



DIGITIZATION OF MANAGEMENT OF PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper focused on digitalization of management of pre-primary, primary and secondary educational system in Nigeria. Digitalization era today has taken the lead in the educational sector which has made everything much easier. Digitalization is simply described as carrying out assignments that are meant to fit into technological advancements through information communication in order to make life easier for people. Pre-Primary education is defined as the education given to a particular group of children in order for them to be acquainted with the basic things before transiting into primary education. Primary education is a subject matter that is best described as the aspect of education that a child attains from the ages of 6-11 years. Secondary education is regarded as the second stage of education that children undergo which begins from the ages of 12-17 years. Challenges of pre-primary, primary and secondary education include: Resources and early childhood curriculum while that of primary education include: Expansion of primary education and inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities and challenges facing secondary education include: Poor primary education and examination malpractice. It was concluded that digitalization is simply described as converting analogue items to fit into technological advancements. It was recommended that government should try as much as possible to improve the welfare of teachers both at the state level as well as that of the federal level.

Keywords: Digitalization, Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Educational system.

Introduction



The digitalization era today has taken the lead in the educational sector which has made everything a lot easier especially children acquiring all forms of educational skills weigh more than the analogue way of doing things, while the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary educational system that all comprise of the Universities, Polytechnics and the Colleges of education now write their exams at ICT Centers Using Computers. Digitalization can be simply described as the transformation of technology in virtually every facet of life which occurred during the last few decades which has helped so many individuals in the drastic advancements of change in which all forms of telecommunication that has promoted educational development and skills as well as improving learning experiences of learners (Parviainen, Paivi, Maarit, Jukka and Sussana, 2017).

Education still remains a bedrock for the development of children of all ages including those who are physically challenged because it is one of the fundamental human rights that a child has in which the pre-primary education stage is to ensure that they acquire the basic things such as writing alphabets and numbers, painting, drawing, identification of objects and recitation of nursery rhymes (Berlinski, Galiam and Gertler, 2006).

Primary education is a very vital part of education that children need in order to build a solid foundation for career building in which it starts from the ages of 6-11 years of age which prepares him for secondary school education but if all these are lacking then it will be very difficult when the time comes (Madueke, 2003).

It was until the year 1984 when the Nigerian structure of the primary educational system was at the ages of 6 years while the post primary level happens to be from ages of 5-7 which then moved on to the secondary, teacher's training college known as (TTC), college of education (Anyanwu et al, 1999). Education is another ingredient for sustainable growth and development in any society because it helps one to properly stand out in any environment, he/she finds himself/herself in order for him/her contribute their own quota meaningfully for the growth of others as well as community levels (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2009).

Concept of Digitalization.

Digitalization is simply described as converting things done in analogue methods to fit into technological advancements through information communication in order to make life a lot easier for individuals (Feldman, 1997). Robinson (2003) described digitalization as a process where individuals are being informed about new innovations by someone in order to make communication and data processing much better. Digitalization also transcends from using instructional materials through the use of Microsoft PowerPoint which is known as slides in discussing a subject matter to learners who are experiencing difficulties in understanding what is being taught in class so as to help them out of that particular situation (Brennen and Kreiss, 2016). Manoff (2016) points out the most vital part of information that is required through the ages of digitalization at the same time decreasing the essential part of the visible system s on which information is properly stored.

The more technology continues to evolve round the clock, the more digitalization emerges to be the best way to pass on a conversation with another person in a way of introducing man into new innovative ideas as far as education is concerned which also moves learners from passive to active learners, which is in itself making individuals move with the trends on ground in order for them to be able to broaden their scope of ideas to make them better persons for experience continues to be the best teacher so that they can also lead others in that direction (Mansell, 2012). Internet services are other areas where digitalization takes place because you are able to get whatever information you want which is done through the use of search engines which helps in research purposes rather than visiting libraries to obtain information which happens to be time consuming and has continued to help in technological advancements in the lives of a lot of individuals (Gillespie, 2007). Digitalization is an eye opener to so many people in the digital space because it has helped in the area of creating platforms online which are used in discussing educational problems of learners and seeking for ways in which these challenges can



be solved either by using WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram which are places people can air their views on trending issues in education (Brynojolfsson and McAfee, 2015).

Pre-Primary Education

National Policy on Education (2013) defined pre-primary education as the education given to a particular group of children in order for them to be acquainted with the basic things before transiting into primary education from the ages of 0-6 years which begins from the creche to kindergarten. Pre-Primary Education as explained by Hague (2003) aids in building the cognitive level of children at the early stages of their lives which will have a solid foundation on active participation in class once they get admitted into the primary school by it this level of education is going to place them very well that will enable them cope better without much challenges as they advance higher.

It has been observed that poor quality/standard of education in the pre-primary level of education has in a way affected children who are in primary schools in the sense that their writing skills are nothing to write home about which is due to the fact that they were not properly supervised in their activities (Nwangwu, 2012). Nakpodia and Achugbe (2012) were of the opinion that it is the best thing for children to start schooling at early stages of life especially the pre-primary education so that it helps them learn faster and at the same time it enables them to be able to understand their mother tongue which will facilitate their integration of cultural heritage i.e. parents are to imbibe in them cultural norms and values and as well know the difference between good and bad as well as greetings which is a symbol of showing respect to elders and higher authorities.

Pre-Primary education has to do with the characteristics of the school surrounding and the experience children are faced with which will be a basis for their growth and all-round development especially their level of reasoning which has to do with the cognitive and welfare (Hassan, 2007). Oyetunde (2012) suggested that making good use of the mother tongue is another value placed on the child to acquire more educational skills to affect his immediate community and will in a way set a foundational basis for him to be able to get along with his peers which is an essence of pre-primary education.

Amali et al (2014) asserted that there is no official curriculum that spell out subjects and materials that can be used in the area of impartation as well as learning on the part of children in nursery school which happened to be in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Importance of pre-primary education

In everything we do especially in the area of education no matter how small it may appear to be, everything is important as a starting point in life. The following serve as importance of pre-primary education which are:

1. **Socialization:** - When children mix-up with others in the school environment they meet children from different backgrounds and with that they are being taught how to tolerate others in the world in which they live and it's a part of the little education and in this case the child's basic needs are met.
2. **Co-operation:** - When children undergo the process of pre-primary education they are being taught how to share with other children and with this they get acquainted with the norms and values of what they are expected to know and it starts from the home environment.
3. **Respect:** - This is another important aspect because it helps in training a child in the area of respect for elders and constituted authorities.
4. **Confidence and self-esteem:** - Interaction that are positive between other children and teachers helps in building the self-esteem of children especially when they are faced with academic challenges it's important for teachers to encourage children with learning difficulties in order for them to improve and do better.



Challenges facing pre-primary education

There are bound to be challenges facing children at the pre-primary level of education which is normal for every child growing up. The following include:

1. **Resources:** - At the pre-primary education stage, there are limited resources which is meant to improve the learning experiences of children due to poor planning on how they will be made available and will be used by their care givers (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016). Even at the pre-primary stage of education there is a need for curriculum implementation in order to improve the learning experiences of the child (Chukwubikem, 2013).
2. **Early childhood curriculum:** - The school curriculum at the pre-primary educational level of the child should be also included by the state ministry of education so that it clearly defines the syllabus which is what will bring about total transformation in the life of children and will also benefit parents through quality and standard of education (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016).
3. **Professional Development:** - This is where professionalism is lacking which is affecting children at the pre-primary stage simply because there are no qualified teachers that will provide quality instructions through the use of instructional materials that will make them understand faster what they are being taught as well as proper learning facilities (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016).

Primary Education

Primary education is a subject matter that is best described as an aspect of education a child attains from the ages of 6-11 years of age which is from primary 1-6 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Lawali (2008) critically defined primary education as a particular aspect that a particular group of people receive at their early stages of life with the aim of transmitting worthwhile knowledge and instruction. Odigie (2012) simply described it as a well-designed curriculum that is meant to equip children with basic subject matters that develops them all round from the age of 6-11 years in order for them to stand out among their age groups. Okoye (2017) asserted that a lot has been put in place in order to make primary education more unique in Nigeria to become more popular through introducing universal primary scheme on Monday 6th of September in the year 1976 by the then military head of state in the person of General Olusegun Obasanjo at Oke-suna municipal primary school in the city of Lagos.

Okoye (2017) went further to explain why universal primary education (UPE) made primary education free and compulsory for all children of school age bracket, this was done so that school children can get basic instructions that will put them on the right part and also mould them character wise. But the challenge remains that even qualified teachers who teach them in government owned primary schools both federal and state most especially those in state primary schools are owed backlog of salaries for couple of months without even any form of incentives which is to motivate them give out their best in which we all know that everything is being politicized and in the same vein suffer much later after retirement when they are deprived of their gratuities (Okoye, 2017).

Another critical challenge here is where the Nigerian government at all levels have neglected their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that the welfare of teachers are looked into which is why the primary education in Nigeria continues to collapse as the days go by (Okoye, 2017). The term primary education simply talks about the first stage of the formal aspect of education that a child attains within the age bracket of 6-11 years in which they are taught subjects like indigenous languages which include: English language, French, Arabic, Social studies, Health science, Agricultural science, local craft and a host of others in which these subjects all contain the programme of studies that the children are required to take in order to have an in-depth knowledge of what they all entail (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

Objectives of Primary Education.



Primary education can be achieved when certain objectives are taken into consideration for the sake of children once the Nigerian policy on education in Nigeria is implemented. The following objectives of primary education as according to federal republic of Nigeria (2004) include:

1. The inclusiveness of permanent literacy and the enablement to communicate freely without any form of hinderance.
2. It helps in setting good foundational basis for scientific and creative thinking.
3. Primary education helps in effective participation and contributing meaningfully to the lives of children, the school and society.
4. Primary education assists in character molding and all-round development of the child.
5. It helps in developing a child's cognitive development and adapting to any environment he finds himself.

Challenges Facing Primary Education

Primary education today is faced with numerous challenges as it regards the welfare of teachers which has been neglected by government at all levels. The following challenges include:

1. **Expansion of primary education:** There has been continuous expansion of primary education i.e. Government has continued to establish more primary schools in Nigeria without taking into consideration the resources that will be pumped into ensuring that they run smoothly even as they also lack proper funding of such schools which have recorded a lot of decay that is attributed to negligence and poor maintenance culture which is the order of the day (Safiya, 2005). And again, another challenge here is when admitting more children, we find out that there are no qualified teachers to handle certain subjects that's why the standard of education is very poor compared to other schools especially schools owned by individuals (Safiya, 2005).
2. **Inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities:** Inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities is another challenge in most primary and secondary schools today that is why the quality of education is falling continually because of poor funding of infrastructures within the school because there is little or no identification of the needs facing the primary education that is to say that government have shown less concern to primary education in Nigeria and it is a thing that calls for concern to so many parents because they have dedicated all their resources in order for their children to get the best quality of education but the biting issue here is that there is no conducive atmosphere of learning and there are cases where children sit under the tree to learn which is a common thing in some areas in Northern Nigeria (Safiya, 2005).
3. **Establishment of private primary schools:** One of the challenges being faced here is the unavailability of manpower to establish more private primary schools that will argument for the government owned schools haven't been established which is why teachers who are well equipped with all the basic knowledge and skills to teach and impart meaningfully to children haven't been employed (Aguokogbuo, 2001). Another reason for these challenges is simply because most of the children of government officials have them in private schools which is the most likely reason why they don't give a damn of the poor state of public primary schools (Aguokogbuo, 2001).
4. **Political Constraint:** The reason for this is because once there is change in leadership, we find out that more challenges spring up when there is no continuity in government that is why when the Universal Primary Education (UPE) was established we find out that it was short lived which gradually led to the collapse.
5. **Socio-Cultural Constraint:** There happen to be instances where some parents forbid their children from going to modernized schools and it's simply because they have indoctrinated their children to some particular schools due to the various cultural beliefs which is more particular in Northern Nigeria where they are meant to attend Islamic schools known as Islamiyah and it hasn't helped in any way.



Secondary Education

Secondary education as the name implies is regarded as the second stage of education that a child undergoes which begins from the ages of 12-17 years that comprise both segments which are the junior secondary school known as JSS 1 - JSS 3 in which the JSS 3 examination is taken which qualifies them for senior secondary school known as SS 1 - SS3 and it is the stage in which they will be enrolled into segments where they are being offered options of where to fall into which include: Sciences, arts and the commercial classes depending on their area of interest (Achuonye, 2007).

In this case, the various subjects offered in science related subjects as it is designed in the school curriculum by the federal ministry of education include: Physics, chemistry, Further Mathematics, Technical Drawing, Health science etc. while those in the arts offer subjects like history, government, literature in English and Christian religious studies while commercial students offer subjects like accounting and commerce (Achuonye, 2007). Geography and agricultural science are required but are optional for those in the arts and sciences while compulsory subjects both for those in the sciences, arts and commercial are English language, mathematics, biology and economics which shows that all subjects offered at the senior secondary school level prepares them either for the University, Polytechnics and as well colleges of education (Achuonye, 2007).

Secondary education today has been highly corrupt because of the things that go on simply due to the high level of examination malpractice most especially during external examinations in cases where teachers of the school want the name of their school to be ranked the best so they go as far as asking the students to pay certain amount of money in order for them to be assisted to pass which also involve external invigilators so that they can add up to what they are paid which has killed the secondary education sector simply because of the absence of sanity and reading culture on the part of the students which is why the students cannot even make simple sentences i.e. expressing themselves through writing once they gain admission into tertiary institutions (Omoregie, 2006).

Another problem here is the instance where students are unable to read and pronounce words fluently which shows that the educational sector as a whole has collapsed and the school system has lost its value that's why we find out that even when they become University graduates they are not able to deliver the knowledge they have acquired i.e. they only passed through school while the school never passed through them which is the reason why there are half baked graduates today and has in one way or the other destroyed the dignity of academia (Osaghae, 2002).

Challenges facing secondary education

A lot of factors faced in secondary education is as a result of negligence and poor technological advancement which is known as digitalization. The following include:

1. **Poor primary education:** - This is a situation where students in secondary school were not made to go through thorough grooming in learning standards in order to prepare them for secondary education and is also as a result of lack of qualified teachers in coaching them of what they are supposed to acquire during their stay in primary school.
2. **Examination malpractice:** - Examination malpractice is one of the trending activities that take place in our secondary schools today because of the poor reading culture and one of the reasons is when children are being sent to schools where poor standards of education is low especially schools in rural areas and we see that the students are fully prepared to cheat (Adamu, 2002).
3. **Inadequate facilities:** - Facilities within the school happen to be material resources meant to be used in teaching students but quite unfortunately today we see cases where the school seriously lacks laboratories where practical's are carried out which is more particular in senior secondary schools and because funding in our educational system is quite low, and it goes on to affect students when the time for WAEC comes (Ahmed, 2003). Another key to note here is when the learning environment is not conducive then it affects the health of students in the area of proper



ventilation and proper location of school environment is also lacking which need educational intervention programmes (Jaiyeoba & Atanda, 2005).

4. **Poor supervision of schools:** - This is where the school system begins to fall simply because of the absence of supervision of activities that take place within the school by key officials from the secondary school board and those within the state ministry of education (Ayodele, 2002). Those in the federal ministries of education have not done relatively well in the area of sending representatives to come and see how secondary schools have upgraded their syllabus and how the school principals are managing the resources meant for the school (Ayodele, 2002).
5. **Staff low morale:** - This is when teachers welfare is not properly looked into in enabling them give in their best, there are situations where they will not be paid salaries for months especially at state levels and these teachers' pay transport to work every day just to ensure that the students don't miss out on anything (Oguntoye, 2003). The thing here is that most of them even go as far as conducting extra lessons after school hours for the day just to assist those with learning difficulties to catch up to get along with others and still there is no form of incentives attached to encourage them (Fadipe, 2003).

Ways of improving universal basic education

There is a serious need for the universal basic education to be looked into for the good of children. The following include:

1. There should be mass education and literacy campaigns towards better improvement of learning experiences.
2. There should be proper funding of the universal primary and basic educational sectors within the pre-primary, primary and secondary schools.
3. There is a need to establish adult literacy classes.
4. All things should be done in order to ensure that the school system functions better once there are procurement of teaching aids.
5. There should be provision for training of teachers in order for them to impart worthwhile knowledge to children.

Conclusion

Digitalization is simply described as converting of analogue way of doing things to fit into the digital technological advancement through information communication in order to make life a lot easier for individuals. Pre-Primary education stages are to ensure that they acquire the basic fundamental skills. Primary education is a very vital part of education that children need as a foundation basis for career building which starts from ages 6-11 years.

Recommendations

1. Government should take full responsibility in funding the pre-primary, primary and secondary schools up to standard for the good of all.
2. Government should provide adequate infrastructural development in primary and secondary schools that will be conducive for learning.
3. Government should try as much as possible to improve the welfare of teachers both at state and federal levels in order for them to be motivated to work.
4. All stakeholders have a responsibility in making sure that the welfare of their wards in school are properly catered for.
5. All school administrators should site school buildings far away from noisy areas to places that are conducive for learning.

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