

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Abstract

The paper is titled "Quality Assurance and Curriculum Implementation in secondary schools in Port Harcourt. It seeks to investigate quality assurance indices as it affects curriculum implementation in secondary schools. The quality of teachers, funding and learning environment were the variables under study. Three research questions guided the study. 225 teachers from 15 public secondary schools in port Harcourt were sampled for the study using simple random sampling technique. A researcher made nine item structured questionnaires was developed and used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was vetted by experts in research methods, while the reliability coefficient yielded an V value of 0.87 level of significance after a test re-test method was adopted on some teachers outside the same used for the study. Simple mean was used for analyzed the data collected. The result showed that professional qualification and teachers teaching experience affects the implementation of the curriculum positively. Again, adequate funding of our secondary schools promotes quality assurance in curriculum implementation and finally, conducive learning environment ensures quality assurance in curriculum implementation. The paper therefore, made the following recommendations: that qualified teachers should be recruited and employed in our secondary school, adequate funding of schools and a conducive learning environment should be created in our schools as to guarantee quality assurance in curriculum implementation.

Introduction

Curriculum has been defined by many scholars, some see curriculum as a set of guidelines relating to content or subject of instruction, yet others see it as the objective, content, activities and methods of what is offered to the learner in the school. According to Omieibi, (2006), the content of the curriculum is what learners learn while the process refers to how they learn, while Achuonye and Ajoku, see curriculum as a systematic plan of activities learners undergo under the guidance and direction of the school which depicts the scope needed to attain the aims and objectives at a particular level.

Sofolhan (1992), defined curriculum as all goal directed activities that are generated by the school whether they take place in the institution or outside it. A more comprehensive definitions was given by NTI (2005), which defined curriculum as the planned experiences offered to learners under the guidance of the school. Curriculum issues have always occupied the center stage in academic discourse in Nigeria. Beginning from the colonial period through the independence era, various opinions and views were expressed over what should constitute a functional utilitarian school curriculum. The deliberations at the 1969 national conference led to the adoption of a National Policy on Education in 1977.

Quality assurance, according to Mohammed (2005), is the success with which an institution provides educational environment, which enables worthwhile learning goals like academic standards, high products of our educational system and the achievement of the goals of each level of the educational sector. The quality of education provided in any society is also subjected to quality assessment. The system of education is said to be qualitative when compared to other nation's educational system intends of teacher quality, conducive learning environment, adequate funding and learning facilities which would guarantee the achievement of educational goals, hence assuring quality of the products of education.

Quality assurance in secondary school curriculum implementation seeks to address issues of standard, value and how the products of secondary education could be able to achieve the goals of secondary education, which is stipulated in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004:18).

Specifically, the policy framework further provides that secondary education shall:

- a) Provide all primary school leaves with the opportunity for education of a higher level; irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background;

- b) Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents opportunities and future roles;
- c) Provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- d) Develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage;
- e) Inspire students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence, and
- f) Foster nation unity with an emphasis on the common tie that unite us in our diversity and so on (NPE, 2004).

Teacher Quality in Secondary Schools

Teacher quality has to do with the professional qualification of a teacher, the teacher must possess the teaching qualifications enables of making him effective in teaching/learning process or in instructional delivery process. This makes a teacher qualitative when compared to other professionals in their own area of specialization while unqualified teachers may have problem in instructional delivery process because they were not trained as teachers. The National Policy on Education recognizes that no educational system rise above the quality of its teachers (NPE,2004:39).. The quality of teachers in our secondary schools determines to a large extent the quality of those that they produce and the quality of those that they produce and the quality of their research output, (Ogbodo, 2006). The National Policy on Education again recognized that the minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession should be the Nigerian certificate in education. Teachers in the secondary school are inadequate and unqualified in most cases and as such implementation of the curriculum becomes difficult as some do not go through teachers training institutions, (Nwiyi & Uriah, 2007). They came into the teaching profession as the last resort there is no job and therefore, they came into the teaching profession as the resort when there is no job and therefore, they cannot offer quality services, since they were not trained for such purpose. There is problem of implementing the curriculum, because one thing is to possess the knowledge, another is the ability to transfer the knowledge, skills and attitude to the learners. These teachers in our secondary schools are not effective in instructional delivery processes. There is therefore, the need for training of teachers in methods and techniques in teaching; hence one waits when this policy requirement will implemented in our schools, Ogbodo, (2006).

Funding and Curriculum Implementation

Education in Nigeria is associated with inadequate funding from federal, state and local governments. Funds meant for educations are diverted and teacher's salaries and government are not paid as and when due, infrastructural facilities are in a state of decay. To survival, the teachers abandon their primary responsibilities (teaching) and look for alternative means of survival, to the detriment of the students who are the recipient of their services. According to Ogbuibe, Agunloye and Okebe (2003), teachers are stagnated and denied promotions; hence some spends nearly eight years without promotion. This situation is highly demoralizing and has negative impacts on the implementation of the curriculum in the secondary schools.

Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation

Learning environment has been identified as an indispensable factor in the effective functioning of any school system. A conducive environment must be created for the objective of education to be achieved (Ukeje, 1992). Good learning environment promotes quality education, which goes beyond good classroom, library, laboratories and teachers attendance to workshops and conferences. It includes adequate policies and practices, which prohibits students and teachers harassment, examination malpractice, cultism and its associated violence. It connotes good academic culture, (Ogbodo, 2006). It is also within the preview of the schools to engender a peaceful and conducive climate and academic culture so that the school curriculum would be implemented which would guarantee excellence on the part of the students.

Statement of the Problem

Scholar and indeed stakeholders in education have expressed considerable concern about the deteriorating quality of secondary education in Nigeria. There is evidence that this deterioration

in-quality is the direct result of poor implementation of secondary school curriculum (Sofolaham, 1992). Koko (2004), in her study, discovered that quality assurance in curriculum implementation appears to be neglected in our schools especially in secondary schools in Port Harcourt may have been compounded in our secondary schools system, and there is no evidence of the effect of the use of well experienced and better qualified and motivated school teachers could have on quality assurance in the implementation of secondary school curriculum. This necessitated the present study, which seeks to establish the influence of some quality assurance indices on secondary curriculum implementation in Port Harcourt.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine how some quality assurance indices can influence secondary school curriculum implementation in Port Harcourt. The objective of the study include to:

- 1) Find out if teacher quality affects quality assurance in curriculum implementation.
- 2) Determine the affects of funding on quality assurance in curriculum implementation.
- 3) Ascertain the influence of learning environment on quality assurance in curriculum implementation.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) How does teacher quality affect quality assurance in curriculum implementation
- 2) What are the influences of funding on quality assurance in curriculum implementation
- 3) What influence does learning environment have on quality assurance in secondary school curriculum implementation?

Method

The population of the study comprised all the 809 teachers in the 15 public secondary schools in Port Harcourt local government area of Rivers State. 225 teachers from 15 public secondary schools in Port Harcourt were sampled for the study using simple random sampling technique. A researcher made nine-items structured questionnaire was developed and used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was vetted by experts in research methods while the reliability coefficient yielded an V value of 0.87 level of significance after a test re-test method was adopted on some teachers outside the sample used for the study. Simple mean was used to analyzed the data collected. The number of responses for each of the variable were weighted and they were added and divided by the total number of respondents (225) to get mean. 2.5 and above were used as an agreed factors in deciding the answers to the research questions, while less than 2.5 is not an agree factor.

As a rule of thumb, the accepted mean is 2.5 and above that is:

SA	Stronger Agree	= 4
A D	Agree Disagree	= 3
SD	Strongly Disagree	= 1
Total	10	

$$10/4=2.5$$

Results

Table 1; Mean Score of the Effect of Teacher Quality on Quality Assurance in Curriculum Implementation.

S/N	Variables	No. of Res p.	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	Remark
1	Recruiting teachers without qualification will be productive	225	125 (500)	78 (234)	18 (36)	4 (4)	3.44	Accepted

	curriculum implementation							
2	Teachers professional qualification will help to bring about quality curriculum implementation	225	118 (472)	82 (252)	20 (40)	3 (3)	3.40	Accepted
3	Teaching experience teachers is crucial to quality assurance curriculum	225	110 (440)	76 (228)	30 (60)	9 (18)	3.31	Accepted

	implementation							
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The table 1, shows that recruiting teachers without teaching qualification will be counterproductive in curriculum implementation with the mean score 3.44. Again, teachers, teaching experience and their professional qualification as agreed by the respondents will promote quality assurance in curriculum implementation with the means score 3.40 and 3.31 respectively.

Table 2: Mean Score the Influence of Funding on Quality Assurance in Curriculum of Implementation

S/N	Variables	No. of Res p.	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remark
I	Adequate funding of the school guarantees quality assurance in curriculum implementation	225	108 (432)	57 (171)	40 (80)	20 (20)	3.12	Accepted
2	Teachers are more committed to duty when they are paid regularly as at when due	225	96 (384)	61 (183)	44 (88)	24 (24)	3.01	Accepted
3	Adequate funding promotes the provision of learning facilities	225	100 (400)	53 (159)	30 (60)	48 (96)	3.01	Accepted

The data in table 2, show that all at the respondents agreed that funding of the schools guarantees quality assurance in curriculum implementation, make teachers more committed to their duties and learning facilities are assured with mean scores 3.12, 3.01 and 3.01.

Table 3: Mean Score of the Influence of Learning Environment on Quality Assurance in Curriculum Implementation

S/N	Variables	No. of Resp.	SA	A	J	SD	X	Remark
1	Environment free from cultism and violence ensures curriculum implementation	225	85 (340)	90 (270)	50 (100)	30 (30)	3.28	Accepted
2	Classroom with adequate learning facilities promote quality assurance in curriculum implementation	225	92 (368)	70 (210)	61 (122)	22 (22)	3.20	Accepted
3	Schools with well equipped libraries and guarantees curriculum implementation	225	74 (296)	88 (264)	70 (140)	23 (23)	3.21	Accepted

The data in table 3, show that the respondents agreed that good learning environment free from cultism and violence ensures curriculum implementation with the means score of 3.28 and they also agreed that adequate learning facilities promotes quality assurance in curriculum implementation with the mean score 3.20. Finally, they are all agreed that well-equipped libraries and laboratories guarantee curriculum implementation with the mean score of 3.21.

Discussion of Findings

The result shows that teaching experience of teachers and teachers' professional qualification will bring about quality assurance in curriculum implementation. This result is in agreement with the work of Ogbodo (2006), who asserted that the quality of those they produce and the quality of their research output. This implies that for low or high products to be assured in our secondary schools, the curriculum should be fully implemented. The result again indicated that funding has positive influence on quality assurance in curriculum implementation.

Finally, the result showed that good learning environmental promotes quality assurance-in curriculum implementation.

The result is in agreement with the work of Ukeje (1992), who maintained that a conducive learning environment helps in the achievement of educational objectives.

Recommendation and Conclusion

For the curriculum to be implemented to achieve the goals of secondary education, it is important that qualified teachers should be recruited and posted to our secondary schools.

Adequate funding of the schools and prompt payment of teachers salaries, conducive learning environment will make the teachers to be more committed to duties, hence guarantee quality assurance in curriculum implementation.

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