

COMMUNITY SENSITIZATION CAMPAIGN AND STUDENTS ENROLMENT IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (TECHNICAL), OMOKU, RIVERS STATE

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INTRODUCTION**Background to the Study**

Education is the tool for the integration of the individual effectively into a society so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific cultural and technological process. The process of education involves the transference of what is known from the custodian of the knowledge (the teacher) to the seekers and the one who wants the knowledge (the learner). Therefore, the importance of the teacher in the process of education is unequivocal. In the light of the above, the basic institution for the training of the teacher, is the college of education. The acquisition of every knowledge – medical knowledge, legal knowledge, political knowledge, academic knowledge, business knowledge, name it, is from a teacher. The managers of the economy, politics, aviation, judicial system, etc. of a nation passed through a teacher. It is therefore justifiable to state that the hallmark and pillar of any nation's development is education.

The law establishing Federal College of Education stated the functions of each college to include: providing full-time courses in teaching, instruction and training in technology, applied Science, commerce, arts, social Science, humanities and management; and in such other fields of applied learning relevant to the needs of the development of Nigeria in the areas of industrial and agricultural production and distribution and for research in the development and adaptation of techniques as the Council may from time to time determine. Furthermore, to conduct courses in education for qualified teachers.

Moreover, Federal College of Education, Omoku, is a technical College. The importance of technical education in the development of any nation cannot be over emphasized. It is concerned with the acquisition of skills and knowledge for sustainable livelihood and national development. Its aim is to promote the production of skilled, technical and professional manpower to revitalize and sustain the economy and reduce unemployment. Technical education is recognized the world over as a veritable tool for empowering people and the industrialization of a nation. According to McGrath (2015), the major thrust of technical education worldwide is to address issues of youth unemployment, poverty and international competitiveness in skills development towards current and projected opportunities and challenges. Technical education provides the recipients with the basic knowledge and practical skills needed for entry into the world of work as employees or employers of labour.

Despite the importance of technical education to national development, its public status in Nigeria seems low, hence the low enrolment into such institution of learning. The current trend of enrolment into the programmes in FEC(T), Omoku is worrisome. The danger of dwindling enrolment may be the extinction of the programme which will have adverse effect on the educational system as the NCE is the core programme for the training of quality teachers. The quality of a society is dependent on the quality of her education. The foundation of a nation is on the foundation of its citizens. Technical education especially, the NCE programme is so misconceived and under rated, that it has become difficult to administer the programme to meet "societal ever-changing needs" (Toby, 2010).

According to Ogueze (2018), Nigeria does not seem to accord technical education and the NCE programme the attention it deserves despite its proven contributions to national development. Corroborating this view, Aina (2018) asserted that since the introduction of the NCE programme in Nigeria educational system, enrolment in its programmes has remained low compare to enrolment in the university system.

This development has posed inherent danger to technological and national development. To this end, Yakubu (2016) reported that the total enrolment figures into Technical, Vocational Education and Training programmes in NCE as at 2016 was low. He added that this trend, in comparison with countries seeking to have rapid socio-economic development is negligible as those countries target about 50% enrolment. Ozioma (2011) asserted that Nigerian schools pay little or no attention to technical education. People seem not to understand what it is all about and consequently acquire disapproval and a dislike for NCE programmes. To this end, the state of enrolment into NCE programmes in colleges in Nigeria needs attention.

Community sensitization campaign is prerequisite for better understanding and appreciation of NCE programme in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. It is effective in bringing awareness among members of the communities, strengthening CBOs' capacity and changing behavior towards enrolment into NCE programmes. Among the various tools used in community sensitization, a few tools like town cry, local radio programmes, town hall meetings, village square meetings, rally, seminars, open space/market square campaign and rural roadside journey are people friendly and effective in providing access to information on the relevance of NCE especial in a technical college like that of FCE(T), Omoku. Most rural communities lack access to information the programmes in the college and their importance in our country, which is one of barriers in appropriate utilization of the available resources and their benefits. Wider information dissemination is needed to increase awareness so that the message reaches all levels of stakeholders, including potential students, extension workers, parents, community leaders and policy makers. Public awareness regarding the relevance of NCE in the society is essential for massive enrolment. Goshi (2012) posited that majority of the rural community dwellers lack basic access to modern information gazettes (television, radio, and reading materials) due to their economic conditions, which leaves them in ignorance, hence the need for community sensitization campaign. Various local methods for community sensitization can be used in creating awareness among a larger number of people from different stakeholder groups in the communities. Furthermore, it also helps the rural community to have sense of ownership of the programme in their locality.

Statement of the Problem

The relevance of the NCE programme in Nigeria cannot be over emphasised. This is the basic programme for the training of teachers in Nigeria. NCE occupies a major place in building an enlightened and egalitarian society. The quality of the educational system of a country has a major role in the quality of life, economic and national development of a country. Massive enrolment into this programme will do a nation a lot of good. Low enrolment will mean shortage of teachers in the schools at all level of education. In Federal Colleges of Education, there have been a decline in enrolment. The same is the case in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. What could be the problem: the reason for the decline in enrolment? Can community sensitization campaign proffer solution to the problem? Providing answers to these questions is the problem/ rationale of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to find out if communities sensitization campaign can improve students' enrolment into the NCE programme in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku and if yes, carry out aggressive sensitization of the communities in Ahoada West and

Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Find out the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State.
2. Find out the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku.
3. Ascertain how community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State?
2. What are the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku?
3. How can community sensitization campaign strategies enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level:

Ho1: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Ho2: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku of Rivers State.

Ho3: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the how community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

Literature Review

The purpose of education is not just making a student literate but adds rationale thinking, knowledge, ability and self-sufficiency. Education is an engine for the growth and progress of any society. It not only imparts knowledge, skills and inculcates values, but is also responsible for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets technological innovation and economic growth. Education prepares the young for the future so that they can live and succeed in a hostile and a changing society.

Technical education is that type of education designed technically and systematically to accommodate both the trainer and the trainee, to enable the trainee acquire the basic knowledge, skills, abilities, understanding and attitudes needed for one's efficient performance in his or her chosen occupational career for self-reliance and national development.

Technical education enables its recipients to become active people who contribute positively to the well-being and economic development of society. The implication of this is that technical education gives attention to the development of both material and human resources (Adelakun, Oviawe & Barfa, 2015). They added that for these good yields of Technical, Vocational Education and Training programmes, it is obvious that no nation will adequately develop its technological base if it neglects

the development of its workforce. It is integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of the impact on human resource development, productivity and economic growth. Technical colleges in Nigeria are faced with series of challenges which hinders its programmes. According to Ogueze (2018), NCE has contributed massively to National Development. Despite this fact, the NCE programme does not enjoy the needed attention from government. Corroborating this view, Aina (2018) added that enrolment into the NCE programmes has not been encouraging compared to what happens in the universities.

This development has posed inherent danger to technological and national development. To this end, Yakubu (2016) reported that the total enrolment figures into Technical, Vocational Education and Training programmes in NCE as at 2016 was low. He added that this trend, in comparison with countries seeking to have rapid socio-economic development is negligible as those countries target about 50% enrolment. People seem not to understand what it is all about and consequently acquire disapproval and a dislike for NCE programmes. To this end, the state of enrolment into NCE programmes in colleges in Nigeria needs attention.

Community sensitization campaign is prerequisite for better understanding and appreciation of NCE programme in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. It is effective in bringing awareness among members of the communities, strengthening CBOs' capacity and changing behavior towards enrolment into NCE programmes. Among the various tools used in community sensitization, a few tools like town cry, local radio programmes, town hall meetings, village square meetings, rally, seminars, open space/market square campaign and rural roadside journey are people friendly and effective in providing access to information on the relevance of NCE especial in a technical college like that of FCE(T), Omoku.

Most rural communities lack access to information the programmes in the college and their importance in our country, which is one of barriers in appropriate utilization of the available resources and their benefits. Wider information dissemination is needed to increase awareness so that the message reaches all levels of stakeholders, including potential students, extension workers, parents, community leaders and policy makers. Public awareness regarding the relevance of NCE in the society is essential for massive enrolment. Goshi (2012) posited that majority of the rural community dwellers lack basic access to modern information gazettes (television, radio, and reading materials) due to their economic conditions, which leaves them in ignorance, hence the need for community sensitization campaign. Various local methods for community sensitization can be used in creating awareness among a larger number of people from different stakeholder groups in the communities. Furthermore, it also helps the rural community to have sense of ownership of the programme in their locality.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted survey design. The study area is Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The population of the study comprised members of Community Based Organisations (CBOs), parents and school leavers in communities in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The sample size for the study was drawn using stratified and random sampling techniques. 1000 respondents were used for the study. This comprised 250 from each stratum of four strata: two from each LGA. The instrument for data collection was tagged "Community Sensitisation Campaign and Student Enrolment in Federal College of Education, Omoku" (CSCSEFCEO) which was made up of two sections: A and B. Section A was used to gather information on the bio-data of respondents while section B was used to elicit response on a four-point rating scale questionnaire items structured from the research questions. The research instrument was adequately scrutinized by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation and community development in order to establish content and construct validity. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, there was a field-testing of the instrument. To achieve this, 50 copies of the instrument was administered on selected CBOs in Asaba and staff of Federal

College of Education, (Technical), Asaba. The choice of this location is that it is the nearest State to Rivers State with Federal College of Education. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test internal consistency of the instrument. Mean and Standard Deviation was used to analyse research questions while Z-test was used to test hypotheses formulated.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What is the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programmes in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean response of respondents on the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni (ONELGA) Local Government Areas of Rivers State

S/N	ITEMS	Ahoada West N=500		ONELGA N=500		Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	I am aware of the NCE programmes in FCE (T), Omoku	2.40	0.75	2.44	0.78	Low level
2	I am aware of the courses of study in FCE (T), Omoku	1.98	0.64	2.30	0.70	Low level
3	I am aware of the requirements for admission into various programmes in NCE	1.75	0.63	1.94	0.75	Low level
4	I am aware of the relevance and benefits of having NCE certificate	2.46	0.80	2.49	0-.85	Low level
5	I am aware that FCE (T), Omoku independently award degree certificate	2.20	0.70	2.40	0.75	Low level
	Grand Mean	2.16	0.70	2.31	0.77	Low level

Findings in research question one reveals that people within the environ of Federal College of Education (Technical) have low level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programmes in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. This is seen in their response to the items in the questionnaire as indicated in the table above. The mean for all the items on the table is below the criterion mean of 2.50. It is also reflected in the grand mean.

Research Question Two: What are the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku?

Table 2: Mean response of respondents on the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

S/N	ITEMS	Ahoada West N=500		ONELGA N=500		Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
6	Town hall meetings is a good community sensitization strategy for students' enrolment into FCE (T), Omoku	3.09	0.78	3.14	0.63	Agree
7	Radio jingle is an appropriate community sensitization strategy for students' enrolment into FCE (T), Omoku	3.11	0.74	3.03	0.76	Agree

8	Town crying will be very effective as a strategy for students' enrolment into FCE (T), Omoku	2.75	1.03	2.94	1.05	Agree
9	Open air rally is a good community sensitization strategy for students' enrolment into FCE (T), Omoku	2.64	1.05	2.85	1.02	Agree
10	One-on-one engagement is an effective community sensitization strategy for students' enrolment into FCE (T), Omoku	3.01	0.83	2.98	0.83	Agree
Grand Mean		2.92	0.89	2.99	0.86	Agree

Findings in research question two reveals that the people agreed that certain community sensitization strategies will enhance students' enrolment into the programmes of study in FEC(T), Omoku. Some of the such programmes as itemized in the table above include town hall meetings, radio jingles, town crying, open-air rally and one-on-one engagement. The assertion that the people agreed to the items on table two is based on the fact that their mean response, including the grand mean, are above the criterion mean of 2.50.

Research Question Three: How can community sensitization campaign strategies enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku?

Table 3: Mean response of respondents on how community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

S/N	ITEMS	Ahoada West N=500		ONELGA N=500		Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
11	Community sensitization strategies such as town hall meetings, radio jingles, town crying, one-on-one engagement and/or open-air rally, will make people be aware of NCE programmes in FCE (T), Omoku thereby enhance students' enrolment	2.66	0.62	2.74	0.73	Agree
12	The above community sensitization strategies will enable people be aware of the courses of study in FCE (T), Omoku thereby enhance students' enrolment	2.86	1.02	2.64	1.02	Agree
13	The above community sensitization strategies will enable people be aware of the requirements for admission into various programmes in NCE thereby enhance students' enrolment	3.10	0.93	3.17	0.83	Agree
14	The above community sensitization strategies will enable people be aware of the relevance and benefits of having NCE certificate thereby enhance students' enrolment	3.08	0.95	2.61	0.85	Agree
15	The above community sensitization strategies will enable people be aware that FCE (T), Omoku independently award	2.91	0.83	2.88	0.83	

degree certificate thereby enhance students' enrolment					Agree
Grand Total	2.85	0.87	2.81	0.85	Agree

Findings in research question three shows that students' enrolment can be enhanced through the enumerated sensitization campaign strategies. Their mean responses, which are above the criterion mean, shows that respondents agreed that community sensitization strategies such as town hall meetings, radio jingles, town crying, one-on-one engagement and/or open-air rally, will make people be aware of: NCE programmes in FCE (T); the courses of study in FCE (T), Omoku; the requirements for admission into various programmes in NCE; the relevance and benefits of having NCE certificate; and that FCE (T), Omoku independently award degree certificate Omoku thereby enhance students' enrolment.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-Test analysis on significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	Z-Cal.	Z-Crit.	Decision
ONELGA	500	2.31	0.77	461	-3.02	±1.96	Accepted
Ahoada West	500	2.16	0.70				

Table 4. revealed that the Z-calculated value is -3.02 and the Z- critical table value is ±1.96 with a degree of freedom of 461 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the z-cal (-3.02) is less than the z-critical table value, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the level of awareness of the relevance of NCE programme in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Ho₂: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku of Rivers State.

Table 5: Z-Test analysis on significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	Z-Cal.	Z-Crit.	Decision
ONELGA	500	2.99	0.86	461	0.80	±1.96	Accepted
Ahoada West	500	2.92	0.89				

Table 5 revealed that the Z-calculated value is 0.80 and the Z- critical table value is ± 1.96 with a degree of freedom of 461 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the z-cal (0.80) is less than the z-critical table value, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the appropriate community sensitization campaign strategies for students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku of Rivers State.

Ho₃: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the how community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

Table 6: Z-Test analysis on significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the how community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	Z-Cal.	Z-Crit.	Decision
ONELGA	500	2.81	0.85	461	-0.12	± 1.96	Accepted
Ahoada West	500	2.85	0.87				

Table 6 revealed that the Z-calculated value is -0.12 and the Z- critical table value is ± 1.96 with a degree of freedom of 461 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the z-cal (-0.12) is less than the z-critical table value, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in Ahoada West and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Areas of Rivers State on the how community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku

Discussion of Findings

Level of Awareness of the Relevance of NCE Programme

From this research, the findings in research question one show that there is low level of awareness of the programmes of study in Federal College of Education (Technical) by people of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni and Ahoada West Local Government Areas of Rivers State. These two L.G.A.s are the closest to the Institution, hence the choice of study area. Responses from respondents shows that the people, as close as they are to the institution are not aware of certain programmes in the institution. If the communities close to the institution are not aware of the programmes in the institution, it does imply that majority of the people in the catchment area have low awareness of the programmes in FCE(T), Omoku. The people are not fully aware of the programmes of study. They are not also fully aware of the requirements for admission into various programmes. Their awareness that FCE(T), Omoku independently awards degree certificate is also low. This lack of awareness has contributed to the low enrolment into the NCE programmes. This is reason Aina (2018) asserted that since the introduction of the NCE programme in Nigeria educational system, enrolment in its programmes has remained low compare to enrolment in the university system.

Appropriate Community Sensitization Campaign Strategies for Students' Enrolment

From this study, it was found out, through research question two, that certain community sensitization campaign strategies can be adopted to drive students' enrolment into FCE(T), Omoku. The strategies that respondents agreed can drive students' enrolment are: one-on-one engagement with the people, town crying, radio jingle, town hall meetings and open-air rally. They agreed that if these strategies are adopted, it will create awareness of the programmes in FCE(T), Omoku. These

strategies are most common in the local communities, as against the modern communication media as posited by Goshi (2012) that majority of the rural community dwellers lack basic access to modern information gazettes (television, radio, and reading materials) due to their economic conditions, which leaves them in ignorance, hence the need for community sensitization campaign. Through this media, the negative perception about the NCE programme will be changed. Technical education especially, the NCE programme is so misconceived and under rated, that it has become difficult to administer the programme to meet "societal ever-changing needs" (Toby, 2010).

How Community Sensitization Campaign Strategies Can Enhance Students' Enrolment

Findings from this study shows that respondents agreed that community sensitization campaign strategies can enhance students' enrolment into Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. Through the used of the sensitization strategies mentioned above, the people will be aware of the academic programmes of study in the institution. In line with this, Ozioma (2011) noted that among the various tools used in community sensitization, a few tools like town cry, local radio programmes, town hall meetings, village square meetings, rally, seminars, open space/market square campaign and rural roadside journey are people friendly and effective in providing access to information on the relevance of NCE. The people, through these media, will be aware of the requirement for admission into various programmes of study. They will understand the relevance of the NCE certificate. Through those media of communication, the news about the dual mandate which empowers FCE(T), Omoku to independently award degree certificate will be spread widely.

CONCLUSION

NCE programme is very vital in the overall development of Nigeria. The reduction in the enrolment rate of students into the NCE programme in Colleges of Education is worrisome. This situation is not different in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. This is because of lack of awareness of the people of the NCE programmes and the relevance of the programmes.

The need to rise up to the occasion and change the trend positively is urgent. Community sensitization campaign strategies such as one-on-one engagement, town hall meetings, town crying, open air rally has been identified as some of the strategies that can be adopted for enhancing students' enrolment. Massive student enrolment will be of immense benefit to the Nigerian society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Relevant units in Federal College of Education (Technical), should immediately swing into action in creating awareness in communities about the programmes of studies in the institution including admission requirements, relevance of the NCE certificate, among others
2. The media of communication relevant to the people such as town crying, town hall meetings, radio jingles, open air rally, one-on-one engagement and many others, should be adopted by the college in creating awareness about the institution in the communities.
3. The college should constitute a follow up committee to sustain any effort made to enhance students' enrolment into the college.

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