

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT EDUCATIONIST IMPLICATION FOR POSITIVE NATIONHOOD

Ethel Uzoamaka Osineke
Department of Entrepreneurship,
Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri,
Imo State.

Abstract

The survival of any nation is predicated on the level of development. Where the standard of living is low, the nation is at risk of total collapse. Child care education therefore is a vital tool which can be used to develop individuals. It is a field where opportunities exist for promoting employment opportunities for Childcare. This paper therefore highlighted the numerous job areas embedded in child care education as well as the challenges of preparing individuals for self-employment/entrepreneurship. Suggestions were made on ways of promoting the opportunities.

A child is any human being below the age 18 (United Nations, 1998). Children are descendants, the hope and the survival of human race and civilization on planet earth. They are important in the family because they contribute to the improvement of their parent's status and also play vital role in the economic survival of the family (Olaitan and Akpan, 2003). Children equally contribute to the moral well-being of the society. Children are very important in any society since they are the future leaders and hope of the Nation. The importance of children emphasizes the importance of their optimal development which depends on the care given to the children. This care stems from child rearing practices which, among others include the provisions of appropriate enabling environment for the childlike needs for food, clothing, play materials including toys, and educational cartoon.

According to National Child Right Implementation Committee (NCRIC, 1999), children require adequate care which includes, among others, adequate care, maintenance, training, socialization in the environment and education. The importance of childcare education for positive nationhood cannot be overemphasized. There is

urgent need of equipping the youth with employable skill to minimize the problem of unemployment, shortage of man power for technological development among others. These needs are properly highlighted by the Nation policy on Education.

Child care is embedded in the culture. It includes what adults and significant others in the child's life are able to provide, such as a healthy and safe environment, supportive and affectionate, interactive, appropriate modeling, stimulation, protection and time, which is all components of respect for the child's synergy of protection and supports their health, nutrition, psychosocial and cognitive aspects of development (Evans, Myers and Lifeld, 2000). Care is one of the key factors in the promotion of children's optimal development. Optimal development refers to the children's ability to acquire cultural relevant skills and behaviours which allow them to function effectively in society. There is therefore need for us to understand the impact of these services and to ensure their quality and accessibility.

Increasingly common, early childhood care plays an important role in children's development and provides a valuable support to families with young children. It is therefore important to understand the impact of these services and to ensure their quality and accessibility. According to Benneth (2018), high quality child care can have a positive influence on children's development and school readiness by providing valuable educational and social experiences. Research shows also that only high quality provision can deliver well-being and appropriate development to young children for positive nationhood. As an increasing number of mothers are in the workforce and most children ages three and older now attend a child care facility on a regular basis, it has become critical that young children from all backgrounds should have access to high quality child care.

Child care is the care and supervision of a child or multiple children at a time, whose ages ranges from six weeks to thirteen years. Child care is the action or skill of looking after children by a day care center, nannies, babysitters, teachers, or other providers.

Collins (2012), defined childcare as the care of children especially by a crèche, nursery or child-minder while parents are working, provided by a child-minder or local authority. It is the care or supervision of another's child, especially at a day care center.

Child care is a field of study that offers numerous occupations for individuals. As a skill oriented course, it possesses the capability of equipping individuals with saleable skills that make for self-employment, self-reliance and creation of wealth. It is an all-embracing programme that focuses on the welfare of individuals and their families. It is vocational and skill-based education which prepares one for gainful employment, employer of labour, good family living, self-employment and development

of the society. It quip the individual to attain and live a useful and satisfying life, and self-reliant which also contribute immensely positive nationhood.

Employment Opportunities in Child Care Development Education

Child care education has contributed much to the development of positive nationhood. Thus, a student at the completion of his course as a child care educationist is expected to have acquired basic knowledge. Child care education prepares one for wage earning in the following career opportunity:

1. **Nannies/Au Pairs:** A nanny is a professional caregiver of any age and land of experience who will work in the parent's home to care for the child. He/she may or may not live with the family. An Au pair is generally a younger person often a college student, who will live with the family for a few months to a few years to provide for the child or children and may do light housekeeping tasks. They are generally seen as a member of the family rather than as a paid caregiver.
2. **Daycare:** refers to the care provided for infants and toddlers, pre-schoolers, and school-aged children either in their own house, in the home of relative or other caregiver owning center based facility
3. **Pre-school teachers:** are essential in helping children learn the basics building blocks of many subjects such as reading, mathematics and spelling.
4. **Family Care:** also known as "in-home" daycare, takes place in providers personal home. This is usually a single provider who is caring for multiple children and families.
5. **Crèches:** The crèche is a non-maternal formal child-care setting where infants and children are kept for a particular period of time for nursing care, nutrition, sleep, excretion and general comfort of the children. It usually cares for a group of ten to more children often in a church, private home or school. The crèche make use of child caregivers or child minders. These refer to people who take responsibility of caring for the children on a long or short term basis in various child-care settings. They provide the children with healthy, supportive, safe and stimulating environment that will make them feel secure and allow them proper growth and development (Strickland and Worth, 2007). The crèche also have medical nurses attached to them. These are regarded as in-house nurses. They see to the treatment of mild illnesses and injuries in the crèche.
6. **Orphanages:** is a residential institution, or group home, devoted to the care of orphans and other children who were separated from their biological families. Examples of what would cause a child to be placed in orphanages are when the biological parents were deceased, the biological family was abusive to the child, there was substance abuse or mental illness in the biological home that was detrimental to the child, or the parents

had to leave to work elsewhere and were unable or unwilling to take the child. The role of the legal responsibility for the support of children whose parents have died or are otherwise unable to provide care differs internationally.

7. Foster Home: a house hold in which a child is raised by someone other than his/her natural or adoptive parent.

8. Home Based Childcare: is a care and education service for children provided in their own home or the home of another adult caregiver and is another early Childhood Education (ECE) option for your child before they reach school age.

9. Social worker: is a profession concerned with helping individuals, families, groups and communities to enhance their individual and collective well-being. It aims to help people develop their skills and their ability to use their own resources and those of the community to resolve problems.

Other child care career opportunities include:

- Home based service provider
- Family support worker
- Health play specialist
- Children's service area manager
- Childcare center director
- Teacher's assistant and
- Kindergarten teacher

Challenges for Preparing Child Care Education for Self Employment/Entrepreneurship
Child care education has not been able to achieve most of the laudable contributions earlier mentioned as a result of the following challenges.

Lack of Political will by the Government in promoting Child Care Education: for a very long time, a lot has been said and written through seminars, workshops, conferences on the need for government to put in place policies and programmes that will promote Child Care education, such important suggestions are never considered by the government and where implemented, such are very quickly truncated.

Inadequate Security and Maintenance of Equipment: in most cases, few equipment supplied to various educational institutions are not secured and maintained. They are often stolen and vandalized by students, staff and members of the public where such institutions are located.

Inadequate Supply of Equipment and Instructional Method: Child Care education demand great number of instructional materials for proper skill acquisition. These materials are often not supplied to schools where child care education is offered and where they are supplied, the supply is always inadequate.

Inadequate Funding: it is a fact that child care education is more expensive than liberal education, but unless a deliberate effort is made to declare it a special area in the government allocation of fund, all efforts will amount to more deceit in actual policies. Udo and Ewuga (2003) noted that no meaningful technological breakthrough can be achieved in Nigeria without child care education. Therefore, government should correctly reposition child care education.

Poor Societal Perception: In Nigeria, many people are yet to understand the meaning, scope and content of child care education. Some view it as education which is just there for children whose parents have no time for their children due to work activities. However, child care education surpasses such perception as it is the foundation for development of great minds in the society for positive nationhood.

Ways of Promoting the Opportunities

The following recommendations were preferred as ways of promoting employment opportunities in Child Care Education.

1. Awareness programme of child care education should be promoted in Nigeria
2. Considering the expensive nature of child care education, funding should not be left to the government and parents alone. Schools and local communities should be encouraged to provide finance towards the development of child care education.
3. Schools should allocate enough teaching time table. This is necessary to ensure the children are exposed to events caving to real life environment.
4. Government should make child care education a priority area in the allocation of funds and in the implementation of policies since Nigeria cannot run away from the fact that no nation can think of effective performance without child care education
5. Government should provide adequate security for the equipment/facilities provided. Also, staff and the society should see the need to secure whatever equipment/facilities that have been provided in their schools.
6. Government should also put in place incentives in form of special allowances that will make child care education attractive.

Conclusion

Child care education has contributed to the development of the nation and is a sine-quanton for technological and industrial development. If this opinion is upheld, then the problems associated with child care education would be addressed.

Child care education is paramount to investing in the productive area towards national development. The various tiers of government should make sure child care education is adequately catered for by making sure sufficient finance is made available for child care education and making sure that child care educators are given adequate encouragement through incentives.

References

- Benneth , (2018). Child Care Development.Houghton Mufflin Harcourt Publishers.
- Dictionary.com. foster Home Retrieved from <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/foster-home>.Home-Based Care. Retrieved from http://www.kiwi_families.co.nz/articles/home-based-care/
- Evans, Myer and Lifeld, (200).Development of the Child.*International Journal of Child Care Education*
- National Child Right Implementation Committee (1999).The Importance of Child Development.*Journal of Science Education*.
- Olaitan, C. B., and Akpan, A. E. (2003).Childhood Development and Family Life Education.Bauchi:League of researchers in Nigeria.
- Wikipedia.com. Orphanage Home. Retrieved from <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/orphange>