



**Ensuring Quality Vocational Education in Universal Basic Education (UBE)  
Program, for Sustainable National Development in Nigeria**

**I.K. Kalat and T.M. Saba**

Department of Industrial and Technology Education  
Federal University of Technology, Minna.

**Abstract**

Quality vocational education provides knowledge, develop skills and inculcate the attitudes that are necessary for entry and progress in an occupation. Hence universal Basic Education (UBE) programme provides free and compulsory education to all Nigeria during the first a years of school life (Excluding pre- primary). When quality vocational education is build in UBE program, it will improved the standard of living and insurance against poverty, thereby sustainable National development. The paper was discussed under the following sub-headings; quality vocational education, concept of UBE program, hindrances to quality vocational education and needs of vocational education is sustainable National development. It was recommended among others that: academically and profcssionally qualified persons should be employed as teachers, workshop and laboratories should be built and equipped with relevant equipment and materials, and teachers should be promoted as at when due and property remunerated to curtain the drain in teachers resources and constant supervision will help to sustain the program.

**Introduction**

The genesis of vocational education can be traced to the effort of man to use his or her senses to manipulate things, which are of importance to him or herself and other people around them. Vocational education, according to Okoro, (1993), is any form of education whose primary purpose is to prepare persons for employment in recognized occupations. It provides the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for effective employment in specific educational endeavour. The quality vocational education ensure adequate teaching of theory and practice to enable the learners have proper knowledge of the subject which will help him or her to practice after leaving the school and to help furthering in education, for sustainable national development.

Ehijeme (2000) sees UBE in the Nigerian context as a close articulation of the formal, non- formal approach and mechanism for the awakening and all round development of the human potentials. The scope of UBE program in Nigeria aims to cater for 9 years early education, including nomadic education for school age children of pastoral nomads and migrant fishermen, and life skills especially for adult persons aged fifteen years and above. Ahia, (2001) opined that UBE in Nigeria's point of view aim at providing free and compulsory education to every Nigerian children. The implementation guideline is to equip individuals with such knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them:

- Live meaningful and fulfilling lives,
- Contribute to the development of society
- Derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from the society and

- Discharge their civic obligations competently

It is the fact that quality of vocational education in UBE program can sustained national development.

#### Quality vocation education

Vocational education deals with knowledge, skills and attitudes that fit an individual, completely or partly for a definite occupation or vocation, the pursuit of which equip him or her for successful living. Osuala, (1998) sees, vocational education as a systematic learning experiences which are designed to fit individuals for gainful employment in recognized occupations as semiskilled workers or technicians or sub-professional. Okorie, (2001), says the history of vocational education is the man's effort to learn to work. Work has enabled man to satisfy his ever increasing needs and want. He categories the vocational education into five (5) major areas

- Agricultural Education
- Business Education
- Computer Education
- Home Economic and
- Industrial and Technical Education.

Quality vocational education is the type of education that exposes the learner to both theory and practices Okoric (2001) outlined several principles guiding quality vocational education these are among others.

- A quality programme prepares students for entry into chosen occupation without neglecting the essentials of a sound general education.
- A quality programme is housed in physical facilities, which are adequate, well-planned, and property equipped to provide realistic vocational education.
- A quality programme adjusts its curriculum to changing business and industrial conditions, technology change, and the requirements for the labour market. It properly uses advisory committces to assist in this process.
- A quality programme uses methods, materials and equipment as similar to actual working conditions as is practically in a school situations and schedules a sufficient amount of continues workshop or laboratory time to carry through the learning experiences.
- A quality programme provides for a systematic evaluation of its effectiveness through periodic review, performance tests and written examinations and follow-up studies of it graduates.

#### Concept of universal basic education (UBE)

The universal education (UBE) scheme according to Ubong, (2001), is an expansion and an improvement on the universal free primary education ( UPE) which was initiated during general Y. Gowon era but officially lunched by General O. Obasanjo on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1976. The UBE programme was lunched on 30th September 1999 in Sokoto by president Olusegun Obasanjo with a view to expanding the focus and scope of the scheme of 1976 which was alleged to have been abandoned by subsequent administrations, that ruled that country. ( Fadarc, 2001). The programme was designed to cater for 9 years early education and nomadic education and providing the life skill for an adult from 15 years and above.

Flagging off the UBE programme, the Federal Government enumerated the objectives of the programme on guidelines for the UBE, programme 1999.

- i. To develop in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.

- ii. To provide free, compulsory universal basic, education for every Nigerian child of school-going age.
- iii. To reduced drastically, the dropout rate from the formals scheme system through improved relevance and efficiency.
- iv. To cater for dropout and out-of-school children/adolescents through various forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education, and.
- v. To ensure the acquisition of the appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and life skills ( as well as the ethical moral and civic valves) needed for laying the foundation life- long learning.

Fadare, (2001), stressed that the UBE scheme is conceived as a people's programme with a strong emphasis on all round development of its beneficiaries, through due attention to the intellectual objectives of education the program intend to reach all the children and illiterate adults.

#### Hindrances to Quality Vocational Education in Schools

There are several factors militating against the teaching of vocational education in Nigeria schools some of these factors are:

- Shortage of qualified vocational education teachers Usman, (1994) opined that unavailability of qualified teachers in schools has been identified as the most important constraints in Nigeria.
- The instructional facilities in consonances with industrial development in the country are grossly inadequate not only that, they are few in number, but most of those installed are out of date and need replacement.
- Some of the localities where the schools are located lack sources of electricity to run the equipment in the workshop or laboratory, if there is any.

Ogunyemi, (2002) pointed out the prominent problems facing the effective teaching of technical education thus

- Inadequate or ill-equipped workshops
- Insufficient tools and equipment
- In sufficient/lack of training materials
- Obsolete or damage or non functional equipment and machinery
- Large population of frustrated students who are sometime hostile and aggressive.

Oladosu, (2001) enumerated the problems facing existing curriculum as:

- Time gap between the planning and implementation stages National Policy of Education (NPE) (1981) Revised) was planned during the period of prosperity and unfortunately its implementation started in the period of economic depression
- Inefficient use of educational resources.
- Infrastructural in adequacy.
- Inadequately trained teachers.
- Religious doctrines and traditional practices, which have stalled children's enrolment into schools in some areas.
- Problem created by the Authority and the adopter decision-making units.
- Political instability in the country.

#### Needs for Quality vocational education in Sustainable National Development.

Okoric, (2001), asserts that among the universal ideals of democratic society is that of maximum participation of each individual in the social life around him. There is need for individual within the society to be satisfied with constant and conscious need in order to enable them to contribute fully in the total around them. Needs for quality vocational educational among others.

- To ensure wage-earning power of workers. The practical training of workers in any pursuit bring both immediate and lasting economic returns in increased production and wage – earning capacity.
- Conserve, develop and preserve the country natural resources.
- It improve the standard of living in the country which is dependent upon increased earning capacity of workers and better understanding of value.
- It is an education for living and insurance against poverty.
- Gives and equal opportunity to all to be prepared their life work.
- Prevent the waste of human labour, it trained and convert unskilled labour into the marketable labour.
- Vocational education is regarded as a wise economic investment. It is believed by many people that through vocational education and training, boys and girls as well as adults will be trained to acquire saleable skills that will enable them to secure employment which will be beneficial to themselves and to the society.

### Conclusion

Ensuing quality vocational education in universal basic education (UBE) programme is an assets to the Nation. Since the programme aim at making education compulsory and free for the period of nine (9) years for the citizen and also providing life skill to adults above 15 years. Through education individuals acquire usable and socially accepted vocational skills with vocational skills one can be productive, which ensures individual and group survival. When quality vocational education is sustainable in the UBE program, the cases of armed robbery, prostitutions, child labour, violence, street begging and poverty will be reduced to the barest minimum in the Nation.

### Suggestions / Recommendations

The following suggestions/recommendation can help in ensuring quality vocational education in UBE programmes.

1. Academically and professional qualified persons should be employed as teachers, since no educational system can rise above the level of its teacher.
2. If the teachers who champion the change are not motivated by increasing pay packets substantially, the change may not be effective. Today's teachers are quick to observe that they deserve better treatment here on earth, as their own market, where the forces of demand and supply that determine their existence is here on earth and not in heaven as previously perceived. Base on that, teachers need to be properly remunerated to curtail their movement out of the profession.
3. Teaching aids have to be available in right quantity and quality. Computers, equipped workshops and laboratories, libraries, charts, maps, audio and videotapes, filmstrips, and other instructional materials make the learning more permanent. If the materials supplied are not adequate, the expected change of behaviour may die a premature death.
4. The staff training on the job should not be an ad-hoc affair. Deliberate training programmes at the planning stage need to be put in place. Staff development should be a regular exercise and there should be express sponsorship to workshops and conferences.
5. A regular assessment of the programme implementation process and regular supervision.
6. Places where the program been operated , should have sources of electricity, to enable the operation of installed equipment.

### References

- Ahia, C. N. (2001) The UBE primary school practical home economics and the problems of relevant resource in A. M. Wokocha, (2001) *Quality Education and Universal Basic Education Programme*: Port Harcourt, Osia International Publishers Company Limited.
- Ehireme, I. S. (2000) UBE: aim, scope, problems and prospects. A paper presented at a National Workshop organized by all Nigerian Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools at Asaba.
- Fadare G. M. (2001) The curriculum imperative for quality Universal Education in Nigeria in A. M. Wokocha (2001) *Quality Education and Universal Basic Education Programme*, Port Harcourt, Osia International Publishers Company Limited.
- F. M. E (1999) *Blue Print on Basic Education*, Abuja: Federal Government Press.
- Ogunyemi, M. A. A (2002) The functions and responsibilities of a Technical teacher. *The Journal of Nigerian Association of Teachers of Technology*. 4 (1) 1 – 11.
- Okorie, J. U (2001) *Vocational Industrial Education* Bauchi league of researchers in Nigeria.
- Okoro, O.M (1993) *principles and methods in vocational and Technical Education*. Nsukka, University Trust publishers.
- Oladosu. I. A (2001) science curriculum imperative for quality UBE: The need for a sustainable foundation in A.M Wokocha (2001) *quality Education and universal Basic Education Programme*. PortHarcourt Osia International Publishers company Limited.
- Osuala, E. C (1998) *Foundations of vocational Education* Onisha, cape publishers international Limited
- Ubong, B (2001) staff personel Management in schools. Issue for the universal Basic Education (UBE)scheme In A.M workers.(2001) *Quality Education and Universal Basic Education programme*, port Harcourt, Osia International Publishers company Limited.
- Usman. B (1994) "Implication of Technical Teacher shortage on the implementation of the National policy on Education" *Spectrum journal* 1 (1) 71-78