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CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF ECONOMICS EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

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Abstract
Economics Education is one of the core subjects in secondary school. The course is indispensable in solving individual and national problems. The paper ethically examined the challenges facing the teaching and learning of economics in Nigeria school, such problems as unprofessionally published text books, shortage of qualified economics teachers, non-utilization of (ICTs) materials, poor funding of research, faculty evaluation among others. The papers appraised the future of economics education and saw a very bright prospect in the area of funding of research, retraining of teacher, writing of current text to meet the demand and yearling the teaming population. In this study, the researchers concluded that professional growth in economics is achievable through retraining of teachers and exposures to current national and international networks and development.

Introduction
Economics teachers in secondary and tertiary levels of education need to be repositioned in terms of professional growth through retaining, research, seminars, conferences and workshops of the aims of teaching the subject must be realized. Economics is a course of study with limited scholars in the field. In the present dispensation, scholars in the field of economics would help to maintain standards for effective implementation in Nigeria schools. Teachers of economics are expected to embrace the in depth knowledge of the methods and practice of teaching economics, the organization and evaluation of its contents, philosophies and objectives through researches, conferences, seminars and workshops. In the 21st century, it is expected that economics education would grow to embrace contemporary economics issues and information and communication technologies (CTS) as based for expansion of its curricular and implementation device. In this instances,

for economics education teacher to fit into the modern information age, the expectations are that he should be adequately resourceful, research oriented, involving learners in practical learning experiences, where they are expected to be creators and initiators of knowledge, values and attitudes for the development of Nigeria society.

Conceptual Framework

Meaning of Economics

The term economics has no specific definition. Various economists have come up with different concepts of Economics. According to Robbins, Economics human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. Adam Smith and his followers see Economics as an inquiry into the nature and causes of wealth of nations. This means that economics is a science of wealth, it is all about acquiring wealth.

The Benefits of Economics to the society

Amalualu (1997) gives the following as the benefits of studying Economics.

1. The study of Economics assists the government to determine the expected income and expenditure of a country through preparation of budget
2. It aids production by helping to determine what to produce, when and how to produce goods necessary to satisfy human wants.
3. Economics enables traders and business men to maximize their profit using economics principles in their business.
4. The study of economics enables individuals to participate actively in the art of governance.
5. Economics also assists in determine the pattern of consumption of goods and services in our local environment.

Qualities of an Effective Economics Teacher

1. **Continuous research orientation:** It is very important that economics teachers should update their knowledge through credible researches in line with modern society needs and aspirations. He is expected to read wide contribute to knowledge in his area of specialization.

2. **ICT skilled:** it is incumbent on economics teachers to be ICT skilled. This would help to enhance work. The knowledge of ICT will enable teachers of Economics equipped with the skills of information location, research and capability of maintenance of information communication technologies (ICTS) materials.
3. **Friendly Academic assistance to the learners:** according to Ifelunni, Oduh and Idahosa (2005), teachers can effectively instruct the learners when they combine professional and personal qualities that will endear them to the students. Most teachers who scare away students questions and research problems, intuits the learning of economics. A sound economics teacher should have grasp of the subject matter and should encourage learning in students through his personal disposition.
4. **Professional growth:** professional growth in economics education is meant for trained and untrained teachers. This could be done through research, cooperative learning, seminars and conferences. The need for continuous professional growth in economics education was reiterated by the Amahalu (1997), who said that skills, contents and methodologies of economics are in a content change in order to keep pace with the scientific and technological development and changing needs of the society
5. **Functional evaluation:** projects, tutorials, researched papers should form part of the economics education evaluation. Written examination should be de-emphasized. Ideally, cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains are supposed to be embodied any functional evaluation

Challenges of Economic Education in Nigeria

1. Unprofessionally published text books: Akpochato (1997) rightly of pointed out that non- availability of required economics text books, journals and magazine hamper the effective teaching and learning of economics at the secondary and tertiary level of education in Nigeria. He reiterated that text books that would aid effective discussion of economics concept

are not in appreciable quantity. Teachers in economics are challenged to write and publish current materials to stem the gross inadequate of material in the area.

2. Shortage of qualify teachers: professionally trained economics teachers are grossly in that supply. This gap has to be filled through retraining of teachers through short courses. Sandwich programme, workshops etc.
3. Non utilization of information and communication technologies (ICTS) materials: most teachers do not have the technical knowledge hoe on how to access materials from the internet. In addition ICT materials are scarcely provided for inadequate numbers to facilitate teaching and learning in economics. This is a major setback to the instructional quality of economics education provided by Nigerian teachers in this information age:
4. Poor funding research: incentives for research in economics education is still very how most teachers of economics emanon self supported funded research. This secrecies poses major limitations to the development of economics education is still in Nigeria.
5. Faculty evaluation devices: economics education is still wrought administered in Nigerian school teacher expose students to cognitive learning to the utter neglect of affective and psychomotor learning. This inhabits skills development of economics instruction

Prospects of Economics Education in Nigeria

The future of economics education in Nigeria is very bright. The federal government has made tremendous effort in improving the teaching and learning of economics in Nigeria schools through T.E.T- fund projects. Many economics teachers are doing their bachelor, master's and doctorate degree in economics education in Nigeria universities through T.E.T-fund sponsorship. This doubt will in create the quality of economics teachers in our secondary and tertiary institution

Government and private individuals have donated ICT materials to school and councils for studying of economics and other related disciplines. This has increased the ICT skills of the economics teachers and trance.

Economics teachers are sponsored to attend conferences, seminars, workshops on the best pedagogical practices in economics by their institution and the government.

Many scholars of the economics have embarked on writing quantitative books for teaching and learning of economics in Nigerian schools. There is no doubt, the teaching and learning of economics is very bright in Nigeria schools

Conclusion

Economics education is indispensable in national development for economics teachers to provide qualitative instruction to his students he needs to be adequately resourceful, research oriented and involving learners in practical learning experience where they are expected to be creators and initiators of knowledge, values and attitudes for development of Nigeria society.

Professional growth in economics education is available through retraining and exposure to current national and international information net works and development

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