SCHOOL EXHIBITION AS AN APPROACH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM IN VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

School exhibition is an academic activity, which requires students and teachers to showcase their skills, talents and potentials so that the concept of self–reliance in vocational and technical education (VTE) can be achieved. This teaching/learning approach, which is rarely employed by most schools, possesses a result oriented attribute which government should emphasize and encourage educational administrators to make the most of this strategy. A planning – execution – feedback model has been developed in this paper such that when utilized will smoothen the progress of the implementation of curriculum in vocational and technical education in Nigerian schools.

Introduction

The common slogan associated with vocational and technical and technical education is self-reliance. This term means standing on ones feet, making it by oneself, relying or showing confidence in one's abilities. It implies that students of Vocational Technical Education (VTE) are expected at the end of the learning period be able to set up and manage vocation for purpose of profit maximization.

For vocational education to achieve this basic purpose, the curriculum has been designed to ensure that the objectives of Vocational Technical Education (VTE) are achieved. However, one thing is having a well-designed and articulated curriculum, and another is implementing it appropriately to achieve the goals. Hence, curriculum implementation is another task that requires human dexterity, multi-dimensional strategies, and diversified approaches considering the diverse socio-economic settings and learning environment, which are constraints to effective teaching and learning.

On this premise, one of the approaches is the use of exhibition. Specifically, school exhibition presented here relates to views of Jonathan and Babalola (2007) in which they considered it as a public show of quality goods and services by student-farmers and the public invited to see and appreciate, while

competition, prizes, and learning form part of the display. This is distinct from other levels of exhibitions and the modality of utilizing. It is in this context that the paper concerns by developing exhibition model that will further ascertain the implementation of curriculum in vocational and technical education in Nigerian schools.

Concept of School Exhibition

Ohuche and Ali (2006) had considered exhibition as a method of learning science through interaction between the exhibitors and public; and this plays a very important role in both formal and informal situations. Exhibition is specifically seen as a collection of things, skills, commercial goods, technology, potentials, and talent advertisements, prizes and patronage (Hornby, 2006).

These views when related to school arrangement specifically capture school exhibition as educational and the exhibitors are teachers and students/associates with defined objectives of drawing public attention for awareness, appreciation, encouragement such that they use the forum to further their goals as an institution of learning.

School exhibition being educational activity serves as a proof that curriculum is implemented. This is so because exhibitors attract the public to witness the knowledge gained, learning outcomes and evidences of change in the learners. On the whole school exhibition is a teaching-learning strategy of making the learning process not only appealing and enjoyable to the learners but also evoking intrinsic interest in the minds of the learners.

Objectives and Curriculum of Vocational and Technical Education

Vocational and technical education in its broadest sense is seen by Ogunyemi (2001) cited in Datiri and Yusuph (2007) as an aspect of education that covers instruction in technical and vocational programmes offered at the polytechnics/monotechnics, technical colleges, vocational centre and colleges of education for the production of technologists, technicians, craftsmen, artisans and teachers in their respective specialties.

The document, National Policy on Education (2004) delineated the objectives of vocational and technical education to include:

(i) Provide trained manpower particularly in applied science, technology, and commercial at sub-professional grades.

(ii) Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

(iii) Provide the people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man.

(iv) Give an introduction to professional studies in engineering and other technologies.

(v) Give training and improve the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technical and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant and;

(vi) Enable young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexion of technology.

In achieving these objectives National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) diversified the Vocational Technical Education (VTE) curricular contents to cover the following skilled subjects areas (courses) applied science, agricultural education, (crop and animal), business education (book-keeping, shorthand, typing, computer application), home economics, technical subjects (wood work, technical drawing, metal work etc), craft and advanced craft (ceramics, sculpture, graphics, textile, painting), engineering and technical subjects (automobile technology, building constructing, electrical electronics technology), computer technology, information/communication technology) etc.

Relating the curricular content to objectives typifies that Vocational Technical Education (VTE) is an educational phase that seeks to help individuals acquired specific mechanical or manipulation skills required to help individuals to function effectively in a rapidly changing society. Institutions designed for the implementation of these curricular outside the universities include: pre-vocational and vocational school at post-primary level; the technical colleges/school of vocational technical education at post-secondary level.

However, effective implementation of the curriculum content through teaching and learning process in the designated institutions leads to upholding the Vocational Technical Education (VTE) primary philosophy of training individuals for gainful employment, purposely to make them self-reliant economically, politically and socially through exhibition as in-school activity for self-reliant goal.

Suggested School Exhibition Model to Aid the Implementation of Curriculum in Vocational and Technical Education

Model is operational framework which guides and directs the flow of a process such that a plan is executed successfully. It is a linkage of coordinated activities to be preformed when applied to service delivery for a goal to be attained. Edozie (2003) modeled a planning–executing step for field trip as a strategy of making

the learning of building science interesting for student in secondary schools. However, field trip and exhibition are different teaching–learning strategies and their plans likely to differ, but then some of the steps are used to evolve appropriate exhibition outlay for the implementation of curriculum in schools.

Jonathan and Babalola (2007) used direct planning approach in discussing the use of building exhibition as a technique in teaching building science in junior secondary school. The steps provided defy the feedback component, which is necessary in evaluating educational activities.

However, model for school exhibition either at inter-or intra-arrangement can be conceived with regards to the adoption of planning-execution-feedback mechanism. Figure 1 shows the inter-link between the components in the model. The outlays as contained in the model include:

(a) **Identifying the objectives for the exhibition:** The objectives of building construction exhibition should be clearly identified and stated concisely. The intended outcomes and scope should be stated in clear objectives. A clear objective will guide the planners to check side attraction which are hindrances towards achieving the purpose. The objectives should cover cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

(b) **The school management:** The role of the school management is to agree on the need for organizing an exhibition and as well constitute a committee that can plan and execute successfully at the management meetings. The management has to give the planning crew time, support, and guidelines as term of reference because this will facilitate the success of their assignment.

(c) **The Parent and Guardian:** Briefing the parents and guardians during Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meeting entail seeking their consent and support. The PTA involvement and approval also attract outsiders and members of public to come around. This is publicity component in the planning and promotes the attainment of the objectives. Parent and guardian and public awareness modifies the objectives and perfect preparation. Parental approval reduces any conflict that may occur.

(d) **Detail Planning:** Necessary and appropriate preparation should cover the following:

- Arrangement the various activities that will take place from the opening to the end of the ceremony.

- Drawing up the programme of event, identify the person that will chair the opening ceremony. Meeting and briefing the people concern, seeking their support ahead of time.
- Making arrangement for necessary materials, equipment, photographing/ video coverage (if necessary), public address system and other electronic gadget that may be needed.
- Constituting the sales crew if sales are part of the exhibition and monitoring team.

(e) **Briefing the students**. The should be informed after the school management and PTA approvals have been secured. They should be told of the activities they will be involved so as to:

- Prepare the people toward facing the public coming to see what they produce and be ready to answer question on how they prepare them.
- Set up the standard behaviour and orderliness as well as dressing modestly,
- Organized those that will sell the items exhibited if sales are built into programmed of events.
- Organized student to prepare and be ready to display what they produce and the crew of assessors will assess individual, class clubs, and associations among others for prices, recognition and reward.
- Identify and tag stands and positions in the location for proper arrangement.

f) **Exhibition day(s)**: The exhibition day(s) should witness early commencement of activities as stated in the program of event. The exhibition venue should be arranged and students showing what they produced. The result should be made public and the impressing student/class/club should be applauded and encouraged with prizes as planned.

(g) **Report:** On rounding up of the exhibition there should be an interaction with the student. They should be given an opportunity to talk about their experiences. This is a way the teacher will find out if the behavioural change has met the set objectives. It is a good forum to correct misinformation, misconception and misrepresentation. Question that can be discussed include:

- Did the exhibition serve our purpose?
- Was there enough time, items and activities?
- If we arrange the exhibition, again should we make a change?
- What things did the students like best? Least? Why was this so?
- Where there disciplinary problem needed to be considered?

(h) **Feed Back:** The committee writes a comprehensive report of the exhibition to the school management and also briefs the parent as it relates to the conduct of their wards and meeting the expected objectives. Hence, the report and the feedback constitute the feedback mechanism to the school management and the parents.

Figure 1:

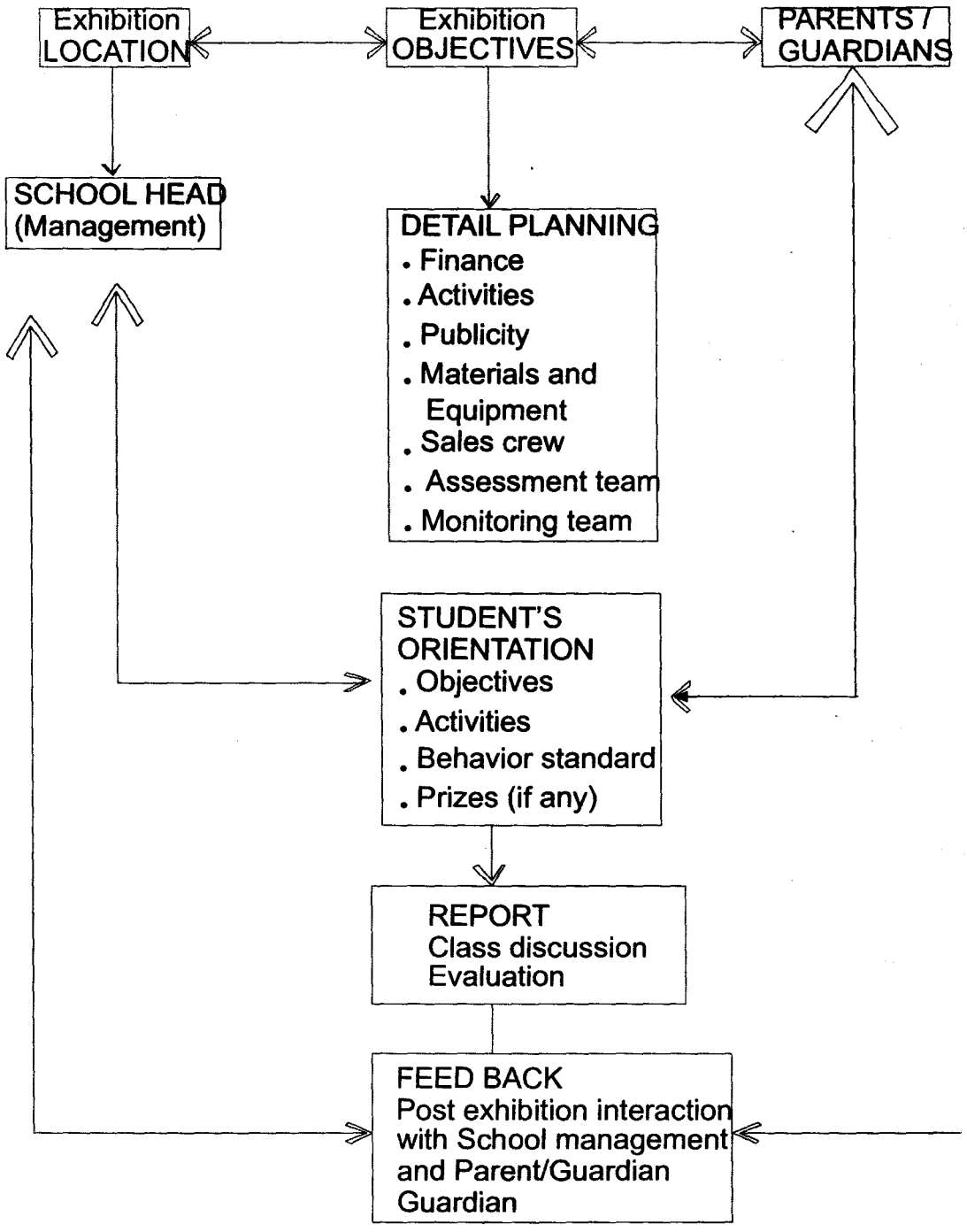

Figure 1: Planning-execution-feedback model for school exhibition
Source: Ajusted from Edozie (2003)

responsibility and requirement respectively.

5. Workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers on exhibition administration.
6. Government should encourage all schools to organize exhibition at local, state, and federal levels sustainably.

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