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Curriculum Implementation Challenges Encountered By Secondary School Teachers In Katsina Local Government Area, Katsina State.

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ABSTRACT
The primary concerns of the study reported on were to establish the challenges secondary school teachers encounter in implementing the new curriculum in Katsina local government area as remedies are sought. The paradigm underpinning the study was interpretivism, utilising a qualitative design. The public schools – in both low and high density suburbs – and participants were purposively selected as the study sought depth as opposed to breadth. The data was captured using a semi-structured interview protocol through face-to-face interviews and focus groups. Professional documents were scrutinised and the availability of resources was observed using a semi-structured observation checklist. The use of multiple data sources, triangulation, an audit trail, and member checking enhanced its credibility. The major barriers to effective curriculum implementation were human, physical, material and financial resources. Attempts have been made in developing human capital through various capacity building workshops whose facilitators were not pragmatic. Encouraging though, it was found that teachers have embraced the new curriculum despite the hardships they are encountering as they view it as competence based and self-empowering through the entrepreneurial skills learners acquire. All that is needed is a collective approach in resource mobilisation, with the government being a major funder, if the inequalities and inequities in accessing education, which Katsina state government attempted to abolish at post-independence, are not to mushroom.
Keywords: Challenges, curriculum implementation, Secondary schools, school management team, teachers, capacity building.

INTRODUCTION

Post-independence, Nigeria inherited an education system which was tailored to produce unemployable youth who lacked the requisite productive, survival and critical skills to sustain the socio-economic, technological and cultural transformation needed for national development amid the global competition for human capital (Okoh, 2019). This bookish curriculum, which was the ritual of the past administration, had to be abandoned in preference of a growth oriented one. Hence Nigeria has introduced a new secondary education model the emphasis the skills as well as academic development of learner. The skills component of the model is being pursued through the teaching and learning thirty four (34) vocational (trade based) subjects developed by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)

The trade subjects which are expected to be taught together with the academic school oriented subjects

allowed students to acquire specific vocational skills in at least one trade area, based on students' choice. A fundamental gap was observed after five years of implementing the new education model (Adekunle, 2018). It revealed that, while students had learn the trades, they lack the entrepreneurial skills and ingenuity to deploy the acquire skills for profitable economic ventures (Muhammad, 2020).

In 20217, the 34 trade curricular were reformed and new trade and entrepreneurship curriculum was introduced to provide students with practical opportunities to acquire entrepreneur competence alongside their trade trade specific skills by taking part in-school small skill business venture, to prepare them better for the world of work. The new secondary school model is noble idea on paper but now successful it's implementation?

This study seeks to focus on the teachers who are in the field, their supervisors and students. The study is therefore designed to examine the challenges secondary school teachers encounter in their attempt to implement the new curriculum in Katsina Local Government Area.

The quest for changing school curricula by the Nigerian government was based on two main imperatives. First, the scale of change in the world and the demands of the 21st century require learners to be exposed to different and higher level skills and knowledge than those previously offered by the Nigerian curricula. Therefore, the government was bound to develop a new modernised and internationally comparable curriculum. Second, Nigeria has changed. It remained the incisive wish of the national education ministry to design a curriculum that does not reproduce the diversities, dichotomies and contradictions in society, but produces a new order that they seek. The curricula for schools, therefore, required revision to reflect new values and principles, especially those of the Constitution of Nigeria. Mudau (2004:1) stresses that when the democratic government took office in Nigeria, one of the major challenges with which it was confronted was to redress the quality of education offered to the black majority. This necessitated a new curriculum that would empower previously suppressed, neglected and disadvantaged communities (Jansen & Christie, 1999(a):146). In 1997, the then National Minister of Education launched a new curriculum called Curriculum 2005 (C2005), which offers

outcomes based education (OBE) (DoE: 2000). The curriculum was regarded as a key initiative in the transformation of the Nigeria society because it was hoped that OBE would facilitate the development of an internationally competitive nation with a literate, creative and critical thinking citizenry (DoE, 2003). C2005 was aimed at equipping learners with relevant skills and knowledge that would make them critical thinkers who are self-reliant and self-supporting. Due to some challenges associated with an effective implementation of C2005, this curriculum was reviewed and replaced by Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). It is a revision of the current National Curriculum Statement (NCS). With the introduction of CAPS, every subject in 2 each grade will have a single, comprehensive and concise policy document that will provide details on what teachers need to teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis. This curriculum review has the aim of lessening the administrative load on teachers, and ensuring that there is clear guidance and consistency for teachers when teaching.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the wild recognition and acceptance accorded the role of curriculum as a tool or career of the national philosophy in Nigerian educational system, there seem to be problems in the implementation of their vital educational blue-print. Many laudable goals of the curriculum have failed to pass the planning stage of the curriculum due to faulty implementation. Well-conceived curriculum ideas have remained virtual inert and dysfunctional. The outcome of this is the bred of secondary teachers who are found to be grossly deficient in both practical and theoretical in all development. The result of this state of affairs is the production of half barked, in trained at the basic and sometimes confused learner. This problem and other related problems should be a cause for concern to all educators and serious minded stakeholders of the educational sub-sectors. Against this background, this study was designed to investigate the challenges encountered by secondary school teachers in Katsina Local Government Area.

Curriculum changes that have been implemented over the years are adversely affecting SMT and teachers. According to Maodzwa-Tarwiza and Cross (2009:136), some teachers argue convincingly that it is easier to continue with familiar teaching methods instead of paying lip service to the new policies. This

suggests that capacitation of teachers is essential in the successful implementation of any curriculum change as they are the main role-players in promoting quality education. Inadequate training regarding curriculum implementation, lack of guidelines for the implementation of curriculum changes and the complexity of managing the new and the old curriculum simultaneously, created a challenge to most high school educators, especially in Mount Fletcher District in the Eastern Cape Province. Against this background, the following aim of the study was formulated

The Aim Of The Study

The aim of the study is to investigate the experiences and challenges faced by school stakeholders (school management team [SMT] and educators) regarding implementation of curriculum changes in selected high schools in Mount Fletcher District in the Eastern Cape Province.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate perceived causes and problems of curriculum implementation in Katsina Local Government Area, leading to poor result at WAEC and NECO. This study sought to establish that if the curriculum were properly implemented in Katsina Local Government Area, there would be an improvements in results of WAEC and NECO.

The specific objectives of this study are:

(i) To investigate the challenges faced by teachers as regarded the implementation of the school curriculum.

(ii) To assess the effect on learner performance of the challenges faced by teachers as regards the implementation of the secondary school curriculum.

(iii) To establish the causes of the problem of the secondary school curriculum implementation in Katsina Local Government Area.

(iv) To establish the ways forward as regards these perceived problems.

Research questions

What are the challenges faced by school stakeholders (SMT and teachers) regarding implementation of curriculum change in selected Secondary schools in the Katsina Local Government? This general research question finds expression in the following:

Sub-questions

(i) What are teachers‟ experiences of teaching before 1994 and what are their views on recent curriculum changes?

(ii) What are the roles of School Management Team (SMT) in managing curriculum changes?

(iii) What are the experiences and challenges faced by SMT and teachers in curriculum implementation?

(iv) What types of support structures and skills are necessary for effective implementation of curriculum change?

Literature Review

Ogar and Awhen (2015, 145) view curriculum as “planned experiences offered to the learner by the school”. Similarly, the CFFPASE (GoZ 2015–2022, 4–5) conceives it as “the sum total of all learning experiences and opportunities that are provided to learners in the context of formal and non-formal education”. Both definitions seem to imply that curriculum is a blue-print which schools adopt in order for them to translate the hopes and aspirations of the nation into tangible reality. In the process teachers become the “adoption unit” and “assault troops” (Bishop 1985).

As highlighted before, the MoPSE crafted the CFFPASE informed by Nziramasanga’s (1999) recommendations and is the “main reference document informing the development of syllabuses, revision of syllabuses, development and use of learning resources and the creation of guidelines for in-service teacher training and support” (GoZ 2015–2022, 13). It also brings about the country’s socio-economic transformation development in line with the Zim-ASSET. This seven year comprehensive plan has in-built reviews for modifications. Consequently, the 2017 review culminated in an updated curriculum. The CFFPASE demands that learners’ hands be made “dirtier” by engaging them in vocational subjects which empower them with entrepreneurial and survival skills so as to develop enterprises and contribute to the

socio-economic transformation. Through it, learners are exposed to the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Heritage Studies. The strong scientific and technological bias encompassed in it, develops skills which learners would utilise in the productive sector of the economy, thus linking the school to industry. With a proper foundation laid down at primary level, learners are exposed to life-and-work learning contexts through the life-skills orientation programme. This makes it part of the human capital development strategic priority of the Zim-ASSET Social Services and Poverty Eradication cluster (GoZn.d.).

In that context, the CFFPASE seems to have been tailored to develop self-reliant skills in learners through vocational subjects which would make them marketable in the real world of life and work. Galvanised by that philosophy, the MoPSE crafted a competence-based curriculum which sought to develop the much needed human capital base that would ensure sustainable development of the nation in the future. Its orientation was inclusive as it catered for the diverse abilities, aptitudes and interests that learners possessed in sync with the MoPSE vision (GoZ 2015–2022). Furthermore, 16 languages were officialised (GoZ 2013) so as to cater for the learners' different unique identities, and their ethnic and diverse cultures for the purpose of uniting citizens and moulding learners who would cherish and practise the philosophical orientation of "humanness" within the Nigerian context (GoZn.d.). Most important was the recognition of indigenous languages, premised on the assumption that the educational, technological, and cultural attainments and spiritual levels of Katsina state Nigeria could be raised if instruction were given in the learners' mother-tongue (Nziramasanga 1999).

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach informed by an interpretivist paradigm was employed in exploring the implementation challenges Nigeriasecondary school teachers encountered in the process as remedies were sought. It entailed an in-depth study of a small sample on the phenomenon in its natural setting which was determined by the concept of saturation as the findings were context bound (Simon and Goes 2011). It was also based on the assumption that reality is subjective and is built from the person's life experiences and interactions with the ultimate aim of producing accurate descriptions of aspects of human experiences, concerned with interpreting and understanding texts, which offer rich and deep accounts of phenomenon (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). Compatible with a qualitative study, multiple sources of data were used. A semistructured face-to-face interview protocol was used to interview 12 education managers. Four focus groups comprising six ECD, five Grade 1–2, six Grade 3–4 teachers and five parents were used to gather the participants' detailed descriptions of their lived experiences. In the process their behaviours were observed as they responded to questions. This was premised on the fact that in qualitative studies, behaviour and experiences are considered inseparable (Simon and Goes 2011). Furthermore, a semistructured observation checklist was employed to ascertain the availability of resources. Finally, document analysis – which entailed scrutinising professional documents – was equally utilised (Denzin and Lincoln 2011).

The study used random sampling in some selected secondary schools in Katsina local government area through interview and direct conversations with respondents. Data generated were subjected to statistical analysis.

RESULTS

The data analysis process yielded the following thematic areas, namely: participants' biographical data; resources; language policy; workshops; curriculum; and implementers' attitudes. Biographical Background Table 1: Biographical data of education managers Education managers Teachers Description Frequency Gender Females 12 18 Academic qualifications "O" level "A" level 12 0 12 6 Professional qualification Certificate in Education Bachelor in Education Master in Education 1 7 4 17 1 0 167 Curriculum Implementation Challenges Encountered by secondary School Teachers Education managers Teachers Description Frequency Current studies Advanced computers Theology Music Bachelor in Education Master in Education 1 0 0 0 1 0 1 2 6 0 Teaching experience 0–5 years 6–10 years 11–15 years

16–20 years 21–25 years 26–30+ years 0 0 0 4 5 3 12 1 2 1 0 2 Number of years in post 0–5 years 6–10 years 11+ years 7 3 2 0 0 0

Table 1 reveals that the 12 female education managers who participated in the study were "O" level holders. One, seven and four of these were holders of a Certificate in Education, a Bachelor in Education and a Master in Education Management, respectively. Their teaching experiences ranged from 15 to more than 31 years against their management experience of two to seven years. Of note, one undergraduate was studying a postgraduate degree while the other was studying computers. Similarly, Table 1 reveals that 18 female teachers teaching infant classes up to Grade 4 participated. Twelve and six were "O" level and "A" level holders, respectively. Seventeen of these were Diploma in Education holders while one had completed a Bachelor of Education degree. Their teaching experiences ranged from below five to 30 years. The former were the bulk and nine of these were undergraduates in the following areas: music, theology and ECD.

CONCLUSION

The study found out that teachers of various subject areas had numerous challenges in implementing the new curriculum. The challenges included, lack of instructional resources in schools to operationalize the new curriculum, Teachers' limited knowledge of the curriculum, exclusion of teachers in curriculum development, as well as limited funding provision for the new curriculum implementation. These challenges are discussed below. Lack of instructional resources Most schools do not have required facilities, instructional and human resources. There is shortage of resources ranging from text books, classrooms and qualified teachers. The shortage of resources has animated the difficulties that complicate effective

Teachers are the implementers of curriculum in schools, but they meet a lot of challenges as revealed by this study. Teachers are faced by many challenges mostly lack of diverse resources. Without the required resources, operationalising the new curriculum continues to be a daunting task for teachers to implement. Teachers in rural schools teach large classes which put pressure on their work, yet without enough resources to teach effectively. The lack of knowledge of the new curriculum also hampered the effective implementation of the new curriculum as teachers were not involved in the curriculum review and development. The involvement would have enabled teachers to acquire an understanding of the new curriculum, thus making it easy for them to implement. As funding is a determinant for the success of most operations. The lack of fund to secure the resources in their multiplicity as required for the effective implementation of the new curriculum, has posed threat to teachers to implement the new curriculum as required. Consequently, classroom instructions were not effective and learner performance was not impressive as the new curriculum was faced by numerous operational challenges.

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