Factors Influencing the Implementation of Co-Operative Education in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The aim of this research work was to determine the various factors influencing the implementation of co-operative education in Nigeria using Enugu urban as a case study. The general objective was to examine the various policies put in place by the co-operative bodies in order to improve co-operative education among the general public and the co-operative members, specifically to assess the extent to which these policies have helped in improving co-operative education. The population of the study is 148 members while the sample size is 25 registered co-operative societies respectively. This was arrived at using the Taro Yamane sampling techniques. Data for the research were collected using both primary and secondary data collecting instruments which include the questionnaires, interviews and personal observations. The data collected were also subjected to the analysis of statistics of frequency and percentages. The research made the following findings: that the co-operative field staff lack specialized training in such courses as teaching, psychology and human relations which are relevant to their type of job; co-operative societies depend largely on co-operative field staff for their co-operative education; most co-operatives in Enugu urban do not possess copies of the co-operative law, Majority of those who do, do not study the provision of the law. The researcher made the following recommendations: that the training of co-operative field staff should involve the study of teaching techniques, principles of adult education, psychology, sociology and human relations; since co-operative education in co-operative societies depend much on the cooperative field staff, efforts should be made by the field staff to visit and educate the members regularly; the training programme for co-operative field staff should emphasize on the study of co-operative law among other things, for effective study of the co-operative societies rules and bye-laws.

Key words: Co-Operative Education • Nigeria • Enugu Urban • Bye-Laws and Training Programme

INTRODUCTION

The good virtue of education cannot be overemphasized in influencing all aspects of human life. In the co-operative movement, education is highly recognized as a very essential instrument for achieving success. Most co-operators place so much premiums on co-operative education to the extent of ranking it above capital in the development of the organization [1]. The world pioneers saw education as the only means of obtaining the desired result for the activities. In their view, co-operative societies are business enterprise as well as organs for social progress and will be whatever the members, the leaders and executive staff make of it.

As Anyanwu (2000) [2] reported that, “the early co-operators, the Rochdale pioneers, started first with the education of its members. Even when they started their own individual co-operative stores, the education continued. They constantly reviewed and revalued each stage of development with a view of improving on their present state and plan for the future. Therefore, the most urgent and perhaps the most essential task was not to
It is sure an irrefutable fact that there has been very poor response in the attitude of the masses towards obtaining co-operative education in our country Nigeria. This, the researcher assumes might be due to poor enlightenment on co-operative education among the citizens of the country [3 and 4].

However, it will be quite unfair to say that effort had not been made by the government and various co-operative organization towards solving the problem. For instance in the study area which is in Enugu metropolis comprising of Abakpa Nike, New Layout, New Haven, Independence Layout etc. many effort had been geared to ensure the implementation of this co-operative education which includes advising the masses through seminars and workshops on the importance of creating time for co-operative education, again is through the provision of material resources such as books, cooperative journals, posters etc which is assumed will enhance the desire of the masses in co-operative education [5, 6 and 7].

However, with the look of things in Enugu metropolis today, it is believed that all these past efforts failed to create the needed transformation required, with regard to the achievement of the required level on co-operative education. And these resulted to poor establishment of co-operative societies and inefficient management of the existing ones. Therefore more efforts is required to make people understand the advantages and conditions of work in common: training them in co-operative principles, getting them familiar with the structure and method of co-operative organization and helping them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge valuable as the education process has been seen to be, it becomes necessary to find out to what extent our local co-operators value the role of co-operative education in co-operative development. If they value it’s role, then it would be necessary to identify the factors that positively or negatively affect it’s implementation.

Objective of the Study: The broad objective of this research was to find out the factors influencing the implementation of co-operative education with a view to suggesting solutions. The specific objectives include:

- To examine the various policies put in place by the co-operative bodies in order to improve co-operative education among the general public and the co-operative members.
- To assess the extent to which these policies have helped in improving co-operative education.
- To examine the various personal challenges facing various potential members from attending co-operative education.
- To identify the problems co-operatives face in their effort of co-operative education.
- To make recommendations based on the research findings.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design: The descriptive research design method was applied which includes personal observations and distribution of questionnaires etc.

Area of Study: The area of study is Enugu urban and it covers both Enugu East, North, South local government areas respectively with Abakpa Nike, New layout, New haven, Independence layout, Obiagu, Trans-Ekulu, the GRA and Uwani etc and according to the 2006 national population census, Enugu metropolis has a total population of about 722,664 persons, it is also pertinent to note that the study area is seen as the economic power house of the state as well as the political and distractive center of the state.

Population: The population is made up of about 148 co-operative societies, registered in Enugu metropolis comprising of about 16,500 persons or members of co-operatives.

Sample and sampling technique and after the procedure, only 25 registered co-operative societies were used for the research work.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: The researcher divided the respondents in the sections so as to use the stratified random sampling. The two main sections were the officials and then the members. The researcher employed the simple random sampling in selecting a limited number of co-operative societies and sample size was 25 co-operative societies.

Method of Data Collection: The questionnaire meant for distribution was approved before it was distributed to members and officers through some co-operative filed staff.

A minimum of about 1 month was given to administer and return the questionnaires. The avidity of this research was examined using the responses to the questionnaire which has been distributed and returned.
**Instrument:** The instruments used in collecting data for this research work were both the primary and secondary data collecting instruments and these include: the administration of questionnaires, personal interview, personal observations, sourcing of data from textbooks and journals.

**Validity of the Instrument:** This is the determination of the extent to which the instrument actually reflects the variable being measured. Here, the questionnaire was read many times to ensure that the items were understood easily and the instructions used were appropriate.

**Reliability of the Instrument:** To say that a data gathered instrument is reliable simply means that the process of obtaining information is accurate and consistent. The research ensured that the source of information are accurate and also that the research work was able to measure what it suppose to measure with regard to the research objective and also the research questions.

**Method of Data Analysis:** The data gotten from the study objective and questionnaires were analyzed using statistics of frequency and percentage only.

### RESULTS

**Table 1:** Educational Qualification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of societies</th>
<th>Degree/HND</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>OND/WAEC</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey, November, 2014.*

With reference to Educational Qualification, out of the 25 co-operative field staff sampled from the 25 co-operative societies 11 (44%) of them had the degree or HND while 14 (56%) had OND or WAEC.

**Table 2:** Procedures in Educating the members

The table below shows the procedure co-operatives follow in educating members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Education</th>
<th>No. of Societies sampled</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Explain the meaning of and principles of co-operation.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Acquainting members with the duties and obligations.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Emphasizing benefits accruing to members</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Reading the bye-laws</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Reading and Explaining the co-operative laws</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. English</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Vernacular</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Both</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey, November, 2014.*

From table 2, it can be seen that 17 societies out of the 25 sampled representing (68%) were of the opinion that Education received were inform of Explaining the meaning and principles of co-operation while 8 (32%) disagree with their duties and obligations. 14 (56%) received education inform of reading the bye-laws, while 11 (44%) disagreed.

**Table 3:** below shows a distribution table according to the regularity of visit and education of co-operative staff to members of co-operative society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of visit of co-operative field staff</th>
<th>No. of Societies sampled</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do the co-operative field staff visit these societies up to 9 times a year.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nature of inhibiting factor</td>
<td>No of staff sampled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What factors limit your ability to visit these societies more often?</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Location of the society</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Inaccessibility society location</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Inadequate transport allowance</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Lack of transport facilities</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do the co-operative members receive education more than twelve times and year</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey, November, 2014.*
DISCUSSION

The effective implementation of co-operative education is influenced by the provision of the following: financial and material incentive, provision of qualified and experienced co-operative educators, making co-operative education accessible to all members.

The results of this research revealed that there is a relationship between the qualification and experience of the co-operative field staff, the nature and quality of education received by members of co-operatives.

Further investigation showed that most of the staff did not update their knowledge after completing their formal educational courses in co-operatives. The finding also showed that the field staff possesses considerable experience on the job. It was also revealed that the amount of co-operative field’s staff did not complain at all about location of societies nor did they complain of inaccessibility of such location. This should be because these societies were all within the Enugu metropolis.

However, the entire field staff sampled complained of inadequate transport allowance. This was closely followed by the complaint about lack of transport facilities. By lack of transport facility it doesn’t mean lack of public transport facility but transport facilities made available by the ministry of commerce and industry.

It was also revealed that co-operative education programmes carried out in many co-operative societies were poorly funded. All the societies funded their education programme through the use of statutory reserve on co-operative education.

It was discovered also that language was not a major barrier to co-operative education. This is because most of the members understand English language while illiterate members where present, the field staff had to use vernacular. The co-operative inspectors sampled used both English and vernacular in educating their members. From the above discussion, it is clear to see that most of the problems of co-operative fields staff hinged on inadequate financial incentives and lack of materials.

Information collected showed that marked difference exists between literature and illiterate members of co-operative societies. There was a unanimous agreement among co-operative fields staff that literate members cope better with co-operative education programme.

It was also a unanimous agreement that previous knowledge of the principles and working of co-operative societies enhance the ability to cope with co-operative education being given in the co-operative societies.

Since the nature of the job of the co-operative field staff requires some form of teaching, dealing with adults, dealing with people in a group and giving promotional education to the general public, it is required that they should have some specialized training in courses that would help them to carry out their job with ease and efficiency.

CONCLUSION

Most co-operative field staff in Enugu urban possesses adequate general academic qualification. Co-operative field staff lack specialized training in such courses as teaching, psychology and human relations which are relevant to their type of job. Most co-operative field staff, in their education programmes, pay much attention to emphasizing the benefits given from co-operative while they place least emphasis on teaching provision of the co-operative law. Moderate emphasis is placed on teaching, the meaning principles, duties of members, running of co-operative societies and the provisions of the society’s bye-laws. Co-operative societies depend largely on co-operative field staff for their co-operative education. About half of the societies in Enugu Urban are under visited by co-operative field staff. Most co-operative in Enugu urban do not posses copies of the co-operative law majority of those who do, do not study the provisions of the law. There are shortages of literature in co-operatives and the available ones are not written in Vernacular.

REFERENCES