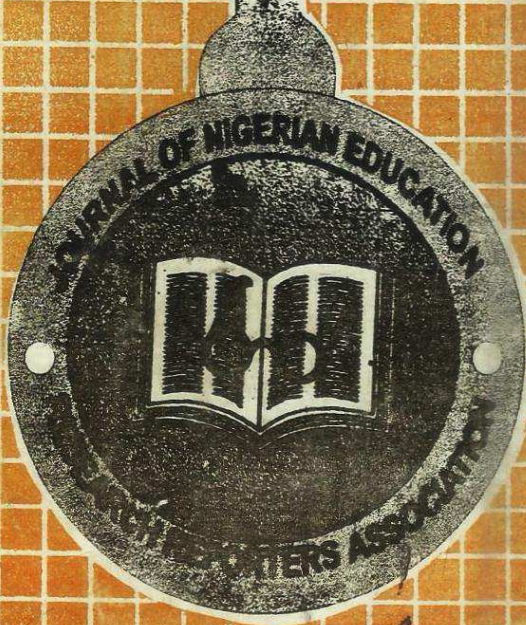


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**PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS OF
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TRAINEE TEACHERS FOR
EFFECTIVENESS IN OCCUPATIONAL SITUATION**

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the competency requirements of Agricultural Education trainee teachers that could help them become effective in occupational situation. It was carried out at the University of Uyo, Uyo using agricultural education students of the third and final years and lecturers as the population all together numbering eighteen. A 30 items structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Mean statistics was employed for data analysis with cutoff point of 2.00. the findings revealed that twenty-seven out of thirty items of the competencies were required while three were not. The implication of competency based agriculture teacher education programme in improving the quality of agriculture teachers in the Nigerian education system were also discussed. Recommendation was made on the need for well-designed, functional and articulated competency-based agriculture teacher education for assured future agricultural technological development of Nigeria.

BACKGROUND

The central focus of agriculture teacher training programme is the production of proficient and skillful teachers who would be effective in the performance of professional functions. The National Policy on Education (1981) places premium on teacher education emphasizing prime consideration of the programme in all educational planning. This of course is based on the understanding that no education can rise above the quality of its teachers.

The need for competent agriculture teachers with the professional tools to be able to carry out the educating role is indisputable. The educating role is the performance of the duty of teaching to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills of youths in agriculture. The agriculture teacher is expected to be knowledgeable in his subject matter and also care about what he is imparting to the learners and even the learners he is developing. The professional competency requirements of the teacher would include:

- A good knowledge base of the agriculture subject matter and the pedagogy.
- A working of educational psychology as a tool for planning the expected duties to be relevant to the needs and level of different categories of learners

- A good knowledge of the theories of learning to be able to interpret and translate the problems peculiar to his school environment.

Deriving from Synder and Anderson (1980) who asserted the competency needs of teachers, the agriculture teachers should acquire inter-related and inter-dependent competencies such as:

- Quality instructional model that could link student's styles of learning with appropriate instructional approaches.
- Organisation and management of the agriculture classroom
- Programme development paradigms.

Highlighting the professional competencies needed by teachers in agricultural colleges in Northern Nigeria, Okatahi (1983) outlined the following;

Programme planning, development and evaluation.

This will involve the ability to develop vocational agriculture programmes, goals, objectives and evaluation procedures.

Instructional planning

This is the ability to develop functional, practicable agriculture lessons plans after determining the needs and interest of the learners as well as the improvisation of instructional materials.

Instructional execution

It involves the ability to direct classroom learning and field laboratory experience using varied approaches.

Instructional evaluation strategies for assessing learners performance, knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Instructional management involving facility improvements as well as time and resources management.

School-community Relation

This demands the ability to initiate cooperation among school community members, the local and state education organs.

Agricultural Extension Philosophy Organisation and administration.

This will involve identification of the farmers/community needs, guiding students on the role and functions of extension agents and planning programmes to meet specific agricultural and personal needs of those concerned.

The Art of Communication

This explains the ability to utilize various media in the performance of extension functions; guiding students on methods and processes of communication. Finally, it is also concerned with the ability to write technical and research reports and newsletters.

Agricultural education programmes in universities have for a long time seem to dangle with three sets of problems.

- (i) The balance between content and pedagogy
- (ii) Integration of theoretical and practical components into organised pedagogical processes.
- (iii) Satisfaction of non-teaching professional functions.

There seem to be non-synchronization of the professional competencies in the training of agricultural education trainee teachers. Based on the above problem, it therefore becomes relevant to determine the professional competencies of agricultural educational trainee teachers that could help them perform their occupational roles effectively after graduation.

Special Objection of the study

To determine the competency requirement of agricultural education trainee teachers for effectiveness in occupational situation.

Methodology

Area of the Study

The study was a survey carried out in the University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Population

Fifteen (15) agricultural education students in the third and final year classes and the three (3) agricultural education lecturers were all involved in the study giving a total of eighteen (18).

Instrument

A thirty-item (30) structured questionnaire was developed and used for collection of data for the study. A three-point scale of "Highly Required", "Required" and "Not Required" were the response options.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected by direct administration of the questionnaire to the eighteen respondents (18). All were duly completed and returned giving one hundred (100) percent return rate.

Analysis procedure

Mean statistic was employed in the analysis of the data with a cut above were regarded as being "Required" and below which is "Not Required".

Results

Table1: Mean responses of Students and Lecturers on Competency Requirements of Agriculture Education Trainee Teachers.

	Identified Competency Requirement	\bar{X}	Decision
	Which of the following items 1-30 could be regarded as competency requirements of agricultural education trainee teachers?		R
1 ✓	Developing vocational agriculture programmes objectives and goals	2.10	R
2	Carrying out planned student following-up studies	2.08	R
3 ✓	Effectively evaluating vocational agriculture programmes	2.11	R
4 ✓	Developing functional practical agriculture lesson plans	2.12	R
5 ✓	Improvising instructional materials	2.08	R
6 ✓	Improving vocational agriculture instructional materials	2.07	R
7	Determining needs and interest of students	2.00	R
8	Directing students classroom and field laboratory experiences	2.06	R
9 ✓	Using various pedagogical approaches to facilitate learning	2.01	R
10	Assessing students knowledge, attitude, and psychomotor achievements	2.07	R
11 ✓	Assessing instructional effectiveness	2.03	R
12.	Managing time and resources	2.02	R
13.	Assisting students in developing positive self concepts and confidence	2.01	R
14.	Providing desired and needed first aid facilities in class in case of emergencies.	1.03	NR
15	Initiating the school community relations	1.03	NR
16.	Providing the school community with relevant agricultural information	1.06	NR
17. ✓	Obtaining information from the school community members for improving agriculture programmes	2.00	R
18.	Initiating, implementing and sustaining cooperation with the local and state education agencies of government	1.03	NR
19	Identifying farmer and immediate community agricultural needs	2.07	R
20 ✓	Planning and execution of agricultural extension programmes for outreach	2.08	R
21	Establishing close working relationship with community members to ensure success of home farm project	2.08	R

	Identified Competency Requirement	\bar{X}	Decision
22	Initiating and supervising students home farm projects	2.08	R
23	Evaluating results of students home-farm projects	2.08	R
24.	Guiding students on the roles and responsibilities of agricultural extension officers	2.00	R
25. ✓	Effectively communicating in the local language of the farmers	2/11	R
26. ✓	Utilizing varieties of media for imparting agricultural information	2.00	R
27. ✓	Training students on the methods and processes of communication with farmers	2.01	R
28.	Creativity and carrying out innovation based on individual and community agricultural needs	2.00	R
29. ✓	Initiating and carrying out research on agricultural and educational development	2.07	R
30. ✓	Writing research and technical reports	2.07	R

Key: R = Required; NR = Not Required.

Analysis of the Table 1 indicate that, of the thirty items of the competency requirements of agricultural education trainee teachers, twenty seven had mean values above the cut off of 2.00 while three of the items had mean values less than 2.00.

It was therefore inferred that the trainees teachers require a good number of competencies to make them effective in occupational situation after graduation.

Discussion

The findings of the study on the competency requirement of would-be agricultural education teachers in training agree majority with the competencies highlighted by Sydney and Anderson (1980) and Okatahi (1983). The competencies hopefully could help the trainees after graduation to be armed with the tools that would enable them go beyond the position of instructors to highly skilled professionals, proficient and effective in the performance of defined roles and responsibilities. An effective educational programme at any level is only as effective as the teacher.

Implication of the Study

The implication of professional competency-based agricultural teacher education programme would go a long way to improving the quality of the agriculture teachers in the Nigerian education system. The aspects of general education, field specialization and professional preparations would be well articulated and therefore the hope for sustainable agricultural development.

It is hoped that the objectives of teacher education of producing highly motivated, conscientious and efficient teachers; encouraging further the spirit of enquiry and creativity; enabling them to fit into the social life of the

communities and the society at large; providing them with intellectual and professional tools to make them adaptable to changing situations as well as enhancing their commitment to their occupational roles and responsibilities would be realized.

Conclusion

It is therefore relevant to consider the development of well designed, functional and competency-based agriculture teacher education programmes for an assured future agricultural technological development of Nigeria.

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