

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS OF TEACHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM EVALUATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

There is no gainsaying that curriculum evaluation as a process involves much more than the concept of evaluation. It is a maintenance process in that it helps to envisage the future of curriculum development. It provides future basic data that serves as a control signal to the overall process of curriculum development and implementation. The need for curriculum evaluation is therefore to make data available for continuous feedback and decision making. In this paper, effort was geared towards taking a critical analysis of the problems that has bedeviled teacher and tertiary education curriculum evaluation in Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that all academic staff of tertiary institutions be adequately trained to meet up with the challenges of the 21st century globalized world, adequate funding of tertiary institutions and proper regulation of programmes by Nigerian University Commission (NUC) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCE).

Key Words: *Problems, Teacher Education, Tertiary Education and Curriculum Evaluation.*

INTRODUCTION:

There is no gainsaying the fact that the ultimate realization of any set of aims for education depends on the teacher. He is responsible for translating policy into action and principles into practice in his classroom interaction with his students. The ability to deliver the lessons properly depends to a great extent on the skills and competencies of the teacher. Effective learning results from effective teaching. Learning will result from teaching and student's achievement is the keyword to justify this (Adetula, 1993). Teachers are the hub of any education system. Teachers must be accountable for what goes on in education. If students are expected to know more and be able to apply their knowledge skillfully, then teachers must be models of such teaching. That is to say that high quality teacher is a key ingredient in curriculum implementation and evaluation.

Therefore, in this work, effort was geared towards an analysis of the problems of teacher and tertiary education curriculum evaluation in Nigeria. Suggestions and recommendations were also made.

CURRICULUM EVALUATION:

According to Esu, Enukeoha and Umoren (1998), curriculum evaluation as a process involves much more than the concept of evaluation. It is the maintenance process in that it helps to envisage the future for curriculum development. It provides future basic data that serves as a control signal to the overall process of curriculum development and implementation. In this case the signal shows whether the mechanism of curriculum development is functioning well or not. It is the process whereby a systematic and scientific approach is used to assess the strength and weakness of a curriculum. It has its major objective of estimating whether learning experiences provided in the school curriculum are meeting the set goals and objectives in bringing about socially desirable development among students.

Similarly, Ndubisi (1994), opined that curriculum evaluation goes beyond the general concept of evaluation. It employs systematic and scientific methodology. It utilizes modern technologies and various human expertises to arrive at best alternatives in education.

In the light of the above, curriculum evaluation is seen as a continuous process which may look for the diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, or an identification of the results of instruction, or a recognition of the need for teacher education, or the selection of a new basis for changing educational policies.

TERTIARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR CURRICULA:

Tertiary education is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnic, Monotechnics, including those institutions offering correspondence courses (FRN, 2004). Curriculum for any level goes inline with the goals of education for that level. In Nigeria, the goals of tertiary level of education, as indicated by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) are as follows:

- a) to contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
- b) to develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
- c) to develop the intellectual capability of the individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- d) to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self reliant and useful members of the society;

- e) to promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
- f) to forge and cement National unity; and international understanding and interaction(p36).

According to the National Policy on Education (2004), the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions shall pursue the stated goals through:

- a) teaching;
- b) research and development;
- c) virile staff development programmes;
- d) generation and dissemination of knowledge;
- e) a variety of modes of programmes including full time, part time, block release, day release, sandwich, etc.
- f) access to training funds such as those provided by the industrial training fund (ITF);
- g) students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)
- h) maintenance of minimum educational standards through appropriate agencies;
- i) inter-institutional co-operation;
- j) dedicated services to the community through extra mural and extension services(pp36-37).

Higher education curricula are highly diversified to encompass almost everything that could be studied. Nigerian higher educational institutions include (i) Universities (ii) Colleges/institute of technology which include polytechnics and Monotechnics.

NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR CURRICULA GOALS:

Universities are mostly research institutions which are empowered to teach, develop high manpower and equip the learners with the necessary skills for successful living. In line with this the curriculum for university education is geared towards national development and sustenance of the individual in day to day useful living. The goals of the curriculum for university education can be achieved according to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) through:

- a) intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation;
- b) making professional course contents to reflect our national requirements;

- c) Making all students, as part of general programme of all round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge and nationalism (p38).

NIGERIA COLLEGES/INSTITUTES OF EDUCATION AND THEIR CURRICULUM GOALS:

Colleges/institutes of education may be run by the universities or they may be autonomous in respect of their curricula and other programmes. They include those institutions that produce teachers that are considered within the context of professionalization. Such institutions include:

- a) Colleges of education
- b) Faculties of education
- c) institutes of education
- d) national teachers institute
- e) schools of education in the polytechnics
- f) Other similar institutions.

The curriculum of such institutions according to National policy on education (FRN, 2004) includes the following:

- a) production of highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
- b) encouragement to further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- c) helping teachers to fit into social life of the community and society at large and enhance their commitment to rational goals;
- d) provision of the teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments as well as making them adaptable to changing situations ;
- e) enhancing teacher's commitment to the teaching professions.

PROBLEMS OF TEACHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM EVALUATION:

According to Nnachi (2009), the goals of teacher and tertiary education in Nigeria are quite sound, lofty and standard and appear to be among the best in the contemporary world. These

goals are incorporated into the curricula of the tertiary and teacher education institutions. By means of the curriculum, the objectives are meant to be realized and the goals attained. But this is far-fetched as the educational system has been bedeviled by several problems some of which are:

i. Lack of effective supervision

The nature of tertiary level of education makes it difficult for effective curriculum supervision. Moreover, there is greater degree of academic freedom than the lower levels of education. Despite this, academic staff continues to 'lament' for overload of work, causing stress and restlessness. When there are many researches to carry out, many students to teach, many scripts to mark and many research papers to write, all within a short time, the possibilities of proper curriculum implementation/evaluation becomes very lean. Therefore the curricula for the teacher and tertiary level of Nigerian education could look extra-ordinary, good, lofty, fantastic and commendable but the problem could be in the implementation and evaluation (Nnachi, 2009).

ii. Lack of professionally trained teachers:

According to Jegede (2007), the quality of teachers in Nigerian schools is poor. Many of them hardly update their knowledge and a good number of them are computer illiterate. Similarly, Obi (2010) opined that teacher educators and teachers do not attain the expected level of competence in their subject areas. This is because some of these teachers were badly taught, have been inadequately trained many years ago and need to be retrained. It is believed that if a teacher is well trained he will be able to manipulate the available means to effectively train the students under his care. The students depend on the teacher on what to learn and how to learn it. As pointed by Ivowi (1999) teaching must be handled by well trained and motivated persons with academic and professional competencies which will match the society's expectations.

iii. Quality assurance and internal efficiency

According to Durosaro (2006), the academic and emotional qualities of intending teachers for training are crucial for quality assurance and internal efficiency for professionalism in teaching in the future. Candidates who usually apply to higher institutions for teacher education in Nigeria are those who have been denied admission or are basically unqualified for admission. The International Labour Organization (ILO) recommends that teachers should be selected on the

basis of moral, intellectual and physical qualities. (Obi, 2010). Yet in most of the Nigerian universities, colleges of education and polytechnics, student's admission are usually based on obtaining the minimum academic requirements while other requirements such as emotional stability, physical uprightness and communication proficiencies are hardly given consideration. In addition to the above, the low quality of teachers produced through in-service training by N.T.I is a serious challenge to teacher and tertiary education.

iv. Professionalization of Teaching

Teaching in Nigeria is yet to be regarded as a profession in the true sense of the word (Obi, 2010). This is because a large number of untrained and uncertified personnel are still retained on the job. Many unqualified teachers are still in the employment role while most higher education lecturers are yet to undergo training in education. Until government makes it mandatory for all involved in the task of teaching to be qualified in Nigeria, teaching will still continue in the present state. This of course has far reaching implications for teacher and tertiary education curriculum evaluation.

v. Inadequate Funding.

Teacher education demands that whatever is required to ensure its goal actualization must be done without prejudice and that it shall be given more emphasis in all educational planning and development. The commitment to give priority attention as emphasized is laudable but government effort in that direction is not yet yielding the anticipated result. Underfunding has contributed to the decline in teacher and tertiary education. Necessary infrastructure, research facilities, teaching aids and other tools are not in line with the rising population of students (Obi, 2010). The way education is financed largely determines who will be educated in what fashion.

vi. Brain Drain Syndrome

According to Osokoya (2008), the quality of education in Nigeria has reduced in the recent years because of the brain drain phenomenon which led to the drift of more able and more experienced university lecturers to countries where they are offered better remunerations. The brain drain syndrome has attributed to a large extent, to lack of incentives to improve performance, very poor equipped working environments, etc. The reliance on inexperienced lecturers in various educational fields in the country definitely affects the quality of students

work and of course the lecturers of the future. This vicious circle contributes to the low status of education in the university and colleges of education curriculum implementation and evaluation.

vii. Globalization and insufficient knowledge of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Another major problem of teacher and tertiary education curriculum evaluation is that of globalization. The knowledge and use of computer is a necessity for all teachers if they are to be relevant in the future. Teachers need to be trained and retrained in ICT as the world is gradually becoming a global village. Most teachers are computer illiterates. This hinders the use of new technologies and methodologies of the modern times. (Ivowi, 1999)

viii. Teaching Methods:

Akin to the above, there is poor use of instructional strategies and learning designs that will promote effective learning. Most often, the lecturers are resistant to changes. They will rather stay safe in the old beaten tract. this attitude must be eliminated if our educational system must progress (Obi, 2010).

ix Accreditation and teachers motivation

Lack of challenging standards of accreditation of teacher education has resulted in minimum level of competence, for example the recommended staff/student ratio of 1:25 is not adhered to. Besides, poor remuneration makes it difficult for the educational sector to attract and retain the top quality personnel that are required to function in the system (Eya, 2000). According to Onah (1998), the teaching condition of a teacher presupposes the learning condition and success of the student. According to Nwagbo (2001) teachers are objects of ridicule by other members of the society; they are poorly paid and denied professional right and benefits. Lack of motivation hinders teachers' effective performance.

x. Operation of continuous assessment practice

Perhaps, a revolution in teacher education programme in Nigeria is the issue of improved assessment practice of students' learning outcomes. The National Policy on Education (2004) recommended the implementation of continuous assessment practice at all levels of education in Nigeria.

Falayajo (2004) asserts that its implementation has been partially undertaken because teachers have not been well trained for it. This of course constitutes one of the major, problems of teacher and tertiary education curriculum evaluation. It is therefore necessary to include training in continuous assessment practice in the pre-service and in service programmes of teacher and tertiary education in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Teacher education has been considered very relevant for Nigeria's societal development. Given the nature of tertiary institutions, there is the need for the application of certain strategies to ensure proper curriculum implementation and evaluation at that level. Thus:

- all academic staff of tertiary institutions must be adequately trained, instructional activities must be carefully planned, construction of syllabuses for use by tertiary institutions, production of standard course outlines, creation and use of monitoring unit for curriculum implementation and evaluation of lesson plan and use of proper evaluation methods.
- the government and other relevant agencies should provide ICT training programmes for teacher educators. A well developed capacity building programme and training of in-service and pre-service teachers in the integration of ICT need to be given attention to, for meeting the challenges of the fast changing technological society.
- The government should release sufficient grant to be in line with rising population. This is because over flooding population in teacher and tertiary institutions has made teaching resources and premises stretched to the extreme. Teacher and tertiary institutions should also establish linkages with some top ranking foreign universities and teacher training institutions for staff exchange in order to ensure conformity with international standards and developments. The University of Lagos and University of Nigeria has set the pace. Research based teaching should also be encouraged in tertiary and teacher education. This implies that students should be introduced to research in their field of specialization. The aim is to bring together recent research information about theories and methods as well as best practices in the area of specialization.

- In furtherance to these, the periodic accreditation of programmes by Nigeria University Commission (NUC) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should be strengthened for quality control and assurance. Institutions should endeavour to limit admission of students to what their facilities can support. There is also the need to improve remuneration and condition of service for teachers in order to get the best from them. The teacher's salary structure should be upgraded and made attractive so that they can live comfortably and be motivated to put in their best.

CONCLUSION:

From the foregoing discourse, it is pertinent to note that proper teacher preparation is the background for the success of any educational system. They produce the personnel that are required to function in various facets of national life and development process. If higher institutions are effective in preparing high quality teachers the students will perform better academically. Besides, it is worthy of note that the problem of modern education is not the existence of just the curriculum but curriculum implementation and evaluation. It is by means of curriculum implementation and evaluation that the goal of education is realized.

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