CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The Relevance of education in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Globally, education is considered as a human right that should be accorded to all. This is the reason why a lot of international human right bodies consider education as a fundamental human right. This work covers the various challenges faced by the education sector of the economy and prospects in relation to curriculum development. The causes of this challenges, effects on the nation and the prospects has also been studied. Lack of governmental support, lack of knowledge and other similar factors have been known to pose a major problem to curriculum development. Effective strategies have been outlined to ensure long lasting prospects in the educational sector as curriculum is being developed.

Key words: Curriculum development, Education, Challenges.

The importance of Curriculum development in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. There are several controversies of curriculum development process. Tanner and Tanner (1975) definition of curriculum has been generally accepted as it relates to curriculum development processes. They defined curriculum as the planned and guided experiences and intended learning outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school for the learner's continuous and wilful growth in personal and social competence. Curriculum development has helped tremendously in solving issues and also render solution to learners.

Curriculum existed with the advent of western civilization from the colonial administration of the country. In Nigeria, the school curriculum in the past was designed to train professionals in the field of medicine, engineering, law and accountancy.

wever, over the years, new occupations have emerged that has led to the expansion of curriculum to provide wider interest.
ter Independence, remarkable changes were made such as the establishment of West rican Examination Council (WAEC) to replace the London matriculation board, the roduction of General Studies (GS) and the introduction of Unity School otherwise own as federal government colleges. Also in 1977, Universal Primary Education PE) scheme was introduced for all children of school age in the country and to guide educational practices in the country. This however, was revised in 1981 leading to the ablishment of a new educational system known as the 6-3-3-4 system. This gained l implementation within 1984 - 1986 (Esu, Enkoha and Umoren, 2009).

challenges of Curriculum Development in Nigeria
is has been split into three broad areas namely;
Curriculum planning and development
Curriculum implementation
Evaluation and supervision

Curriculum planning and development. According to (Ivowi 2009), the lowing are the major challenges faced in curriculum planning and development.
Non participation of teachers in curriculum planning: Edem and Okon (1998) stated that a teacher takes part in the interaction with one or more students for the pose of affecting the students positively. The teacher plays a special role in the gress educational planning in the nation and should actively partake in the planning l development of the curriculum. According to (Afe et al, 2008) "the teacher is an ariable resource in the school system. Furthermore, (Esu et al, 2006), "it should be ed that until teachers are allowed to fully participate in the curriculum development cess, the curriculum, no matter how planned, is likely to be misinterpreted" (Esu et 2006).

Lack of money: Money is highly needed in the curriculum development cess. It is capital intensive when assembling a curriculum change team, to produce a ft of curriculum content and process it through all the stages for final approval by the E. Organising workshops, seminars for teachers who are the pioneers of any curriculum development process needs funding.
rthermore, budgetary allocation to education falls below the 26% as recommended by led Nations Education scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO) standard. cording to (Sturvus, 2012), budgetary sum of N295.3 trillion representing 6.4% of the lget was allocated to education in 2010.

Non completion of curriculum development stages: These are lapses on the t of the government in completing the required stages of curriculum development.

(Ivowi 2009) stated that the massive testing of curriculum materials before being developed were abandoned from 1985 till date. By this act, the essence of pilot schools for testing of curriculum materials was lost thus causing a major setback to curriculum development.

iv.   Lack of support from the government: Many times, Government take decisions without involving teachers and curriculum experts, this has affected the standards, in form of existing knowledge, values, attitudes and skills.

Other Challenges of Curriculum Development
Below are some other challenges of curriculum development

i.   Divided definitions of curriculum development: Curriculum development has divided definitions. Various schools of thought view curriculum in different ways. They are; (i) The traditionalists and (ii) The progressive
The traditionalists view the curriculum as a body of subjects planned for students while the progressive view curriculum as the sum total of all the planned and guided learning experience an individual encounters under the guidance of a school. From the above, it shows that when the curriculum development is to take place, there will be two dimensions. Furthermore, there are still divisions with these schools of thoughts. For instance, the traditionalist believe that knowledge is the truth and truth is universal, therefore, the curriculum should be same everywhere. Their curriculum consisted of studies such as reading, grammar, logic and mathematics. The essentialists there are certain essential that all men should know if they are to be considered educated. Their curriculum consists of the mother tongue, study of grammar, literature, writing, mathematics and foreign language. The discipline doctrine advocates believe that curriculum is a guided process of inquiry that gives right to established discipline. The various views on the definition of curriculum poses a problem for curriculum development as there is no consensus in the definition of curriculum.

ii.   No clear philosophy: Nigeria as a country lacks a clear cut philosophy of education because it lacks political ideology, this then makes it difficult for a national philosophy to be formulated that would give direction to education. The curriculum developed is not relevant to Nigeria as it does not relate with works and life in the society as students still come to schools looking for employment, because the education given to them is not useful to Nigerian environment (Mango, 2008).

iii.

iv.   Change in policies: Another factor that affects curriculum development is the frequent changes in educational policies. We had the Universal Primary Education (UPE) which was launched in 1976 to ensure that every child of school age was enrolled in school. The scheme estimated a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:35. Provisions were made for

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teachers but this fell below the target because pupil enrolment increased dously. The number of teachers and pupils in Nigeria that year (1976) was 0 and 3.2 million respectively (Odigie, 2006).

3-3-4 system of education whose objective was to ensure that students who are pable of going to senior secondary branched off for vocational and technical ion did not achieve its stated objectives as all students moved on to the senior ary schools. Rather than evaluate to find out possible causes of failure of the , there was another change in policy which brought about the Universal Basic ion that was launched in September 1999 by General Olusegun Obasanjo. Over ars, Nigeria had several changes ranging from the 6-5-4 system to the 6-3-3-4 , and presently 9-3-4 system. These numerous programs have not fully achieved at objectives and when a shortfall is discovered instead of evolving the curriculum s to ensure it works, a new curriculum rather developed.

Knowledge depreciation: Due to the development of science and technology, it e more tasking for the curriculum development process as knowledge becomes to quickly hence the need for constant review for the curriculum, the method and als of instruction. Emergent health issues and peace issues respectively.

Notion of crisis: Most curriculum development process do not occur until there oblems in educational system. People now become sensitized that the educational i is no longer meeting the needs of individual and the society at large (Esu *etal,*

Curriculum development time frame: It is difficult to develop curriculum ent in a school district due to limited time available to the teachers. You can work number of teachers during the summer and you can develop a quality curriculum u can only have input of limited number of teachers. Lack of time to work with rs passes a problem to curriculum development (Wiles, 2009).

Problems of Curriculum Implementation: There is a great disparity between is formulated by government and the actual implementation of these policies. makers often vary from policy implementers, hence, this gap becomes a problem rse of implementation. This stage can be referred to as activation/delivery stage in alum process. With the introduction of the Universal Basic Education, education is be free and compulsory. At present in Rivers State, students are still made to pay ation fees before being admitted. There are also payment of examination fees and use of workbooks from teachers, if the Universal Basic Education (UBE) is not y monitored it might go the way of other policies in the past.

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i. **Lack of trained facilitators:** It is a waste of time and resources to develop curriculum materials, if adequate training is not provided for the facilitators, in this case the teachers who are to implement it. Hence, the process of curriculum development will be hampered.

ii. **Lack of instructional materials:** This is another implementation issue in Nigeria education curriculum. Oneachu (2011) describes instructional materials as alternative channels of communication which a teacher can use to compress information and make them more vivid to his learners. This is seriously lacking in our school system.

iii. **Non-application of Information and communication technology (ICT) in Learning:** Inability to apply ICT in learning school subjects is one of the problems militating against effective implementation of curriculum in Nigeria. The inability of the government to develop special kits that would aid the content delivery process, tools and apparatus for teaching and learning of science and technology were not developed to the prototype stage and this led to the failure of tools being produced massively to enhance the teaching and learning process.

3. **Problems of Evaluation and Supervision:**
i. The greatest problem of education the world over is that of responsibility and control. According to Adeyinka (2008), "As a result of the prevalence of multiple system of education in the country, there is the problem of diversification and control. Who controls what levels of education? Most times, people do not have the requisite skills to ensure that activities in schools are carried out in the most effective and efficient way possible. Some of which are the ability to find and interpret information and also communicate with people. Furthermore, people do shy away from evaluation because it exposes the weakness of the organization.

ii. **Unstable subject syllabuses:** There are many examination bodies in Nigeria and there is need for schools and colleges to meet the requirement of the examining bodies. The school subject syllabuses are changed or modified regularly. This poses a major problem to curriculum evaluation and supervision.

Prospect for Curriculum Development
1. The use of mid mapping strategy as a brain storming exercise to enable students, teachers and curriculum experts to adopt a deeper level of learning. (Ferson, 2004:
2. It will be good for curriculum developers to have an overview or overall picture of the curriculum process so they can develop the curriculum effectively.
3. The numbers of pilot schools should be increased and fully utilized in order for the trial testing in curriculum development that has been abandoned for a long period to be reactivated.

For any new change in curriculum development, there should be regular annual vacation courses for school teachers to get them acquainted to the philosophy, objectives, content and delivery method of project materials and also expose them to techniques in education.

Benchmark minimum Academic standards should be used to grade educational institutions and foster cooperation among them to ensure quality assurance all the time. Mandatory continuing professional development (MCPD). There is provision in National Policy on Education (2004) relating to the continuous training of teachers for profound competence against set standards. This will avail the teachers the opportunity to develop and demonstrate instructors.

Use of information technology for teaching and learning; ICT programmes have been incorporated in all teachers training programmes. These will boost the curriculum implementation when fully harnessed. Furthermore, technology should be used in the curriculum development process to reduce the time taken to develop the curriculum. In using the electronic process, materials are developed and distributed on information data base and made accessible to stakeholders to go through and make meeting times and stakeholders. Grey areas are also involved rts. This reduces the meeting times and stakeholders. Grey areas are also involved ig conference call.

nclusion

s paper highlighted the challenges of curriculum development in Nigeria and its aspects. Having known some of these challenges associated with curriculum elopment, there is need for stakeholders to play their part in order to have functional cational system that will meet the needs of the society.

ommendations

Government and other private sectors should be put in more effort and resources wards the development of curriculum education;

Education and the re-orientation of teachers, parents and students on the need to acquainted with the knowledge of curriculum studies and development;

More vocational and technical education centres where curriculum is taught uld be established and the few existing ones should be equipped and staffed;

An independent inspectorate committee should be put in place to regularly nitor curriculum development activities in schools as the existing inspectorate unit is ffective and

Qualitative and affordable education should be made available for all.

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