

Analysis of Factors Responsible for Poor Curriculum Implementation in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to discuss the various challenges the curriculum implementation faced in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Content analysis was adopted for the paper presentation. Data involving both primary and secondary data were sorted on both print and online resources. The paper concludes that poor funding, inadequate academic staff, a sortie of infrastructural facilities, corruption, strike actions, brain-drain, insecurity and poor supervision are the challenges facing the implementation of the curriculum in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper among other things recommends that the federal and state government should increase the funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This will make it easy to implement the curriculum of different programmes.

Keywords: Analysis, Academic staff, Curriculum, Implementation, Tertiary institutions.

Introduction:

Tertiary education is the education final stage of education that handles the production of manpower for the social, economic and technological development of a country. Tertiary education is an organized education that deals with intensive teaching, research and provision of community services. (National policy on Education 2013) sees tertiary education as the education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres such as the Nigeria French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI).

The goals of Tertiary Education are to: Contribute to national development through high-level manpower training; provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians; provide high-quality career counselling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortages through the

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production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service; forge and cement national unity; and promote national and international understanding and interaction (NPE, 2013).

Tertiary Educational institutions shall pursue these goals through: Quality student intake; quality teaching and learning; research and development; high standards in the quality of facilities, services and resources; staff welfare and development programmes; provision of a more practical based curriculum relevant to the needs of the labour market; generation and dissemination of knowledge, skills and competencies that contribute to national and local economic goals which enable students to succeed in a knowledge-based economy; a variety of flexible learning modes including full-time, part time, block release, day-release, and sandwich programmes; access to training funds such as those provided by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund); Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) that is well structured, coordinated and supervised; maintenance of minimum educational standards through appropriate regulatory agencies; an all-inclusive credible admissions policy for national unity; supporting affordable, equitable access to tertiary education through scholarships and students' loans; inter-institutional co-operation and linkages; and dedicated services to the community through extra-mural and extension services (NPE, 2013).

Tertiary institutions are saddled with the responsibilities of curriculum implementation. Curriculum implementation is the act of executing the planned curriculum in the school to modify behavior of the learners. Curriculum implementation is the process of carrying out an organized and planned curriculum document into actions in the educational environment through professional teachers, learners, school administrators, and parents as well as interaction with physical facilities, instructional materials, and psychological and social environments. Curriculum implementation is the act of executing a planned curriculum document into the practical curriculum. (Okebukola, 2004) defines curriculum implementation as the transition of the objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. That is, only effective curriculum implementation ensures the achievement of the objectives for which the curriculum was designed to attain. (Obanya, 2004) sees the implementation of curriculum as day-to-day activities that school management and classroom teachers undertake in the pursuit of the objective of any given curriculum while (Garba, 2004) views curriculum implementation as putting the curriculum into work for the achievement of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. (Chikumbe & Makamure, 2000), the curriculum entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. From the above, curriculum implementation is the virtual and practical execution of prescribed courses of study in school, syllabuses and subjects in the classrooms within a given time. Curriculum implementation can also be viewed as the process of the planned prescribed courses of study being translated into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons by professional teachers to be delivered to students in the classroom online or physically. Curriculum implementation in Nigerian tertiary institutions is faced with challenges. It is important to examine the challenges hindering effective curriculum implementation in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Factors Responsible for Poor Curriculum Implementation in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria:

There are many problems facing curriculum implementation in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Such of them in this paper include; poor funding, inadequate academic staff, a sortie of infrastructural facilities, corruption, strike actions, brain-drain, insecurity and poor supervision:

- i. **Poor Funding:** Poor funding is a major problem facing curriculum implementation in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Ogunode, Yiolokun, & Akeredolu (2019), Ogunode (2020) and Ogunode, Akin-Ibidiran, & Ibidiran (2022) observe that inadequate funding is one of the major problems facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. The budgetary allocation for the administration of public universities in Nigeria is not adequate to implement the programme of universities in Nigeria. The university system requires a lot of funds for effective administration to be able to realize its goals. Funds are needed to procure the human and material resources needed for the implementation of the curriculum. Resources like facilities, staff, instructional aids, supervision, energy etc. (Ogunode & Ahaotu, 2021) observed that the problem of inadequate funding makes it impossible for higher institutions' leaders to implement school programmes. Because of the problem of inadequate funding of the various higher institutions in the country, higher institutions' administrators now resort to the acquisition of loans from financial institutions to run their respective institutions. The inability of vice-chancellors, Rectors and Provosts to access adequate funding for the running of the institutions is responsible for the poor development of the respective institutions in Nigeria. The problem of inadequacy of funds in Nigerian higher institutions can be linked to many factors. The poor funding of public universities in Nigeria is responsible for the poor quality of education and decaying infrastructural facilities. The inability of the government to objectively implement the UNESCO 26% recommendation for the funding of education in Nigeria is contributing to the poor performance of the public universities in the country (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020). (Ogunode, 2020; Ogunode, Abubakar & Ajape 2021). Ogunode & Onyekachi (2021) identified the factors responsible for inadequate funding of public universities in Nigeria to include lack of political will, corruption, increase in population, inflation, fall in national revenue and poor financial planning and the implications of underfunding of the public universities include; inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of academics staff, poor quality of education, brain-drain and strike action.
- ii. **Inadequate Academic Staff:** Inadequate academic staff is a problem hindering effective curriculum implementation in tertiary institutions. Ogunode & Adamu, (2021) view academic staff as those teaching staff in higher institutions. Academic staff are the implementer of the school curriculum and lecture presenters. Academic staffs are the teachers and delivery of instruction in the higher institutions. Academic staff are the knowledge and character builder/importers in the higher institution. The academic staff are the engine room of the higher institutions. They are the pillar and foundation of higher institutions. The functions of the academic staff include lecturing, preparing the lecture note, preparing the lesson note, sourcing instruction materials, giving an assignment to students, assessing the students through continuous assessment and examination, setting exams questions, marking the answer sheet, supervising students' research work, especially projects, theses and dissertation and prepares the students to grade points. The academic staff conducts different levels of research, presents their findings and contributes to the development of knowledge in the higher institutions (Ogunode, Jegede & Musa, 2021; Ogunode, Olatunde-Aiyedun & Mcbrown, 2022). The shortage of academic

staff is affecting curriculum implementation in many higher institutions. There is a shortage of manpower in Nigerian universities which is why the (National Universities Commission 2021) submits that universities should be isolated from the Federal Government's circular on new employment owing to the shortage of lecturers. The commission noted that 100,000 academic staff members were attending to 2.1 million students in Nigerian universities. The NUC disclosed that the commission was supervising over 200 universities consisting of 48 belonging to the Federal Government; 54 states and 99 private institutions. NUC observed that —The entire system has about 2.1 million students and a staff strength of about 170,000 non-teaching and 100,000 academic staff. —Some of the problems facing the system include increased running costs, meagre budgetary allocations, issues of power shortages and shortages of manpower. Ogunode & Adamu (2021) and Ogunode & Okwelogu (2022) conclude that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on the embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria and the implications of the shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation.

- iii. **Shortage of Infrastructural Facilities:** Shortage of infrastructural facilities is another factor militating against effective curriculum implementation in higher institutions spread across the country. Infrastructural facilities according to (Ogunode, 2020) refer to facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. The availability of infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support the effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent effective administration of educational institutions. Many public universities in Nigeria do not have adequate lecture halls, laboratories and offices for both students and academic staff due to poor funding (Ogunode, 2020). Ogunode, Josiah & Ajape (2021) submitted that inadequate infrastructural facilities in many public universities in Nigeria have been linked to the high rate of corruption in the system. The money provided for infrastructural facilities is diverted and looted, leaving the universities to suffer a shortage of facilities. Ebehikhalu & Dawam (2017) and Ogunode, Josiah & Ajape (2021) submitted that inadequate infrastructural facilities in many public universities in Nigeria have been linked to the high rate of corruption in the system. The money provided for infrastructural facilities is diverted and looted, leaving the universities to suffer a shortage of facilities. Specifically, Ogunode (2020) and Ogunode, & Jegede (2021) submit that factors responsible for inadequate infrastructural facilities in Nigerian public universities include; underfunding, increased student population, corruption, poor infrastructural facilities planning, poor supervision and inflation. The implication of inadequate infrastructural facilities in the Nigerian public universities includes; poor quality of education,

poor teaching and learning, low productivity, brain drain and overcrowding of lecture halls.

- iv. **Corruption:** Corruption in higher institutions is also affecting the implementation of the curriculum in tertiary institutions. Funds allocated for infrastructural facilities development that ought to have been deployed to support the curriculum implementation are looted or diverted (Chuta, 2004; Dawood, 2012; Ogunode, 2020). In 2018, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project claimed that there were allegations of corruption in several federal universities relating to the unfair allocation of grades; contract inflation; truncation of staff's salary on the payroll; employment of unqualified staff; certificate scandal; examination malpractice; sexual harassment; and issuance of results for expelled students to graduate. Ahmodu & Sofoluwe (2018) confirmed that University administrators have been accused of financial scandals. From vice-chancellors to bursars, various officials of major Nigerian universities have been accused of corruption with some of them already being prosecuted. For example, SaharaReporters (2017) submitted that the former Vice Chancellor of the Federal University of Petroleum Resources (FUPRE) in Effurun, Delta State, Akaehomen Akii Ibadode, was arrested alongside other top management staff at the institution over an N300 million fraud scandal, Sahara Reporters quoted a senior lecturer at the institution that said corruption and fraud "run in the DNA of the Vice Chancellor," adding that since the fraud was uncovered, Ibadode and other top management staff have been "running from pillar to post." According to the management staff of the institution, the scandal involves the N300 million National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) assessment fund granted to the institution. Rather than use the fund to finance building projects, it was diverted by Mr Ibadode and other staff of the university. "The NEEDS assessment fund was intended for the building of structures in the school, but this was not done," the source said. "Over N300 million was diverted by the VC and his gang. Instead of using the money for the purpose, it was meant for. Ogunode, Josiah, & Ajape (2021) and Ogunode, Ohunene & Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022) identified the following as the reasons for high financial corruption in the public universities in Nigeria: corrupt school administrators, lecturers and students; weak monitoring and evaluation system; weak trade unions; political interference; weak educational system; and poor accountability system. Also, the paper identified the implication of financial corruption on the public universities in Nigeria including a reduction in the volume of funds, inadequate facilities, shortage of staff, poor quality of university education, poor academic programme accreditation status, strike actions, and bad international image.
- v. **Strike Actions:** Strike actions in Nigerian public universities is another problem facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. The Nigerian public universities are known for continuous strike actions by different union groups in the public universities. The continuous strike actions by these different union groups are frustrating the administration of public universities in Nigeria (Ogunode 2020; Ogunode, Akinjobi, & Musa, 2022; Ogunode & Adah 2022)). The reasons for the strike actions by different union groups according to Ogunode (2020) and Ogunode, Ugochukwu, & Jegede (2022) include; underfunding of the public

universities, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor implementation of the agreement reached with union groups and poor working conditions. The implications of the continuous strike actions on the public universities include; disruption in the academic programme, poor quality of education, bad image for the universities, poor ranking internationally and poor patronage of public universities in Nigeria.

- vi. **Brain-drain:** Another problem facing curriculum implementation in Nigerian tertiary institutions is brain-drain. Brain-drain according to Ogunode (2020) refers to the movement of professionals from developing countries to developed countries for better job offers. Brain-drain is a situation whereby professional individuals are migrating from their countries to another country to seek greener pastures. Curriculum implementation requires adequate staffing for each programme. When these academic staffs are not available to support the curriculum, it will affect the implementation. Many lecturers and researchers are leaving public universities in Nigeria for another part of African countries and Europe for better job offers and conducive working environments. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has warned the Federal Government against encouraging brain drain with a lingering strike and nonchalant attitude towards the yearnings of ASUU. Factors responsible for Brain-drain in Nigerian public universities (Ogunode 2020; Ogunode & Atobauka, 2021) include; poor motivation, an unconducive working environment, insecurity, underfunding and political interferences. The implication of brain drain in the Nigerian public universities includes; a shortage of lecturers, poor quality of education and a high student-teacher ratio.
- vii. **Insecurity:** The insecurity problem in Nigeria is also affecting curriculum implementation. Due to insecurity, many higher institutions in the country no longer enjoy a stable academic calendar. Insecurity has collapsed the school calendar in Nigerian educational institutions. Ogunode (2020) affirms that insecurity is another problem facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. Nigeria is facing an insecurity challenge and this is affecting the entire educational institutions in the country. The Islamic sect called Boko haram meaning western education is forbidden is attacking educational institutions in the Northern part of Nigeria. Many public universities located in Northern Nigeria have been victims of continuous attacks. Many students, lecturers and administrators have been killed while others kidnapped. The various attacks on the universities have resulted in school closure leading to the unstable academic programme (Ogunode, 2020). Garba, Ogunode, Musa & Ahmed (2022) submit that Brain-drain, increased in the cost of running tertiary education, destruction of infrastructural facilities, loss of manpower, reduction in enrolment of students and disruption of the academic programme were identified as the effects of insecurity on tertiary education in the North-East political zone of Nigeria while in the South East. Ogunode & Ukozor (2022) identified disruption of higher education administration, teaching programme, research programme, community service programme, academic calendar, academic programme accreditation, and suspension of infrastructural facilities projects, brain-drain and reduction of academic staff strength is the impact of insecurity on higher education in the south-east geo-political zone and the paper

recommendation that the federal and state government should address issues responsible for the high rate of insecurity in the region.

- viii. **Poor supervision:** Poor supervision of tertiary institutions by the various institutions and individuals in charge is also among the factors contributing to poor implementation of the curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Edokhamhen & Ogunode (2020) observes that ineffective supervision is also responsible for poor teaching programme in higher institutions in Nigeria. The Nigerian government, in a bid to ensure effective supervision of teaching programmes in the higher institutions, established the following agencies: universities are supervised by the National Universities Commissions, while colleges of education are supervised by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) oversees polytechnic education. These commissions are responsible for policy decisions affecting institutions under their supervision, maintenance of standards through a system of periodic accreditation of courses, distribution and monitoring of government funding, the appointment of members of governing councils, and the day-to-day running of the institutions (NEEDS, 2014). These supervisory agencies of higher institutions have not been effective in the supervision of teaching programmes at the various higher institutions due to many challenges that include underfunding, shortage of staffers, weak leadership and internal problems. The inability of these supervisory agencies to effectively supervise the activities of the higher institutions is one of the factors responsible for poor teaching in the higher institutions in Nigeria (Edokhamhen & Ogunode, 2020; Ogunode & Ndayebom, 2022). Factors responsible for poor supervision of higher institutions in Nigeria (Ogunode & Ndayebom, 2022; Ogunode & Adanna, 2022) include Inadequate funding, shortage of personnel, inadequate transportation facilities, insecurity, opposition from labour unions, limited offices, strike actions, inadequate supervision materials and corruption were concluded as the challenges militating against effective supervision of higher institutions in Nigeria.

Conclusion:

Curriculum implementation is vital to the sustainability of tertiary education in Nigeria. Curriculum implementation is key to the realization of tertiary institutions' goals and objectives. In Nigeria, especially in tertiary institutions, curriculum implementation is faced with many challenges. This paper concludes that the challenges facing curriculum implementation in Nigeria include; poor funding, inadequate academic staff, shortage of infrastructural facilities, corruption, strike actions, brain-drain, insecurity and poor supervision.

Recommendations:

Based on the problems identified in this paper, the paper hereby recommends the following:

- i. Federal and state governments should increase the funding of tertiary institutions across the country;
- ii. The government should direct tertiary institutions administrators in the country to employ more academic and non-academic staff;

- iii. More infrastructure facilities should be provided in all the tertiary institutions in the country;
- iv. Corruption in the administration and management of the tertiary institutions should be fought by the deployment of ICT and involvement of tertiary institutions' stakeholders, especially the community;
- v. The government should employ agreements reached with the various trade unions in the tertiary institutions are implemented.
- vi. The government should come up with packages to motivate the academic staff to stay in the various higher institutions through increments of salaries and other allowances.
- vii. The government should address all factors causing insecurity in the country; and
- viii. The various supervisory agencies should be strengthened to carry out their supervisory functions.

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