



**IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM PROGRAMME IN NIGERIAN HIGHER
INSTITUTIONS: PROBLEMS AND WAY FORWARD**

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Abstract

Curriculum and instruction programme is one of the compulsory courses that must be offered and passed in the faculty of education. The curriculum programme is also offered as a masters programme and PhD programme in many Universities across the country. The curriculum programme is facing many implementation problems in the Nigerian higher institutions. Inadequate funding, shortage of curriculum lecturers, inadequate teaching and learning materials of curriculum programme, inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, corruption, strike action and insecurity were identified as problems facing the implementation of curriculum programme in the Nigerian higher institutions. To address the problems, the following were recommended: increase in the funding of curriculum programme, employment of more curriculum lecturers, provision of more instructional materials of curriculum programme, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, motivate all the lecturers in the higher institutions to prevent brain-drain, fight all forms of corruption practices in the higher institutions, implement all agreements reached with different unions groups in the higher institutions and provision of adequate security in all higher institutions.

Keyword: Curriculum, Education, Implementation, Higher, Programme, Studies

Introduction

The first higher educational institution, the Yaba Higher College, was established in 1932. Since then, the higher education have been growing and developing rapidly in Nigeria. The national policy on Education (2013), defined higher education as the education given after secondary education in colleges of education, monotechnics, polytechnics, universities including those institutions offering correspondence courses. The goals of tertiary education include: Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and the society; Develop the intellectual capability or individuals to understand and



appreciate their local and external environment; Acquire both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service Forge and cement national and international unity; and Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

These stated goals shall be achieved through: teaching; research and development; Virile staff development programmes; Generation and dissemination of knowledge; A variety of modes of programmes including full-time, part-time, block-release, day-release, sandwich etc. For effective administration of higher institutions in Nigeria, the federal government established different agencies for supervision. These agencies include

National Commission for Colleges of Education

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is a parastatal of the Federal ministry of Education established by Decree 13 of 1989. The establishment of the Commission was a resultant effect of the utmost importance accorded to quality teacher education by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Since its inception, the Commission has continuously pursued the goals of quality assurance in teacher education. It has continuously reviewed and standardized the curriculum of colleges of education in the country through programme accreditation, which is carried out once in five years for all the federal colleges of education, state colleges of education and private colleges of education under the Commission (NEEDS 2014).

National Board for Technical Education

The National Board for Technical Education was established by Act No. 9 of 1977, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education specifically created to handle all aspects of technical and vocational education falling outside University education. The Board supervises and regulates, through an accreditation process, the programmes offered by technical institutions at Secondary and post-Secondary school levels. It is also involved in funding of Polytechnics owned by the Government of Nigeria (NEEDS 2014).

National Universities Commission

The National Universities Commission (NUC) is a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Education. The Commission was established in 1962 with the task of developing and managing University education in Nigeria. Its functions include: granting approval for all academic programmes in Nigerian Universities; granting approval for the establishment of all higher educational institutions offering degree programmes; and ensuring quality assurance, through regular accreditation, of all academic programmes in Universities. The Commission currently regulates the academic programmes of federal, state and private Universities in Nigeria. The Role of National Universities Commission (NUC) in system performance cannot be overlooked. The functions of National Universities Commission (NUC) include: advising the federal Government on the establishment and location of Universities, creating new facilities and post graduate units in the Universities; advising Government on the fundamental



needs of the Universities; carrying out periodic plans on the general programme to be pursued by Universities staff; preparing periodic plans on the general programme to be pursued by the Universities; receiving and disbursing Federal grants to Federal Universities, establishing and maintaining the minimum academic standards; accrediting the degrees and other academic programme awarded by the universities (NEEDS, 2014; Lassa, 1992).

The National Universities Commission (NUC) in (2007) came out with a documents containing all programmes that are offering in the Nigerian Universities. The BMAS documents were produced for the under listed academic disciplines: i) Administration; Management and Management Technology; ii) Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Home Economics; iii) Arts; iv) Basic Medical and Health Science v) Education; vi) Engineering and Technology; vii) Environmental Sciences; viii) Law; ix) Pharmaceutical Sciences x) Medicine and Dentistry; xi) Science; xii) Social Sciences; xiii) Veterinary Medicine. Science programme in recent times in the Nigerian higher institutions is facing many challenges which ranges from poor supervision to poor administration.

Education is one of the programme the Nigerian Universities are offering. Education programme covers a lot of programme in sciences, social sciences and arts. Education programmes are designed to have a core educational courses. Curriculum and Instruction I and Curriculum and Instruction II are among the core educational courses that every students must pass before graduating. Curriculum and Instruction as a course and compulsory. Curriculum is also offer as master programme and as a PhD programme in some Universities. Curriculum and instruction like every other programme in the Nigerian higher institutions is faced with many problems. This paper will discuss the problems facing the implementation of Curriculum and instruction programme in the Nigerian higher institutions.

2.0 Concept of Curriculum Studies

According to the Okudishu (2013), a curriculum is the combination of instructional practices, learning experiences, and students' performance assessment that are designed to bring out and evaluate the target learning outcomes of a particular course. A detailed plan for instruction set by policy-makers. A selection of information, segregated into disciplines and courses, typically designed to achieve a specific educational objective. As applied to education, curriculum is the series of things that students must do and experience by way of developing abilities to do the things well that adults do in life; and to be in all ways the people that they should

Curriculum programme is a core course at first degree and at all education institutes including Colleges of education. Curriculum is also offered as a programme on its own at the master and PhD level in some Nigerian universities. Curriculum at the first degree level is divided into two. First semester for Curriculum and instruction (I) while second semester Curriculum and instruction (II). It is designed to suit the programme of specialization. The science education have their curriculum designed for science related programme while the same goes for social science and art education. The general objectives of curriculum programme is to expose the students to fundamental concepts of curriculum development which include objectives, contents, learning opportunities and evaluation. Knowledge and skills on Curriculum Development and to expose them to the critical analysis of curriculum in terms of their



relevance and National goals. Relationship between curriculum and instruction in terms of objectives specification, selection of learning experiences, learning materials, methods and media of instruction, and evaluation. An overview of curriculum innovation in a subject matter area with particular reference to Nigerian experience.

The curriculum programme also to produce graduates equipped with critical skills and abilities to: understand curriculum concepts as relating to their area of specialization. Identified models that are application to the reality of education in their country. Provide training in the principles of curriculum and their application appropriate to the type of degree concerned: single, joint and combined studies; Stimulate students intellectually through the study of curriculum and to lead them to appreciate its application to a range of problems and its relevance in a variety of contexts; Provide a firm foundation of knowledge about the workings of national policies on education and to develop the relevant skills for the constructive use of that knowledge in a range of settings; Develop in students the ability to apply the analytical tools, knowledge and skills acquired to the solution of societies' curriculum problems. Equip students with appropriate tools of analysis to tackle issues and problems of curriculum policy; Develop in students, through the study of curriculum, a range of transferable skills that will be of value in curriculum planning, development implementation and evaluation; Provide students with analytical skills and the ability to develop simplified frameworks for studying the real world and Provide students with the knowledge and skill base, from which they can proceed to further studies in curriculum, related areas or in inter-disciplinary areas that involve curriculum.

3.0 Concept of Implementation

The concept of implementation means different thing to different people. Implementation is the act of executing a programme, policies or a project. Implementation is a project management tool use to describe the process of systematically carrying out programme, projects or policies as designed and as planned. Implementation is done in many institutions especially in the educational institutions where different programmes, policies and projects emerged every day. Implementation is very important in the educational institutions because its' makes programme, policies designed and projects a reality.

In the higher institutions, teaching programme, research programme and community service programme are been implemented every day. Within the faculties and departments, various programme of studies are also been implemented with the aims of realizing the whole objectives of the higher institutions. One of the major problems facing the Nigerian education institutions especially the higher institutions is problem of implementation of programme, policies and various projects meant for the development of higher institutions. On poor policies implementation in Nigerian educational institutions, Daniel-Kalioi, B. (2019) cited Njodi (2005) who observed that Nigeria's education sector is facing many challenges mainly because successive governments failed to properly implement the various policies so far introduced. Each government introduced its new policy on education thereby abolishing an existing one. These acts of policy summersaults throw the universities and their leadership structure into confusion while Researchers like Daniel-Kalioi, (2019), Nwankwaola (2018)



and Daniel-Kalio (2018) lamented that the problem is not so much about making sound policies but it is with poor policy implementation.

4.0 PROBLEMS FACING IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM STUDIES

This paper will focus on the following problems: inadequate funding, shortage of curriculum lecturers, inadequate teaching and learning materials of curriculum programme, inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, corruption, strike action and insecurity as problems facing the implementation of curriculum programme in the Nigerian higher institutions.

4.1 Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding is a major problem facing the implementation of curriculum studies programme in the Nigerian higher institutions. The funds released for the administration of the programmes at the faculty and departments level is not adequate to implement the programmes as designed and planned. Due to inadequate funding many academic leaders in the different higher institutions cannot procure all human and materials resources needed to implement the various programmes that various higher institutions are offering especially the curriculum studies. Ajayi & Akindutire (2007) have identified inadequate funding as one of the problems facing Nigerian schools especially higher institutions. This has in no small measures hindered their optimal performances over the years. Noun (2008), submits that such predicament adversely affects the administration of the institutions across the country. Consequently, delayed salaries and staff remuneration, poor infrastructural provision, shortage of basic learning amenities, poor maintenance of structures and poor staffing are prevalent. Most institutions in the country are poorly financed and the consequence of this is more felt in the quality of the output from these schools. The trend of performance of students in qualifying examinations and even, in internal examinations over the years has been revealing. As an alternative means to success, students at various levels settle with examination malpractices of various forms. Apart from this, dearth of study materials in our institutions, inadequate facilities, deplorable equipment, financial crises between staff and management or government, which often degenerate to various reactions such as strike, are some of the evidences of poor funding. Some researcher like Agabi, (2014); Ekankumo & Kemebaradikumo, (2014) and Olube (2016) has opined that the inadequate funding of higher education by Nigeria government has contributed immensely to the decay in the sector, especially since the country is unable to meet the recommended UNESCO's benchmark of 26 percent of every developing country's annual budget to be invested on funding education. Also concluded that inadequate funding is a major problem facing the management of higher education in Nigeria

4.2 Shortage of Curriculum Lecturers

Shortage of curriculum studies lecturers is another big problem hindering effective implementation of the curriculum studies programme in the Nigerian higher institutions especially the universities. Many faculty and departments of education do not have lecturers that specialized in the curriculum studies and to handle the teaching due to poor manpower planning in the higher institutions. The shortage of



curriculum studies lecturers have increase the teacher-students ratio of the programme which is not good for the development of higher education. Noun (2008) observed that most Universities' staff/student ratios are very high, while academic/non-academic staff ratios are lopsided. Consequently, the output from these institutions becomes short of standard. The NEEDS (2014) assessment of higher institutions observed that majorities of the higher institutions are facing problem of staff shortage. The report indicated that there were 37,504 academic staff in the 74 public universities in the country. This numbers compare to the student population is inadequate. The shortage of the academic staff resulted to the high students-teacher ratio in most of the universities in the country. For instance, University of Abuja had staff to student ratio 1:122, Lagos state University had a ratio 1:144 and National Open University had a ratio 1:363. The report also showed that 43% of the lecturers in the Nigerian universities had PhD and above, while others have less qualification. The reported also revealed that only 50% of the academic staff have required skills and pedagogical skills, counselling and ICT competencies required for efficient service delivery in tertiary institutions. The inadequate lecturers in majorities of the higher institutions in the country is responsible for the falling standard of higher education. There are many reasons responsible for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian universities, some of the reasons include; low salaries and poor motivation compare to other institutions in the country where they pay high salaries and allowances. Teaching of large classes and rising workload in the universities are also some of the reasons. Brain-drain and poor working environment and lack of manpower planning for higher institutions in the country. The Nigerian higher institutions need about 22,496 teachers to improve the quality of teaching and academic service delivery in the higher institutions (NEEDS, 2014).

4.3 Inadequate Teaching and Learning Materials

Instructional materials are very important in the implementation of curriculum studies programme. The national Universities Commission listed the following as the requirement resources for the teaching and learning of curriculum studies in all the universities: Current basic texts, reference books, journals and other relevant textual and non-textual materials should be readily available in the library. It is unfortunate that many faculty and departments of education do not have these instructional materials for the implementation of curriculum studies programme. Onyekakayah (2007) stated that the instruments for learning are lacking, teaching and learning are done in the most unconducive environment, the libraries have outdated books, new journals and publications cannot be acquired because there is no subsidy, the laboratories are a mockery of what they ought to be, there is no feeding on campus, many students literarily go hungry, the lecturers do not get commensurate pay like their counterparts elsewhere, the workload of most lecturers is enormous as brain drain has taken its toll on capable hands that would have been here.

4.4 Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructural facilities are very important in the implementation of teaching and learning programme especially for programme like curriculum. Infrastructural facilities need for the implementation of



teaching, researching and community service programme in the higher institutions include stable light, stable internet service, water, administrative offices, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, ICT facilities, hostels etc. It is unfortunate that majorities of these facilities are not available in right quantities in many higher institutions in Nigeria and this is affecting the implementation of curriculum as a school programme. Ebehikhalu, & Dawam, (2016) observed that it is a well-known fact that ninety percent (90%) of what exist today as tertiary institutions in Nigeria could be referred to as mere glorified secondary schools. This is because most of the nation's universities are characterized by stark infrastructural decay and paucity of fund for research work (Ebehikhalu, & Dawam, 2016; Jiduwah, 2010). Recent reports on our universities portray a general lack of infrastructural facilities. An average public University in Nigeria lacks basic infrastructure like regular water supply, electricity, and standard accommodation for students. In many instances, the toilets that serve the students are in bad shape as many do not have running water. Lecture rooms and offices are not available and where available are in need of refurbishment. Libraries are poorly equipped and are short of modern books and equipment. Laboratory equipment are obsolete and inputs for teaching are in short supply. Roads and building on many campuses are in a state of disrepair. Poor and dilapidated infrastructures are the major factors that have led to the despicable state of the Nigerian Universities. It is therefore not surprising that the products of these infrastructures often fail to rise up to the occasion when put to test and task (Ebehikhalu, & Dawam, 2016).

4.5 Brain-drain

Brain-drain in the Nigerian higher institutions especially the Universities is another problem hindering the effective implementation of curriculum programme in many institutions. Many professors of curriculum studies are among the professors leaving the universities to abroad for a better working environment. The working condition of both academic and non-academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions is very poor pushing many out of the University system. Many faculties and departments in the Nigerian universities are in shortage of lecturers because of the brain-drain programme. Ogunode & Isaac (2021) opined that Professional teachers and experienced professors are now few and limited in major teacher education institutions across the country due to brain-drain. Many academic staff in the Economics department are leaving because the working condition is poor, the salaries and motivation packages are un-attractive. Many of the lecturers are leaving because of poor funding of education, insecurity, lack of modern infrastructural facilities and poor welfare. Ogunode & Isaac (2021) and Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, (2016) concludes that Nigerian public universities are faced with rapid faculty exodus or brain drain. Some faculty members abandoned universities for other sectors of the economy where professionals and scientists receive higher salaries and greater social recognition. The result of the faculty exodus is observed in the quality of graduates that our universities produce. The brain-drain problem is seriously affecting the quality of teacher education programme in Nigeria because students do not have adequate professional teachers and professors that will mentored and grown them up. There are many factors responsible for brain-drain problem in the Nigerian higher



institutions and they include: poor working condition, poor motivation, insecurity challenges and strike actions.

4.6 Corruption

Corruption in the administration of higher institutions in Nigeria is another problem frustrating effective implementation of programme like curriculum studies. Corruption have penetrated many higher institutions in Nigeria. Funds meant for programme development and infrastructural facilities are ended up been diverted into private pockets. Ogunode& Isaac (2021) submitted that the Nigerian public institutions are known for corruption practices. This practices have penetrated almost all the educational institutions especially the higher institutions. The Nigerian higher institutions which is made up of the universities, colleges of education and the polytechnics are not exempted from the evil of corruption. Various forms of academic corruption found in the Nigerian higher institutions include; examination malpractices, bribing of lecturers for unmerited scores, fiscal extortion from students, sex for marks, mismanagement of funds, funds diversion and forgery of certificates. Among of this forms of corruption, fund diversion and mismanagement is the worst affecting the development of infrastructural facilities in the higher institutions. Corruption within an educational institutions such as funds diversion, funds misappropriation and mismanagement are major problem preventing effective administration of higher education in Nigeria. Many researchers observed that the limited funds allocated to the public University system often go down the drain through the corrupt practices of those entrusted with the implementation of University programmes due to inadequate monitoring of University income and expenditure, such is the grim state of affairs, thus the future will need a paradigm shift (Uzoka, 2007; Dare 2008; Ogbondah, 2010; Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, 2016)

4.7 Strike Action

Strike action in the Nigerian higher institutions is another major problem facing the implementation curriculum programme. Academic calendar that have been planned to last for three to four months due to strike actions by different unions groups in the various higher institutions will end up been disrupted and prolong. This will affect all teaching, research and community service programme in all the institutions. Okoli, Ogbondah, &Ewor, (2016) observed that it has become a known fact that students across various universities in Nigeria are constantly faced with industrial actions embarked upon by the Academic and Non-Academic Staff Unions of various institutions. The disagreement or lack of understanding between government and unions arising from non-implementation of agreement reached, often results in deadlock that usually disrupts academic calendar. As academic activities are suspended for a long period, the students reading abilities will definitely fall. Even the previous knowledge acquired is even forgotten by some students. This mostly turns some students into certificates seekers than knowledge seekers while Ogunode& Isaac (2020) and Ogunode (2020) submitted that ASUU/NASU Strike, students' election, communal crisis, increase in school fees, cultic conflict, National programme and public holidays are factors responsible for unstable academic calendar in higher education in Nigeria. It was also established that half bake graduates, poor coverage



of syllabus, resources wastage, students' involvement in criminal activities and students prolonged years of graduation are the effects of unstable academic calendar.

4.8 Insecurity

Insecurity problems is another major challenge facing the implementation of curriculum studies programme in the Nigerian higher institutions. Insecurity is a known issues affecting the entire country especially the Northern part of Nigeria. Insecurity in the country have penetrated into the educational institutions since the school is a part and parcel of the society. Many higher institutions have experienced attacks from different sect groups in the country leading to death of students and lecturers. Many infrastructural facilities destroyed. The most worrisome of the insecurity is the school closure which have affected the academic calendar of different higher institutions in the Country. Many faculties and departments cannot graduate their students due to universities closure and many academic programme like the curriculum studies are affected due to the insecurity challenges facing the country. Some researcher like Ogunode & Abubakar(2020), Ogunode, & Abubakar, (2020m), Ahaotu & Ogunode(2021) and Ogunode ,Ahaotu & Ayisa (2021) opined that insecurity is one of the major problem facing the higher education administration and development in Nigeria.

5.0 Way Forward

To ensure effect implementation of curriculum programme in the Nigerian higher institutions, the following were suggested: increase in the funding of curriculum programme, employment of more curriculum lecturers, provision of more instructional materials of curriculum programme, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, motivate all the lecturers in the higher institutions to prevent brain-drain, fight all forms of corruption practices in the higher institutions, implement all agreements reached with different unions groups in the higher institutions and provision of adequate security in all higher institutions.

1. The government should increase the funding of higher institutions in the country. So, that more monies will be available to release for the administration of departments especially the Curriculum programme. Priorities should be given to the funding of Economics education programme.
2. Government should direct the school administrators to employ more Curriculum lecturers to aid effective implementation of curriculum in the Nigerian higher institutions
3. More infrastructural facilities should be provided in all the departments of education across the country for easy implementation of curriculum programme. The government should increase the salaries of lecturers especially the lecturers of curriculum to prevent them from leaving the higher institutions. The government should implement all agreement reached with different unions groups in the higher institutions to prevent strike actions.
4. Head departments of all higher institutions should provide adequate instructional materials in the departments for the implementation of curriculum programme



5. The government and school administrators should fight all forms of corruption in the higher institutions. Effective financial monitoring and evaluation system should be used to monitor all funds released to the higher institutions in the country
6. The government should ensure security in the country especially in the higher institutions in the country. This will help to ensure effective implementation of curriculum programme.

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of education depends among other thing on the level of curriculum planning, development and implementation. Curriculum programme is an import educational programme that must be given maximum attention in all educational institutions in Nigeria. This paper in discussing problems affecting curriculum course and programme implementation in Nigerian higher institutions identified: inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, corruption, strike action and insecurity were identified as problems facing the implementation of curriculum programme in the Nigerian higher institutions. To address the problems, the following were recommended: increase in the funding of curriculum programme, employment of more curriculum lecturers, provision of more instructional materials of curriculum programme, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, motivate all the lecturers in the higher institutions to prevent brain-drain, fight all forms of corruption practices in the higher institutions, implement all agreements reached with different unions groups in the higher institutions and provision of adequate security in all higher institutions.

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