

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL SERVICE FACILITIES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE) PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

To effectively achieve the goals and the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for sustainable development, it requires the provision of school service facilities such as school library school meals, school health services, guidance and counselling service, educational resource centre, museums services, laboratories and workshops. These form intergral component part of teaching and learning process. The paper examines the significant roles these school service facilities plays in achieving the objectives of the UBE programme for sustainable development in Nigeria, particularly in the 21st century.

School service facilities refers to the educational service facilities such as school library, school meal, school health services, guidance and counseling, educational resource centre, museums services, laboratories and workshops among others. Therefore, according to the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2009), the goals of educational service shall be to:

1. develop, assess and improve educational programmes,
2. enhance teaching and improve the competence of teachers,
3. provide conducive environment for learning,
4. makes learning experiences more meaningful for the children,
5. promote in-service education and,
6. develop and promote effective use of innovative materials in schools.

These school service facilities form the integral component for the realization of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme objectives at the junior secondary school level. Junior secondary school is an education which a child receives immediately after primary education and the objectives are:

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- (a) provide the child with diverse basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship and educational advancement.
- (b) develop patriotic young people equipped to contribute to social development and in the performance of their civic responsibilities.
- (c) inculcate values and raise morally upright individuals capable of independent thinking and who appreciate the dignity of labour;
- (d) inspire national consciousness and harmonious co-existence irrespective of differences in endowment, religion, ethnic and socio-economic background.

The school service facilities at the junior secondary school level of education are regarded as partial enablers of teaching and learning process. Anyakoha (2003) and Takaya (2010) pointed out that, the goals of school service facilities is to facilitate and increase attendance, motivate and to improve academic performance of the learners. Therefore, the role school service facilities play in achieving the objectives of the UBE programme cannot be over-emphasized. It is against this backdrop that the paper examines the place of school service facilities in achieving the objectives of the UBE programme for sustainable development in Nigeria particularly in the 21st century educational innovations.

Operational Definition of Terms

School Service Facilities: These are educational resource materials required for effective implementation of the UBE programme objectives.

Universal Basic Education: It is an educational reform programme of the Nigerian Government that provides free, compulsory and continuous 9-year education in two levels: 6 years of primary and 3 years of junior secondary education for all school-aged children.

Programme: It is a new innovation of education system aimed at achieving a set objectives of a particular nation state.

Implementation: It refers to the process of translating a planned education programme objectives into action for achieving set objectives.

Development: It is an upward movement of a nation state in terms of socio-economic, cultural and political awareness.

School Library: Library is at the heart of the education enterprise and is one of the most important educational services. To this end, proprietors of schools are expected to provide functional libraries in all their educational institutions in accordance with the established standards. They should also provide for training of librarians and library

assistants for this service. This is the information store-house of printed and non-printed resource materials where both teachers and students can access them if available for use in teaching and learning process. The printed resource materials include text books, periodicals as magazines, newspapers, journals, maps, wall charts, diagrams, mobile charts, sketches, pictures, handouts, programmed instruction and newsletters among others. The non-printed resource materials in a functional school library include slide projector, overhead projector, film, video projector, tape recorder, motion and still film project and others. Both the printed and non-printed resource materials are important in teaching and learning because they:

- (a) make teaching and learning more meaningful and interesting to the learners.
- (b) make teaching duty easier for the teacher.
- (c) motivate and stimulates learning activities among the learners.
- (d) encourage the spirit of enquiry method of learning.
- (e) learning experiences becomes permanent with the learners.
- (f) learners learn by doing.

School Health Services: This is another integral component of school service facilities required for implementing the UBE programme for sustainable development. A functional school health services is expected to be stocked with all necessary drugs and qualified medical personnel who should always be on duty to attend to students medical problems. It is expected that:

- (a) school health services provides easy means of attending to students medical problems.
- (b) It saves cost and the risk of transporting the students to outside medical health centres
- (c) It easier to attend to students medical problems
- (d) Student gets proper medical attention from school health.
- (e) Medical facilities are easily obtained from school health service centre.

Therefore, the availability of functional school health services in schools facilitates teaching and learning in schools. It serves also as a motivating factor to parents. Undoubtedly, school health service facilities constitute a factor for effecting sustainable development in Nigeria.

Guidance and counseling forms an integral component of the school service facilities required for implementing the UBE programme for sustainable development. The National Policy on Education (NPE) (2009) stated thus “in view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of personality maladjustment among school children, career officers and counselors shall be appointed in educational institutions”. It went further to say that government shall continue to make provisions for the training of teachers in guidance and counselling. Guidance and

counselling shall be a compulsory course in teacher education programme and all school proprietors of schools are expected to provide counselors in adequate numbers. To effectively implement the UBE programme to achieve sustainable development, there is need to have a functional guidance and counseling service in each of the UBE schools. Students in schools exhibits different behaviours. Some of these behaviours may be anti-social which requires counseling. Some may have learning difficulties, while others may have problems in choosing their career. Thus, in a school where there is functional guidance and counseling unit, students can easily refer to the counselor for counseling based on the nature of each problem. It is expected that in a school system, there should be three principal roles of a school counselor. These are:

- (a) the first roles is that the counselor help students who are presently experiencing difficulties with regards to their educational, vocational or personal social matters. This is referred to as remedial or rehabilitative role.
- (b) the second role of the counselor is to anticipate, circumvent and if possible, forestall any difficulties which may arise in the future. This is called preventive role. This is usually carried out by the counselor giving out lecture series or form of addresses to students through group counseling by supplying them with useful information and equipping them with problem-solving skills.
- (c) the third role of the counselor is to help individuals plan, obtain and derive maximum benefits from educational, vocational, personal social and other kinds of experiences which will enable the individual to discover and develop their potentials. This is referred to as educational and developmental role.

From therefore, guidance and counseling is highly required for effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable development because:

- (i) it identifies learners with special abilities and needs.
 - (ii) interprets learner information to learner-parents, teachers, administrators and other professionals concerned with the learner.
 - (iii) collects and disseminates to learners and parents information concerning career opportunities for further education and training on school curricular.
 - (iv) identifies the guidance needs of the learners.
 - (v) assist learners to make appropriate choice of school subjects and courses of study in making transition from one school level to another and
 - (vi) Identified learners with special needs which require the service of referral sources.
- Therefore from the above, it can be deduced that, guidance and counseling forms an integral components of the school service facilities that constitute the bedrock for effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable development.

Educational resource centre is another important aspect of school service facilities required for effective implementation of the UBE programme educational resource centre is a place where different kinds of educational resource materials are acquired, produced and distributed to schools for teachers and students use in order to enhance the quality of instruction in schools. Education resource centre also organizes and runs workshops and seminars to provide opportunities for teachers to update and upgrade their skills and knowledge through exposure to new materials, methods, techniques and specialists in various areas of education. Educational resource centre is indispensable for effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable national development because it plays a significant role in the following areas:

- (a) It gives opportunities to teachers for updating and upgrading their skills in the new teaching techniques.
- (b) It promotes teaching and learning which enhances students performance.
- (c) It facilitates in achieving the stated objectives of the UBE programme for national development.
- (d) It makes teachers to become more committed to their teaching duty when the required resource materials are adequately available.
- (e) It enhances teaching and improve the competence of teachers.
- (f) It makes learning more meaningful to the learners as they learn better from things they touch, feel and see.
- (g) It develops and promotes an effective use of innovative materials in schools as teachers attends seminars and workshops in the production and use of the new materials.
- (h) It reduces educational costs to schools as they are being supplied to schools free.

Museums services is another catalyst of school service facilities which facilitates the effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable national development in Nigeria. This is cultural artefacts stored for learners, tourists and others to view, touch and feel. Cultural arts and artefacts are important resource materials for the promotion of teaching and learning in schools. It serves as an avenue for transmission of cultural heritage from one generation to another.

Museams services forms an integral parts of teaching and learning because as the learners have the opportunity to view, touch and feel, it aids them through the following ways:

- (a) When learners have the opportunity to view, touch and feel, experiences acquired become more permanent them.
- (b) Museums services serve as a motivating and stimulating factor in teaching and learning situation.
- (c) It attracts the learners to the new concepts to be learnt in the lesson.
- (d) It reduces the complexities of the lesson to both the teacher and the students.

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- (e) It is a better way of transmitting the cultural heritages to the learners.
- (f) Museums services adds to economic development of a nation since foreigners may come for tourism and cultural purposes. Therefore provision of functional museum services contributes in no small measure to the effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable development in Nigeria.

School Meals: The school meals are the meals serve to students when they are away from their homes. Usually these meals are served three times per day to home grown school students. The meals are served to students for the following reasons:

1. It is to keep the learners to the end of the day.
2. To help the school maintain the school time-table from the opening hours to the end of the day.
3. To manage the time available for the school activities of the day.
4. To assist parents in furthering education of their children.

Therefore, the basic provision of school meals to learners will ensure UBE programme achieving sustainable development in Nigeria.

Laboratories and workshops: these are indispensable for effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable development in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education (NPE) 2009 states that “all necessary facilities that would ensure easy access to education shall be provided”. Therefore, functional laboratories/workshops implies that such laboratories and workshops are to be well equipped with science equipment and workshop tools where teachers and students can carry out practical lessons in workshop and laboratory oriented courses. Equipped laboratories and workshops are important in teaching and learning in the following ways:

- (i) Teachers and students can carry out their practical lessons without difficulty.
- (ii) Learners can easily develop the skills problem-solving methods.
- (iii) Learners have the opportunity to learn by doing.
- (iv) It makes the teachers teaching duty easier.
- (v) Learners develop the skills of independent learning in solving their problems and
- (vi) Skills and knowledge are easily acquired during practical lessons.

In conclusion, school service facilities play significant roles in the effective implementation of the UBE programme for sustainable development in Nigeria, therefore, these school service facilities should be provided for use by both teachers and students.

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