

LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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Library Resources for Effective Vocational Education and Training

Abstract

This paper reviewed literature with the aim of justifying library resources for effective vocational education and training. The needed information for this paper was gathered from secondary sources of data which were obtained from journal articles, conference papers, online sources and so on. This involves reading meaning into materials consulted for purpose of achieving a reliable conclusion. Libraries provide information for planning, education, politics, researches, economic activities and enlightenment which are inevitable in learning as a whole. Libraries as pool of information provide such access through their various services and information resources, keeping the people well informed of developments and ensuring its sustainability. The roles library play in educational development is inevitable, hence the need for resources that will aid effective technical education and training. This paper aims at justifying the resources in the library that can aid effective technical education and training. It also looks into types of libraries with resources for technical education and training. Based on the paper, library resources for effective technical education and training include printed and non printed materials and challenges preventing the libraries are inadequate funding. Therefore, the paper suggested the provision of adequate funds by government, provision of adequate and world class infrastructure, training and retraining of staff, enlightenment, sensitization and outreach services so as to aid functional vocational education and training.

Introduction

Education is an essential tool for national development as it involves the development of the whole person intellectually, psychologically, socially, vocationally, religiously or morally. Education is a process through which people are formally and informally trained to acquire knowledge and skills. Human resource is considered the greatest resource for development hence no nation can develop by abandoning her human resources. The input level and quality of occupational participation and productivity of the masses are important contributory factors to the level of economic and overall development of any nation. It is however important that people are well equipped with functional and effective vocational education and training. The library has been proven to be central to the provision of the right type of required information resources that empower the educational institutions with necessary vocational education and trainings to produce highly resourceful people to impact positively on national development.

This is 21st century, one that is termed information age because it is powered by information in all ramifications. Libraries are known for information dissemination with different resources at their disposal which involve resources that support effective vocational training and development. Libraries have always served as tools for vocational education and training at all levels of education. This is because libraries contain information resources that help to aid effective vocational education and training.

The Concept of Vocational Education and Training

Vocational education is education that has “a specific relation to working life” and is “closely related to, but not identical with, the concept of training (or vocational training), which

tends to focus on learning specific skills that are required in particular work places.

Vocational education has been incorporated in academic education. Vocational education is that form of education which was obtainable at the technical colleges. This was equivalent to the senior secondary education but designed for individuals to acquire practical skills, basic and scientific knowledge, and the attitude required to be craftsmen and technicians at sub-professional level. Also they can be referred to as those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic and social life” (Akanbi, 2017).

In Nigeria, technical education had a slow start and developed less quickly than literacy education, which was pioneered by the voluntary agencies. This was partly because it is much more expensive in terms of staff and equipment, and because ‘the Christian missions were more interested in a native's ability to read the Bible than in his ability to turn screws and prime water-pumps’ (Akanbi, 2017). So, the Western education that was introduced in 1842 did not emphasize the acquisition of practical skills to make citizens become self-reliant, rather it was to make whoever had the opportunity to acquire it serve the purpose of the missionaries. The failure of Western education to include the learning of practical skills started the erosion of technical education because it was even practiced in the traditional education setting through the apprenticeship system.

There is this notion that “the hand and the brain evolved together; hence, technical and vocational education, on the one hand, and liberal and general education, on the other, must go together, inseparably, if violence is not to be done to the natural process of growth in man”. The need for technical education and training actually gained attention in the

1930s during the world economic depression, which made it uneconomic for the colonial administration to continue bringing expatriates to meet its needs. Hence, colonial administrations started setting up training schools to produce middle level technical manpower; among the training schools was the Yaba Higher College, which was established in 1932. Conclusively, one can say vocational education and training in Nigeria as

- An integral part of general education
- A means of preparing for occupational fields, for effective participation in the world of work
- An aspect of life-long learning and preparation for responsible citizenship
- An instrument of promoting environmentally sound sustainable development
- A method of alleviating poverty especially through pre-technical and vocational education

All of the aforementioned are areas that library has contributed to in one way or another, it is a recommendation of this paper that anyone can do justification to by conducting a further research.

Roles of Libraries in Education

Libraries are considered the bedrock to which education solely relies on. Libraries have contributed immensely to the world of education and enlightenment from time immemorial. Education as a process of training that is meant to give knowledge, develop skills and abilities that could lead to the development of mental alertness and the right attitude to life. This means that if education is adequately infused in human-kind, individuals would meaningfully help themselves and positively contribute to the growth and welfare of their immediate community. Categorically, education remains the single factor that

guarantees both individual growth and community development. Thus, if an individual acquires skills and the right attitude, and realistically apply the skills and right attitude for the benefit of his society, it means that education has helped to transform the individual for better (Okoye & Chijioke, 2013).

The consensus at the end of a workshop on "Technical Education: A Foundation for a Healthy Economy" organised by the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and Youth Development in collaboration with UNESCO and others in 1994 as found in (Akanbi, 2017) was that the state of technical education in Nigeria is most unsatisfactory. Some participants believed that technical education had reached a point of crisis. Adequate attention has not been given to the technical education, vocational education and training sector. It was also noted that there is no magic for reformation except for proper monitoring of everything that has to do with technical education, vocational education and training. It has now dawned on most Nigerians that acquisition of practical skills with theoretical skills could be a means of creating jobs and could go a long way towards solving unemployment issues in Nigeria. More so the need for library resources to make it effective is what this paper intends to justify. There is always discrepancy when literary education.

The Library is the storehouse of organized knowledge (embedded in information resources) and expected to play a significant role in teaching, learning, and research processes directed towards national development. In this direction, the primary objective of the library is to adequately provide necessary information resources and services in its various operations or sectional services to ensure proper utilization and satisfaction of the information needs of teachers and students (Martin & Udem, 2018). Pointing to the indispensability of library, it is worthy to note that among the requirements for the take-off of any higher institution of

learning, the institution's library must be put in place. The institution's library is to provide adequate information resources and services to support teaching, learning and research activities of students and teachers.

Types of Libraries with Resources for Effective Vocational Education and Training

Libraries provide a forum for global network of information resources, which helps to inculcate in the individual information literacy skills that will enhance independent learning. While libraries possess different types of resources that inform, educate and make persons information literate, information literacy enhances skills that encourage learning competencies and instil abilities to access and use information in the various formats (Itsekor, 2011).

If Nigeria should achieve adequate human development and national transformation through vocational education and training system, efforts must be directed at producing workforce with higher level of required technical knowledge and thinking skill. This can be achieved by equipping libraries with every necessary information resources that are not just relevant but up to date. In so doing, vocational education and training would have helped in moving the workforce into environmentally conscious practices that address environmental, economic and social sustainability, while meeting the needs of industries and individuals. Taking a look at the public libraries and academic libraries on how vocational education and training can benefit and has benefited;

Public Libraries

These are social institutions established to collect, organize, preserve and conserve information resources in a conducive atmosphere and disseminate them to the community

within which the library is located. In the same way, public library can be described as the peoples' socio-educational centre where the recorded knowledge of the society is kept in various formats and in a systematic way for them to read or consult at their pleasure.

However, public libraries function generally as: recreational centre for the people to refresh their memories; educational centre for self-education (that is people's University); training centre for the inculcation of good reading habits; saloons for the people leisure time; avenues for information dissemination and centre for academic pursue. Public libraries play a very vital role in the vocational education and literacy programs of the community by supporting educational programs within the community. The educational development of the community cannot succeed without the aid of the public library which is regarded as vital to socio-educational establishment of the community. Farmers, traders, craftsmen, civil servants, law enforcement agents, politicians, lawyers, doctors, engineers, nurses, pupils, students, teachers, housewives, among others are expected to satisfy their various information needs within the public library. People need to have access to recorded knowledge and information. The provision of access to knowledge and information through the establishment of public libraries constitutes an educational process. Public libraries contribute towards community development through the support they offer to the educational sector by supplying relevant information in multiple formats. These information resources include the ones that aid effective vocational education and training because a public library is generally termed people's university.

Academic Libraries

Academic Libraries are libraries attached to tertiary institutions of learning like universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, major seminaries, comparable theological colleges,

colleges of agriculture, colleges of forestry etc. Academic libraries are primarily established to provide literature support to the programme of parent institutions. For instance, academic libraries are expected to provide educational and information materials that are relevant to the curriculum and that can suit each level of the institution's academic programme such as degree, diploma and certificate courses. Examples of academic libraries are; the Kenneth

Some key institutions host creative arts and media departments. These include: University of Nigeria, Nsukka, University of Benin, Pan Atlantic University, University of Port Harcourt, University of Lagos, and a host of other federal and state universities. In addition, higher institutions in Nigeria including federal, state and private owned have school of entrepreneurship that help to prepare students on how to be job creators and not job seekers. The creative programmes offered in these institutions range from Painting, Fine Arts and Sculpting, to Theatre/Performing Arts (in some) and Textile Design. All these are established under academic institutions which are parents to academic libraries hence the need for library resources for their effectiveness

The resources available in these libraries are both printed and electronic. The printed resources include journals, textbooks, newspapers and magazines etc. The electronic resources in libraries that can aid effective vocational education and training include access to internet in some e-library sections that allow users to surf the internet to get access to more information resources. Electronic journals are also available whereby the library subscribes to have access to several publications of new findings.

Way forward

The most pronounced challenge facing libraries is proper funding. Libraries are not properly funded to make available more relevant and up to date information resources to help the field of vocational education and training but that does not mean there are no resources to assist the subject matter. The essence of vocational education is to enable people to acquire appropriate vocational or occupational skills that can make them better people, live in peace with others and relate well in their day-to-day life. It is education based on one's interest in choosing what suits one in his quest for self-fulfilment. By engaging in any vocational training be it teaching, crafts technology, smiting, farming, music, medicine, etc. the potentials, knowledge and skills of participants are improved for success in life and contribution to national economy. The essence of libraries on the other hand is to make available different forms of information resources in different formats for the satisfaction of the library users and at the same time the community by which they are located. Every library, academic, public, school or special is established to meet information needs of some set of people. By so doing libraries help to contribute to every aspects of development one can think of. When libraries are taken more serious in Nigeria, when Nigerians start to see libraries as a place with bulk of vocational ideas and entrepreneurship information resources, a place to brainstorm to know the antecedents of everything that has to do with vocational education and training in Nigeria.

Conclusion

A library is an agency, which engages in the collection, processing, preservation and dissemination of recorded information in the various formats that is most convenient to its target users. Library is a collection of records of human culture in diverse formats and

languages, preserved, organised and disseminated to meet broad and varying needs of individuals for information, knowledge, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment. The library can also be described as a social institution for the exploitation of knowledge contained in published matter. The resources in library are meant to serve its users and users involved in vocational education and training are not left out. The availability of library resources will make life easier for both the teacher and students of the subject matter so as it does for other fields of study. Vocational education is more of practical but still need information resources to guide the practical aspects. So conclusively library resources for vocational education and training are enormous and vary by how the management of a library consider the relevance of vocational education and training.

Recommendation

- 1) Provision of adequate funds by government,
- 2) Provision of adequate and world class infrastructure
- 3) Training and retraining of library staff
- 4) General library resources usage enlightenment
- 5) Sensitization and outreach services so as to aid functional vocational education and training

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