

HEALTH EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY

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Abstract

One of the fundamental concerns in life is that of a solid means of livelihood. Employability refers to our chances of getting employment At some point in time, everybody has to consider his possibilities of finding a new job, -whether it is when he first enters the labour market or later in life, when changing jobs or transitioning from or non work activity like studies or unemployment. This paper intends to look into the prospects and chances of a specialist in health education to be gainfully employed in the labour market. Opportunities that exists in the employment force for a specialist in health education include among others, being a health educator, dietician, nutritionist, school counselor. It is suggested that contents of health education curriculum should be reviewed periodically to meet the needs of the changing society.

Introduction

Health of every individual is as good as that of the community which he/she belongs. This is because it is a very vital aspect in nation building. Adeniju (1996) observed that health promotes a very sound and encouraging national economy and keeps up steady manpower output. The National Economic Empowerment and Development strategy (NEEDS) (2005) stated that the goal of the NEEDS health component is to improve the health status of Nigerian in order to reduce poverty. A carefully planned health of Nigerian can be improved and maintained Mba (2009) quoted Olayinka and Akinjinka (2004) saying "Health Education as a course is defined as the principle by which individuals and groups of people learn to behave in the most conducive way to the promotion, maintenance or restoration of health. It aims to develop in them a sense of responsibility for health conditions for themselves as individuals, members of families and community.

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Health Education

Udoh (1996) defined health education as the process of providing information a person can utilize to enhance his health status. He further stated that health education includes ensuring that attitudes of the recipients so as to bring about modification or change in behaviour relating to the individual's health as well as that of the family and his community. Asikhia and Blavo (2007) also see health as a condition, state or quality of the whole individual that enables him carry on his daily activities that are both obligatory as well as nonobligatory. Ironically, health education is directed towards all activities carried out and all efforts made to persuade and encourage behaviours that promote good health and discourage behaviours which are negative to good health.

Health education is the platform through which people acquire skills and means of coping with health issues. Harvey (2001) defined health education as the persuasive methods used to encourage people, either individually or collectively. To adopt lifestyles that educators believe will improve health and to reject habits regarded as harmful to health or likely to shorten life expectancy. The term is also used in a broader sense to include instruction about health issues.

Health Education And Employability

Employability has been defined in

different ways by different authors. Yorke (2004) defined employability as a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. This paper is limited to this definition because of the fact that people required great awareness of the links between health and employability with a view to exploring with health care staff ways of incorporating it into practice for the benefit of their clients and to promote employability. Babatunde and Adeniyi (2005) health education motivates the individual to take information and do something with it, to keep oneself healthy by avoiding actions that are harmful and by forming habits that are beneficial. They further stated that health education certainly transcends information level as it extends to application of skills gained.

Employability refers in a general way to our chances of getting employment. Everybody at some point has to consider their possibilities of finding a new job whether it is when they first enter the labour market or later in life, when changing jobs or transitioning from non-work activity, like studies or unemployment.

Although there is no consensus on how employability should be viewed, it could

said in a general view point, that it reflects people's possibilities of acquiring employment. The phenomenon of employability has been documented in different contents, such as in research studies investigation how graduate students should enter the labour market (Hervey, 2001, Knight and Yorke, 2004). How to get the unemployed back to work (Finn, 2000; MCardle, waters, Briscoe and Hall, 2007), or how to best establish the disabled in the labour market (Brincout and Benthey, 2000). Recently, employability has been increasingly used in the context of how employed people are to stay competition in the labour marker (Forrier and Sels, 2003; Fugate Kiniki and Ashforth, 2004; Garsten, 2004).

It goes without argument that health education offers a lot of opportunities for an individual to influence and impact upon the lives of people. As "health educator one can work as a dietitian, nutritionist, school counselor, provide medical and public health educator, you promote a healthy lifestyle within the school or community in order to help prevent disease or illness because of poor habits in this case, the benefits of exercise, good nutrition and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and effects of drugs, alcohol used and smoking should be stressed.

As social worker, you can create and implement programmes that influence the community by providing important

information and resources that assist with the improvement of an individual's mental and physical well being.

A career in health education offers numerous opportunities to work, teach and guide individuals in various setting including non-profit health care, social work, governmental and private organizations.

Health Counselor

Health counseling is a method of approaching psychological difficulties in adjustment that aims to help the client work out his own problems. Jember (2009) submitted that the work of the health counselor is to listen sympathetically, attempting to identify with the client, tries to clarify current problems, and sometimes gives advice. Sometimes a health counselor may delve into genetic counseling which involves the procedure by which patients and their families are given advice about the nature and consequences of inherited disorders, the possibilities of becoming affected or having affected children, and the various options that are available to them for the prevention, diagnosis and management of such conditions.

Dietitians

A diet is the mixture of foods that a person eats. A dietician, according to Jember (2009) should emphasize about a balanced diet which contains the correct proportions of all the

nutrients, that is, vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre as well as water, carbohydrates and fats.

Health Educator

The focus of a health educator is health promotion. This, according to Gazier (2000) is a program of surveillance planned on a community basis to maintain the best possible health and quality of life of the members of that community both collectively and individually. The health educator's responsibility include to blend such programs as health education, immunization, screening test, with environmental monitoring of the atmosphere, housing, and water and food supplies as well as occupational hazards.

Conclusion

Health education plays a vital role towards improving the health status of Nigerians. This is justified in this paper with the facts that it encompasses areas necessary for healthy living. It is therefore a subject that everybody in every profession needs to acquire health information to enable him to function well in his profession.

Recommendations

1. Health education should be included in the plan of every organization that wish participate in the entrepreneurship.
2. Health education should be a compulsory subject in schools.

3. Contents in health education should be reviewed periodically to meet the changing society.
4. All relevant agencies should accept health education and employ professionals to handle it.

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