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OKOLI, B.E. and OKPANI-OKO, L.O.

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THE PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS ON THE RELEVANCE OF TYPEWRITING CURRICULUM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL SKILLS AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

OKOLI, B.E¹. and OKPANI-OKO, L.O².

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION, EBONYI STATE UNIVERSITY, ABAKALIKI,

(NIGERIA.)

okolibene@gmail.com, okpanilaios@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The paper dealt with the perception of teachers on the relevance of typewriting on the development of vocational skills at secondary school level. Four research questions guided the study. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents. The population for the study consisted of 100 teachers. Out of the 100 questionnaire distributed, 80 copies were collected and used for the study. Since the population was manageable, there was no sampling. Data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation. Findings from the study showed that typewriting helps students to be self reliant at graduation and should be made compulsory for all secondary schools; teaching methods used are mainly theoretical; infrastructural facilities needed for practical are not sufficient while specialist teachers are lacking. The findings of the study further revealed that the typing curriculum is not effectively implemented. Therefore, it was recommended that there is need for well equipped typing pools and sufficient specialist teachers should be employed to make the teaching and learning of the subject meaningful.

Keywords: typewriting, vocational, skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

The universal declaration of human rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1948 guaranteed individuals a whole range of basic freedom with education serving as a basic right necessary for the achievement of all other freedoms. The right to education requires that young people be given the opportunity necessary for the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitude and values which will enable them lead productivity lives and discharge their social duties for the betterment of life in the society.

Nigeria having realized the effectiveness of education as a powerful instrument for National progress and development, adjusted her educational philosophy and methodology to march the ideals and challenges of changing economic and social structure of modern society (National Policy on Education, 2004). Consequently, in 1982, Nigeria adjusted her secondary educational system to encompass diversified curriculum that integrates academics with vocational subjects intended to empower the individual for self-employment (Igwe, 2000). According to the National Policy on Education (1981; 2004) the broad aims and objectives of secondary education in Nigerian educational system are preparation for useful living within the society (self-employment) and preparation for higher education.

However, since the adoption of the laudable initiative, majority of Nigerian youths are idle and some are involved in various vices due to unemployment. They do not have the required skills to either fit into many types of jobs that are available or create jobs (Igwe, 2007). It is no longer news that the nation's youth unemployment rate has been shooting up. The federal government recently acknowledged that about 80 per cent of Nigerian youths are unemployed and 10 per cent underemployed (National Policy on Education, 1981; 2004). Adekoya (1999) noted that for Nigerian youths to be empowered economically, they should be given the necessary skill acquisition and for this to

be done, the typing curriculum should be effectively developed and implemented. Oli, (2000) believed that to ensure a positive future for Nigeria, the youths who are believed to be future leaders of the country ought to be well equipped with basic skills such as typing to drive the economy.

Curriculum is a vehicle through which education is attained (Offorma, 2005). The secondary school curriculum as presently developed and implemented is far from achieving the goals of secondary educational system (Obanya, 2004). Several authors have noted that the National policy on Education was well the structure and the contents were adequately defined to deal with the relevance of typing curriculum but the implementation of it is questionable (Babafemi, 2007; Dike, 2009). Investigations showed that students' potentials are not properly channeled as schools lack basic infrastructural facilities necessary for effective typing curriculum implementation, there are inadequate specialist teachers, and where available, they focus more on theoretical aspect, leaving out the practical component of typing.

The nature and level of implementation of typewriting curriculum in secondary schools has received a lot of criticisms and this situation calls for the need to ascertain the perception of teachers on the relevance of typewriting curriculum for the development of vocational skills at secondary school levels and also to identify the root cause of the problem as well as things needed for reformation.

A good number of students who have completed their secondary education but do not wish to continue with higher education are in dilemma. This is because they are not well equipped with necessary skills as typing to empower them. The training acquired at the end of secondary education seems inadequate to make the school leavers competent and self-reliant, hence, cannot contribute to nation building. If the Nigerian society is not to be plagued by breed of unemployable youths who cannot raise the economic productivity of the country, it is desirable that a lasting solution be provided. Thus, this study was designed to provide a solution to the problem facing the students either in school or after graduation. Hence, the need to ascertain the perception of teachers on the relevance of typewriting curriculum for the development of vocational skills at secondary school level.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to ascertain the perception of teachers on the relevance of typewriting curriculum in the development of vocational skills at the secondary school level. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the relevance of typewriting curriculum in the development of vocational skills at the secondary school level.
2. Find out type of teaching methods used in teaching typewriting curriculum in Nigerian secondary schools.
3. Assess infrastructural facilities available for the teaching of typewriting in Nigerian secondary schools.
4. Assess availability of specialist typewriting teachers in Nigerian secondary schools.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How relevant is typewriting curriculum in the development of vocational skills at secondary school level?
2. What type of teaching method is used in teaching typewriting curriculum in Nigerian secondary schools?
3. What are the infrastructural facilities available in Nigerian secondary schools for the teaching of typewriting?
4. What is the proportion of the specialist teachers that are available for the teaching of typewriting in Nigerian secondary schools?

4. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This method was deemed appropriate as it involved the collection of extensive and cross-sectional data for the purpose of describing and interpreting an existing situation under study.

The study was conducted in Secondary Schools in Ebonyi North Senatorial Zone of Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is one of the states located in the eastern part of Nigeria. The state, however is educationally disadvantaged due to the low interest of populace in education especially as it pertains to typewriting curriculum. The population for this study comprised of 80 teachers.

No sampling was done. The whole population was used. The instrument used in data collection was Questionnaire. The Questionnaire was designed by the researcher to measure the perception of teachers on typewriting curriculum for the development of vocational skills at secondary school level. It was arranged in two sections. Section A dealt with the demographic data of the respondents while section B contained five (5) items arranged according to the four research questions that guided the study. The data collected for this study was analyzed using the mean and standard deviation.

5. RESULTS

The results obtained were presented in the tables below:

Table I. Mean rating on the Relevance of Typewriting Curriculum for the Development of Vocational Skills at Secondary School Level.

S/N	VARIABLES	Number of Respondent	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	F _x	\bar{x}	Standard Deviation	Decision Rule
1.	Typing leads students to self employment at graduation.	80	54	20	03	03	351	4.38	1.01	Accept
2.	Typing make students employable in any type of organization at graduation.	80	40	10	10	20	240	3.0	1.51	Accept
3.	Typing sharpen the students' Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and make him to be more creative.	80	45	20	05	05	325	4.06	1.20	Accept
4.	Typing produces low income earners.	80	30	10	10	30	200	2.5	1.42	Reject
5.	Students of typing									

	can engage in part-time income generation.	80	40	20	50	15	285	3.56	1.51	Accept
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Table 1 showed that 54 respondents strongly agreed that Typewriting leads students to self employment at graduation, 20 agreed,, 03 disagreed while 03 strongly disagreed on the statement.They yielded a mean score of 4.39 and standard deviation of 1.01. 40 respondents strongly agreed that Typewriting makes students employable in any type of organization at graduation, 10 agreed, 10 disagreed, 20 strongly disagreed on the statement with a mean score of 3.0 and standard deviation of 1.51. 45 respondents strongly agreed that Typewriting sharpens the students' Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and makes him to be more creative, 20 agreed, 05 disagreed while 05 strongly disagreed on the statement with a mean. score of 4.06 and standard deviation of 1.20. 20 respondents strongly agreed that Typing produce low income earners, 10 agreed, 10 disagreed, while 30 strongly disagreed the statement with a mean score of 2.5 and standard deviation of 1.42.

40 respondents strongly agreed that Students of Typewriting engage in part-time income generation, 20 agreed, 05 disagreed, while 15 strongly disagreed the statement with a means score of 3.6 and standard deviation of 1.51.

Table2. Mean rating on the Type of Teaching Methods used in Teaching of Typewriting in Nigerian Secondary Schools.

S/N	VARIABLES	Number of Respondent	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	F _x	x	Standard Deviation	Decision Rule
6.	Demonstration Method	80	50	20	05	05	325	4.06	1.21	Accept
7.	Problem Solving Method	80	40	10	10	20	270	3.38	1.70	Accept
8.	Discussion Method.	80	55	15	02	08	327	4.09	1.30	Accept
9.	Question and Answer	80	30	10	20	20	210	2.63	1.33	Reject
10.	Lecturing Method	80	20	20	10	30	220	2.75	1.61	Reject

Table 2 showed that 50 respondents strongly agreed that Demonstration Method is used in teaching Typewriting at the Secondary School levels, 20 agreed, 05 disagreed while 05 strongly disagreed on the statement made with a mean score of 4.06 and standard deviation of 1.21.

40 respondents strongly agreed that Problem Solving Method is used in teaching Typewriting at the Secondary school levels, 10 agreed, 10 disagreed while 20. 55 respondents strongly agreed that Discussion Method is used in teaching Typewriting at the Secondary School levels, 15 agreed, 02 disagreed while 08 strongly disagreed on the statement with a mean score of 4.09 and standard deviation of 1.30.

30 respondents strongly agreed that Question and Answer Method is used in teaching Typewriting at the Secondary School levels, 10 agreed, 201 disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed the statement with a means score of 2.63 and standard deviation of 1.33. 20 respondents strongly agreed that Lecturing Method is used in teaching Typewriting at the Secondary School levels, 20 agreed, 10 disagreed while 30 strongly disagreed the statement with a mean score of 2.75 and standard deviation of 1.61.

Table 3. Mean Rating on the Infrastructural Facilities available in Nigerian secondary Schools for the Teaching of Typewriting

S/N	VARIABLES	Number of Respondent	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	F _x	x	Standard Deviation	Decision Rule
11.	Typing Pool	80	45	20	10	05	310	3.88	1.21	Accept
12.	Computer Laboratory	80	40	10	10	20	260	3.25	1.70	Accept
13.	Auditing Studio	80	20	20	20	20	319	2.77	1.30	Accept
14.	Class Rooms	80	30	10	15	25	203	2.63	1.33	Reject

From the table above, 45 respondents strongly agreed that Typing Pool is an infrastructural facility available in Nigerian Secondary Schools for the teaching of Typewriting, 20 agreed, 10 disagreed while 05 strongly disagreed on the statement made with a mean score of 3.88 and standard deviation of 1.28.

40 respondents strongly agreed that computer Laboratory is an infrastructural facility available in Nigerian Secondary Schools for the teaching of Typewriting, 10 agreed, 10 disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed on the statement with a mean score of 3.25 and standard deviation of 1.65.

20 respondents strongly agreed that Auditing Studio is an infrastructural facility available in Nigerian Secondary Schools for the teaching of Typewriting, 20 agreed, 20 disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed the statement with a mean score of 2.77 and standard deviation of 1.39.

30 respondents strongly agreed that class room is an infrastructural facility available in Nigerian Secondary Schools for the teaching of Typewriting, 10 agreed, 15 disagreed while 25 strongly disagreed the statement with a mean score of 2.60 and standard deviation of 1.37.

Table 4: Mean rating on the proportion of the specialist teachers that are available for the teaching of typewriting in secondary schools.

S/N	VARIABLES	Number of Respondent	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	F _x	x	Standard Deviation	Decision Rule
15.	The proportion of specialist teachers is grossly inadequate.	80	50	20	08	02	328	4.1	1.12	Accept
16.	The proportion of specialist teachers is commensurate to the number of students.	80	30	10	15	25	225	2.81	1.59	Accept
17.	The proportion of specialist teachers is not an important factor to be considered.	80	35	20	10	15	280	3.5	1.55	Accept
18	The specialist teachers in the field are not willing to teach Typewriting.	80	55	15	03	07	328	4.1	1.27	Accept
19.	Non specialists are employed to teach Typing in most schools.	80	55	15	07	03	332	4.15	1.17	Accept

From the table above, 50 respondents strongly agreed that the proportion of Specialist Teachers in this field of study is grossly inadequate, 20 agreed, 08 disagree while 02 strongly disagreed on the statement made with a mean score of 4.1 and standard deviation of 1.28.

30 respondents strongly agreed that the proportion of specialist teachers is commensurate to the number of students, 10 agreed, 15 disagreed while 25 strongly disagreed on the statement with a mean score of 2.81 and standard deviation of 1.39.

35 respondents strongly agreed that the proportion of specialist teachers is not an important factor to consider, 20 agreed, 10 disagreed while 15 strongly disagreed on the statement with a mean score of 3.5 and standard deviation of 1.65.

55 respondents strongly agreed that most so called specialist teachers in this field of study are not willing to teach them, 15 agreed, 03 disagreed, while 07 strongly disagreed the statement with a mean score of 4.1 and standard deviation of 1.39.

55 respondents strongly agreed that non-specialists are employed in place of specialists in most schools without justifiable reasons, 15 agreed, 07 disagreed while 03 strongly disagreed the statement with a mean score of 4.15 and standard deviation of 1.37.

6. DISCUSSION

From the result of the study as shown in table 1, it was observed that typewriting leads students to self employment at graduation, since it has highest mean score of 4.38. this will encourage the students to do them in both Junior and Senior Secondary Schools in order to be competent in this skill training such as typewriting which enhances productivity and sustains competitiveness in the global economy (Atakpa, 2006). From vocational education perspective, emphases are based on skill acquisition for its graduates with a view to enhancing their skills for employment ventures (Anyakoha,1994) and also after graduation, since through it they will either be self employed or be motivated to move higher with it in their higher school of learning. And so emphasis should be laid on the solid teaching of it because it will enhance vocational skill development. With economic development in focus, typewriting provides students with enough skills for job creation and self reliance in a depressed economy. Nwabunwanne (2006) highlighted the need to strengthen the attention given to typing by providing the students opportunities of improving self-employment through practical demonstration on this subject. This can sustain individuals under a depressed economy.

Therefore, it is found that typewriting should be taught well at Junior and Senior Secondary Schools. This notion was shared virtually by all the teachers in the eight sampled schools of the zone.

This finding validates the views expressed by Cotton(2010) who stressed that in order for the students to keep up with their new skills and to improve their typing, they will need daily practice of it. Igwe (2007) who noted that typewriting prepares secondary school leavers to seek admission to the university.

The result in table 2 revealed that the teaching method used in teaching typewriting in Nigerian Secondary Schools was mainly theoretical, with exception of some few schools in the Zone where teaching had a blend of theoretical and real practical. This result coincides with several authors like Ajibola (2008), Offorma, (2005), who consider theory based teaching as the dominant pedagogical mode used in Nigerian secondary schools. This revealed that this factor was responsible for use of theory method: lack of adequate instructional materials for practical work. It is further revealed that majority of teachers in the eight schools of the Zone studied used improvisation in the absence of instructional materials and learning equipment. Essentially, the primary education

goal for teaching vocational and technical subjects is to teach students both practical and theory as such subjects are very practical in nature and should ideally be taught with methods that maximize the active participation of the learner (Aina, 2009). Teachers of typing are, therefore, expected to properly blend theory with practice for effective learning and transfer of knowledge. More so, students will have more interest in what they see, touch and work with than what they are taught in abstract. On the other hand, teachers and schools should not be expected to perform miracle when they lack teaching and learning tools.

From the result in table 3, it was found that Typing Pools should be made available in secondary schools with a mean score of 3.88 for the teaching of typewriting and not in the class rooms as seen in so many schools. When these facilities are made available, it will enhance vocational skills development in students. This revealed that the eight schools used were found to lack sufficient infrastructural facilities needed for practical work on this skill-based subject (typing), available functional facilities include computer Science Laboratory and class rooms, which were fairly equipped. On the contrary, some of the schools had sufficient facilities that were well maintained. The explanation is that those schools were well funded.

Ajayi (1999) in a study on “relationship between infrastructural availability in typing curriculum implementation in school” and using both the teachers of the eight sampled schools in the Zone found that no significant relationship exists between school facilities availability and curriculum implementation in Nigerian secondary schools. But Anyakogu (2002) opined that a relationship did exist between the availability of school facilities and implementation of typewriting curriculum at secondary schools level. As he puts it, without the availability of functional Typing pool in the schools, typing skilled-based subjects will not be effectively implemented in Nigeria, and students would lack skill acquisition and economic empowerment. This is because, students lack the ability to carry out meaningful work due to lack of acquisition of basic skills that promote effective work performance.

Again without channeling adequate resources to the education sector and without motivating the teachers to provide good quality education to the youth, Nigeria will continue to lag behind socially and economically.

From the result of the study as shown in table 4, it was found that large proportion of teachers available for the teaching of Typewriting at Secondary Schools are non-specialists in place of specialists in most schools without justifiable reasons. This will not enhance vocational skill development in the students as far as this subject is concerned. Ajibola (2008) pointed out that most of the teachers are not qualified to teach the subject. Amugo (1997) noted that implementation of typewriting curriculum in secondary schools in Nigeria is inadequate.

Judging from the result, the proportion of specialist teachers available in Nigerian secondary schools for the teaching of Typewriting, is lacking, this suggests the need for Nigerian technical institutions to adequately train both vocational and technical teachers so that such trained teachers can in turn provide necessary training for the students who are required for the sustenance of manpower and technological development in the country.

7. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that the perception of the teachers on the relevance of typewriting curriculum for the development of vocational skills at secondary school levels is fairly but not effectively implemented. Evidence yielded by the study revealed the following factors as the root cause of the problem: theory-based teaching method, insufficient specialist teachers, lack of infrastructural facilities, not making the study of typewriting curriculum compulsory for the secondary school students.

Recommendations

Results of the research study revealed several remarkable findings. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal and State Government should make it a point of duty to build infrastructural facilities including adequate provision of Typing Pools that are well equipped, to make teaching and learning of typing subject meaningful. This will enable students to have the opportunity to engage in practical works, which is the major aspect of typewriting curriculum.
2. The teaching of typewriting should be made compulsory for students in Secondary schools.
3. It is a known fact that society accord inferior status to vocational and technical education such as typewriting. Therefore, the negative attitude of many parents towards typewriting should be changed. Adequate enlightenment campaigns should be carried out to emphasize its importance in light of the prevailing economic circumstance of the nation and the unemployment rate, which is on the increase.
4. Teachers should be supported through continuing professional development and motivation to enable them prepare the youths for success in the competitive global economy.

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