

PERCEPTION OF THE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ON CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN EKITI STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated perception of public secondary school teachers on curriculum implementation in Ekiti State. It adopted the descriptive research of the survey type. The population consisted of secondary school teachers. The sample was made up of 480 teachers selected across the 16 local government areas of the state. Self-designed instrument tagged Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (CIQ) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument which was validated by research experts had a reliability coefficient of 0.74 using test-retest method of reliability. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that poor monitoring/supervision, poor teacher training institutions, and non-involvement of teachers in curriculum development were the most occurring problems. The study also revealed regular in-service training and adequate supervision as probable solutions to the problems of curriculum implementation. It was recommended that all the stakeholders should live up to expectations in terms of monitoring strategies for effective implementation of curriculum in Nigeria.

Keywords: Perception of Teachers, Curriculum Implementation, Public secondary schools, Ekiti state

Introduction

Issues of curriculum implementation represent fundamental challenge to policy administration in Nigeria. Because no matter how a curriculum is developed with ideal dimensions, if it is not applicable, then it cannot be said is effective. For this reason, an ideal curriculum will only achieve its objectives if it is implemented effectively. (Gamze, Tugba, Kursat and Esra, 2017). Therefore, the curriculum implementers need to be trained on implementation. It has been observed that the challenges facing the

different levels of educational system in Nigeria are not on the formulation of policy but the implementation. Once a policy has been chosen, planning for policy implementation should begin immediately (Ayodele and Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2011). Successful implementation of curriculum requires understanding the roles of individuals both inside and outside the system. The major problem militating against the Nigerian education industry is how to implement the well planned curriculum. Onyeachu (2008) maintained that no matter how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designed and documented, implementation is important. Also, Odey and Opoh (2015) opined that a curriculum may be beautifully planned but will be of no relevant if it is not implemented. It has been observed that, Nigeria is a country where beautifully and standard curricular have been planned, howbeit failed to produce the intended output as a result of poor implementation. No matter how well developed a curriculum is, it will not achieve its objectives unless teachers who put curriculum into practice fulfill their tasks efficiently (Guroi, 2004).

Teachers who play a major role on curriculum implementation process have the responsibility to practice developed curriculum in accordance with its principles. There are various problems of curriculum implementation, but teachers are primary elements giving feedback about any developed curriculum. Because, teachers are expected to control the curriculum at the implementation levels by mastering the principles of teaching, objectives, contents, teaching-learning approaches and process of curriculum evaluation.

Curriculum development process begins in the classroom, therefore teaching's role as curriculum developer includes implementing designed curricular in the classroom. Teachers are the most important factor in curriculum development. Just as the curriculum planners works primarily, so too the teacher works primarily in both instruction and curriculum. Oliva (2001) stated that teachers and curriculum specialist all engage in activities to improve both curriculum and instruction. In that case, it can be inferred that their roles are similar. According to Oliva (2001), teachers and curriculum specialists are one and the same person. However, in the same vein, Alsubaie (2016) maintained that if another party has already developed the curriculum, the teachers have to make an effort to know and

understand it. He stressed further so, teachers should be involved in curriculum development.

Implementation simply means process of putting into action packed ideas or policy into reality. According to Odey and Opoh (2015), implementation is the moving force of any plan without which a plan is only good wish on intention. It is therefore the blue-print or instrument by which school seeks to translate the hope and value of the society in which it operates into concretes reality. Curriculum is a programme which is made up of three components programme of studies, programme of activities and programme of guidance (Offorma, 2005).

Curriculum implementation had been variously defined. Okebukola (2004) described curriculum implementation as the translation of the objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. Lazarus and Baraka (2015) also defined curriculum implementation as the act of working out the plans and suggestions that have been made by curriculum specialists and subject experts in a classroom or school setting. Teachers have been seen as the main curriculum implementers, while at the same time students, parents, school administrators can be directly or indirectly involved in the implementation process.

Implementing the curriculum does not focus on the actual use, but also on the attitudes of those who implement it. There are several models of curriculum implementation, but for the purpose of this work ORC model as explained by Solomon (2019) is applicable. The "ORC" stands for Overcoming Resistance to Change. The model rests on the assumption that the success or failure of curriculum implementation primarily depends on the impact the developer make on the users of curriculum. If change is desired, then people's misgivings,, their misapprehensions, or other related factors must be addressed. According to Alsubaie (2016), without doubt, the most important person in the curriculum implementation process is the teacher. Teachers are expected to follow the prescribed syllabus exactly and make sure that they do not miss any topic/component. It seems most teachers in secondary schools could not interpret the content in the curriculum. Teachers implement personalized variations of the prescribed curriculum due to poor abilities, therefore managerial approach is required. The principal is the curriculum leader who develops the schools vision of a quality curriculum. He is to monitor and assist in curriculum implementation.

The achievement of objectives of any level of education depends largely on effective implementation of its planned programme (Ali and Ajibola, 2015). It has been observed that many factors constitute problems of curriculum implementation which includes: non-involvement of teachers in curriculum development, inadequate funding, scarcity of qualified subject teachers, lack of instructional materials, lack of dedication on the part of the teachers, interest attitude and satisfaction as well as wrong application of curriculum designed at the level of classroom environment. Adeleke (2007) also observed that education sector in Nigeria has suffered the plight of inadequate instructional materials, inadequate qualified teacher, poor funding syndrome, inadequate instructional facilities and lack of motivation among others. The end product of this is the badly brought up of secondary school learners who are deficient academically. George (2018) penned that full implementation takes place when learners acquire the planned skills, attitudes and ideas which are aimed to enable them effectively and optimally in the society. Izuagba and Atuobi (2009) noted that the outcome of this is the bred of graduates of higher institution who are found to be grossly deficient in practical and professional competencies, lack of professionalization of teaching by the Teachers Registration Council (TRC) and inadequately teacher training institutions. Despite the importance attached to the role of curriculum in the national philosophy of Nigerian educational system, there are problems in the implementation of this laudable educational blue-print. Odey and Opoh (2015) emphasised that many laudable goals of the curriculum have failed to pass the planning stage of the curriculum due to faulty implementation.

It has been observed that under funding creates a lot of implications on the implementation of curriculum in institutions. It seems the economy of a nation determines the effectiveness of curriculum designed. It has been observed that due to increase in manpower in the education sector, the highest percentage of money allocated to education is absorbed by salaries while little percentage is left for teaching materials, training of teachers and monitoring for the smooth curriculum implementation. In the absence of teaching and learning materials, the teaching and learning processes could be hampered and if the designated officers do not go out to evaluate, it could be difficult to know whether the curriculum is being effectively

implemented or not. To this end, curriculum implementation as perceived by the secondary school teachers in Ekiti State is being examined in this paper.

Purpose of the study

The study examined the perceptions of the public secondary school teacher on curriculum implementation. The study examined what teachers perceived about the causes of the problems of curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Ekiti State. The study also examined the ways forward for the perceived problems.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of teachers on the problem of curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Ekiti State?
2. What are the causes of the problems perceived by the teachers on the curriculum implementation?
3. What are the solutions to the perceived problems?

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research of the survey type. The population consisted of all secondary school teachers in Ekiti State. The sample was however made up of 480 teachers. Ten (10) teachers were selected from 48 secondary schools across the 16 local government areas in the state using simple random sampling technique. A Self-designed instrument titled "Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire" (CIQ) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by research experts in Educational Management and in Tests and Measurement departments in Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti. Test-retest method of reliability was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained. Meanwhile, 460 copies of the questionnaire were eventually retrieved from the respondents making a total of 95.8% return rate. The data for the study were analyzed descriptively. The descriptive statistics used include frequency count and percentages.

Findings and Discussion

The results of the study were presented on tables 1-3.

Descriptive Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the perception of teachers on the problems of curriculum implementation in Ekiti State?

To answer research question one, responses on items in section B of "CIQ" were used, and the result was presented on table 1.

Table 1: Perception of teachers on the problem of curriculum implementation

S/N	Problems	Frequency		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Faulty monitoring/supervision of implementation process to ensure quality control	368	92	80%	20%
2	Poor teacher training institutions	368	92	80%	20%
3	Non-involvement of teachers in curriculum development	368	92	80%	20%
4	Emphasis of teachers in seminars and workshops as basis for promotion	350	110	76.09%	23.91%
5	Poor preparation of scheme of work and lesson note from the curriculum	345	115	75%	25%
6	Weak quality of human and material resources	345	115	75%	25%
7	Lack of sufficient finance	345	115	75%	25%
8	Poor knowledge of teachers to interpret the curriculum contents	345	115	75%	25%
9	Excess workload due to over populated class size	322	138	70%	30%
10	The curriculum is not	322	138	70%	30%

	plainly spelt out				
11	Lack of intrinsic motivation of teachers.	276	184	60%	40%
12	Lack of control of recruitment into teaching	276	184	60%	40%
13	Problems of content delivery and wrong use of teaching method	299	184	60%	40%
14	Inadequate time to cover the curriculum	207	253	45%	55%
15	Emphasis of test on teachers as criteria for promotion	184	276	40%	60%

Table 1 presents the perception of teachers on the problems of curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Ekiti State. The table revealed items with high percentages (70%-80%) that constitutes major problems of curriculum implementation. The implication of this result was that items with higher percentage constituted serious problems of curriculum implementation than items with percentage.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of poor implementation of curriculum as perceived by the teachers?

To answer research question two, responses on items in section C of the "CIQ" were used, and the result was presented on table 2.

Table 2: Teachers' perceived causes of curriculum implementation

S/N	Causes	Frequency		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	inability of government to train teachers in curriculum implementation	450	10	97.83%	2.17%
2	lack of extrinsic motivation of teachers	450	10	97.83%	2.17%
3	lack of supervisory strategy	445	15	96.74%	3.26%
4	poor remuneration of teachers	375	85	81.52%	18.48%
5	teacher compromise of their teaching responsibility due to alternative sources of living	364	96	79.13%	20.87%
6	laxity on the part of some teachers	364	96	79.13%	20.87%
7	inadequate intrinsic motivation of	350	110	76.09%	23.91%

	teachers				
8	constant strike action	336	124	73.04%	26.96%
9	lack of competencies of some teachers	336	124	73.04%	26.96%
10	constant change of government	330	130	71.74%	28.26%
11	poor funding	318	142	69.13%	30.87%
12	lack of control on admission	299	161	65%	35%
13	lack of support from the communities	207	253	45%	55%

Table 2 presents the perception of teachers on the causes of the problems of curriculum implementation. The result revealed items with high percentages (65%-98%) as major causes of curriculum implementation. The implication of this result was that items with high percentage constitute major causes of poor curriculum implementation than items with low percentage.

Research Question 3: What are the solutions to the problems of curriculum implementation?

To answer this research question, response on items in section D of the "CIQ" were used, the result was presented on table 3.

Table 3: Perception of teachers on solutions to the problems of curriculum implementation

S/N	Solutions	Frequency		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Regular in-service retraining programmes for teachers	457	03	99.35%	0.65%
2	Adequate supervision of curriculum implementation	446	14	96.96%	3.04%
3	Provision of more qualified teachers	391	69	85%	15%
4	Appointment of teachers should be based on merit	373	87	81.09%	18.91%
5	Adequate funding	368	92	80%	20%
6	Improvement on teachers remuneration	368	92	80%	20%
7	Curriculum should be constantly reviewed to meet the taste of times	368	92	80%	20%

8	Self-efficacy of teachers as basis for their promotion	359	101	78.04%	21.96%
9	Normal school/class size should be maintained	322	138	70%	30%
10	School leaders should assist teachers in the area of curriculum planning	212	248	46.09%	53.91%
11	Teachers' promotion should be determined based on students rating	207	253	45%	55%

Table 3 presents the solutions to the problem of curriculum implementation. The result revealed items with high percentages (70%-99%) as major solutions to problems of curriculum implementation. The implication of this result was that items with high percentage constitute major solutions to poor curriculum implementation than items with low percentage.

Discussion

The study revealed that majority of the items on table 1 with high percentages (65%-80%) constitutes major problems of curriculum implementation. This agreed with George (2018), who penned that it's advised to consider every possible factor that can affect curriculum implementation in order to develop effective curriculum for education. The result revealed poor monitoring/supervision of implementation process with high percentage as major problem. This finding aligned with the findings of George (2018), that implementation of curriculum is not possible without supervisory functions provided by the government. Non-involvement of teachers in curriculum development also found as major problem. This was supported by Demirel (2007) that teachers have responsibilities at curriculum development process such as having up-to-date knowledge and positive attitude related to curriculum development process, participating to the works on preparing every material that will be used in the class. Moreover, poor teacher training institutions, emphasis of teachers in seminars and workshops were found as problem of curriculum implementation. This was supported by Everard and Morris (1990) that initial teacher

education training cannot provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for a life time of teaching.

The finding also revealed major solutions to problem of curriculum implementation with high percentages (70%-99%). Regular in-service retraining programmes for teachers as solution to the problem of curriculum implementation was revealed. Gamze, Tugba and Kursat (2017) suggested that prospective teachers and in-service teachers are given chance to participate in the projects on curriculum development at each level of education. The finding also agreed with the findings of Erturk (1994) and Tasdemir (2003) so teachers as curriculum implementers have to train on implemented curriculum's principles, implementation approaches, objectives, evaluation and technical competencies. Moreover, adequate supervision was revealed as one of major solutions to poor curriculum implementation. This finding was in line with the finding of George (2018) that implementation of curriculum is not possible without supervisory functions provided by the government. Nompumelelo (2016) also supported that during supervisory discussion, educators also have opportunity to talk to the instructional leader about the problems they encounter in teaching practice.

Conclusion

Curriculum management and implementation is a critical aspect in ensuring that effective teaching and learning take place. Effective implementation of curriculum cannot be guaranteed where there are numerous problems being faced by the implementers. Hence, such problems should be addressed by the stakeholders

Recommendations

- All the education stakeholders have to come together as a team for curriculum implementation to be effective.
- Teacher training institutions in Nigeria should be of more practical than theory.
- At the implementation stage proper monitoring strategies right from the heads of department should be emphasized.
- When a new curriculum is designed, teachers as curriculum implementers' inputs should be sought.

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