. It means that the fundamental knowledge about the skill has been established as a result of constant practice under a strict supervision. The autonomous stage is the stage where the learner or trainee has gained information and practice diligently and has become automatic. At this stage the learner can accomplish functions and responsibilities without any conscious thought as the training has become internalized in his movements en route to this achievement is characterized by hard work and training. This quality and attitude is essential for a successful skill's acquisition programmes.

Available Skill for Youth Empowerment

There are different types of skills viable and available that tends toward a life-long expertise, that would provide empowerment to young people is the Nigerian society (Emejuru 2016) described empowerment to mean an economic and labor concept which deals with the imparting of labor skills and sensitivity to an able-bodied, mentally fit individual or group of individuals to enable them viable participate in the harnessing and distribution of economic and social resources for meaningful self benefits and the improvement of our society. This means that to empower the youth is to train, educate, cause him to acquire a means of livelihood or skill in order to enable him to live useful and optimally in that society.

Empowerment of the youth that would be sustainable or life sustaining occupations is determined by training and education and other programme that would cause the youth to acquire a means of livelihood.

The importance of youth empowerment is discussed in the study by Olusola (2019). In the study, the author identified the following elements to include:

- i. Poverty Eradication
- ii. Improved Standard of Education
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Crime Reduction and National Security and
- v. Employment Creations

The author assumed that based on these five elements, both the youth and the wider society will benefit when youths are empowered. Most significant is the benefit relating to crime reduction, national security and employment creation attributed to youth empowerment.

Rohaila (2022) agreed with the assumption that empowering the youth, socially, economically and politically has a wide range of benefits to the larger society. The argument is that nothing of greatness can be achieved by any country without giving importance to their youth. This is because empowering the youth in our society is an amazing thing. The youth are not only the hope of our future but the actual strength of our nation as well. The concept of youth empowerment conveys the idea that our youth can create a difference only when they are empowered. An empowered youth is the one who learns to work on developing their skills to start earning at an

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early age. A sensitive government will of necessity prioritize the empowerment of their youth through education and skill acquisition initiative that will guarantee a sustainable youth empowerment.

The Role of Education in Skill Acquisition and Sustainable Youth Empowerment

Education no doubt empowers an individual; however, it must be the education that is channeled towards earning of certificate as well as the acquisition of a skill. This idea is contained in the work by Thomas (2021). He found that education goes beyond having certificate which is a pointer that one is educated. Education helps the learner to reap and relish development in all facets of life when it makes the individual to apply the practical knowledge, acquired through education. In another words, education of whatever type should be aimed at making the individual obtain an enhance capacity to use his head as well as his hands. Therefore, while desiring to acquire education, premium should also be placed on skill acquisition. This is one of essential keys to promoting entrepreneurship and the eradication of unemployment.

Atueyi (2017) suggests that learners whose discipline is not in the vocational and technical.

Studies could utilize the long vacation to engage in skills acquisition. He believed that exposing and training students/ pupils to learn new skills and Vocational programmes is highly beneficial than taking them through the same classroom routine for a repeat or reintroduction of new class work.

Social Studies Education is one of the types of education that promotes entrepreneurship educations at the Upper Basic Education level. Achor, Muodumogu and Wilfred Bonse (2019) confirmed this observation in their study. Entrepreneurship is a skill based education in Social Studies Learners is exposed to different forms entrepreneurial skills taught in Social Studies. This introduced in Social Studies classes in order to achieve some of the objective of teaching and leaving the subject), particularly the self- reliant matrix in social Studies Education. Entrepreneurial contents found in Social Studies Education are expected to equip learners with skills that will make them to be self reliant, prepare the learners. to enter into jobs and progress in their various jobs. Social Studies Education at the Upper Basic Education level through its entrepreneurial programme is able to produce learners that are resourceful, creative and imaginative. The study by Edor (2013) maintained that Social Studies education teaches entrepreneurship for the purpose of youth empowerment. He found a correlate between the teaching of Social Studies and sustainable youth empowerment as a result of the implementation of the curriculum of Social Studies Education and adopting entrepreneurial skills. It is the objectives of Social Studies that at the end of the course the learner would be able to:

- i. Respond to the type of values and attitudes for his survival in the Nigeria society.
- i. Obtain the training of his mind and the understanding of the world around him, and

ii. Acquire the appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical, and social abilities and competence as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society. Guided by this model, Social Studies Education is able to teach learners the following entrepreneurial skills leading to sustainable youth empowerment. There are:

1. Personal characteristics
- ii. Interpersonal skills,
- ii. Critical and creative thinking skills
- v. Practical skills and knowledge

These listed skills taught in Social Studies act as a background to sustainable youth empowerment often provided by a majority of Non- Governmental Organization and Government in Nigeria.

Factors Affecting Sustainable Youth Empowerment in Nigeria

There seems to be a strong connection between youth empowerment and sustainable development. Tegede, Irewole and Dada (2019) viewed youth empowerment as a catalyst for sustainable development in Nigeria. It indicates that the neglect of youth empowerment would have negative impact on sustainable development. It also means that the youths contribute substantially to the economic growth and national development. Therefore, there is the need for sustainable youth empowerment. Fasola (2019) revealed that youth empowerment programmes have not been successfully sustainable. According to him, Nigeria have trained artisans, but have not been able to create an economy for them. It means, an enabling economic environment would be needed if youth empowerment could be sustained. Other factors affecting the need to achieve youth empowerment were identified in the study by McDonald, Iloany and Okoye- Nebo (2014) to includes:

- Weak leadership,
- Social conflicts
- Environmental factors,
- Discrimination against female youth,
- Debt burden, and
- Population explosion.

The authors agreed to the fact that the listed issues are the factors that has hindered the success of youth empowerment programme in Nigeria. In order to achieve sustainable youth empowerment, each and or all the identified factors hindering the successes of youth empowerment programme has to be taken into consideration by government at every level.

Delta State Government Youth Empowerment Programme

Many States in Nigeria recognized the value attached to skill acquisition as an attempt to empower the teaming youth's facing unemployment in Nigeria. A majority of international organizations recognized the fact that Nigeria is a youth dominated nation. According to in Ekpo (2019) Nigeria youth constitutes 83.5 percent of her

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population, falling within the age range of zero to thirty - Nine years. It is acknowledged nationwide that very little has been done by the Nigerian government to motivate and enhance the ideals of the youths in the country. It is in response to this experience different states have embarked on youth empowerment through skill acquisition, Delta State inclusive.

The Delta Rural Youth Skill Acquisition Programme 2021 2022 is designed to take the skill acquisition programme to the rural youth population. It has as its objectives as follows:

- To create income earning opportunities.,
- To stem youth restiveness,
- To discourage rural - urban drift, and
- To grow the local economy.

The target youth demography under this programme are semi - literate youths, who have acquired skill training need start up and fundamental business skill.

The RYSA programme of the Delta State has two Training components as follows:

1. The Practical/ Hands -on training: This aspect of the programme entails training of beneficiaries to acquire further practical skills required for them to succeed in their chosen enterprises. This training was carved out by Master Trainers designated across different communities in the State:

i. The Community Business School (CBS) training:

This is a mandatory programme for all RYSA beneficiaries to be undertaken once a week for eight weeks in the course of the practical/ hands on training programmes. The programme was meant to equip beneficiaries with life and business skills that are critical to success in life and business. Beneficiaries are subjected to the following Course Outline and skills are as illustrated below:

Table on Community Business School and Skill Areas

S/N	COURSE CONTENTS	AVAILABLE SKILL AREAS
1	Introduction to Business	Aluminum Profiling
2	Customer Relations	Catering and Confectioneries
3	Marketing	Electrical Installations and Repairs
4	Book Keeping	Fashion and Designs
5	Community Service and Volunteerism	Hair Dressing
6	Business Networking	Makeover
7	Plumbing	
8	Pop, Screed making and Painting	
9	Tiling	
10	Welding and Fabrication	
11	Woodwork and Furniture	
12		
13		

Source: Adopted from: <https://www.sparkgist.com> (2022)

Ahon (2021) revealed that youth empowerment have been sustained because after the training in one of the Twelve's (12) available skills area, the beneficiary is given financial assistance for a start- up in the empowerment programme. The starter packs to beneficiaries after their training completes the process of the empowerment programme. This is in pursuance of the State Government commitment to train Delta State youths into becoming Entrepreneurs, Business owners, job and wealth creators. This objective of the State Government to provide opportunities for the youths to be wealth creators aligned with the objectives of the Upper Basic Social Studies Education. This is because, the contents in the subject tends towards producing individuals after acquiring both head and hand knowledge and skill, would be able to contribute meaningfully to the development of his life and that of his immediate environment.

Conclusion

Social Studies Education particularly at the Upper Basic level is programme designed with the goal of sustainable youth empowerment. Learners are exposed to various contents based on skill acquisition. It is aimed that learners would acquire a life - long skill that can assist them throughout their life experience. This correlate is understood by the teacher hence, in most Social Studies Education classroom learners are exposed to needle work; modeling, construction projects, cooking, production, dyeing of clothes, fabrics; carving; Computer design and typing among other skills acquisition orientation found in the social Studies curriculum. Therefore, the paper concludes that sustainable youth empowerment can be achieved through social Studies Education, especially at the Upper Basic level of the programme. This is because, social Studies at the Upper Basic Education was primarily designed to equip the young adult with relevant skills that will make them productive in life.

Suggestions of the Study

The paper makes the following suggestion that:

1. Youths should apply to the various empowerment programmes of the state government. This will enable them to obtain valuable skill and be made self reliant in the society.
2. Government should enlarge the State Rural Youth Skill Acquisition to all class of unemployed youth. This will reduce the unemployment rate in the state as well as reduce crime rate
3. Teachers of Upper Basic Social Studies Education should emphasize contents that would encourage skills acquisition during the teaching and learning of the subject. This will enable the objective of the subject to be achieved, which is self reliant of the learner after completing the course of the Upper Basic Social Studies Education.

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