
Technical Teachers Role in the Effective Implementation of Technical College Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This paper focused on technical teachers' role in the effective implementation of technical college curriculum. Technical teachers are teachers who teach technical subjects in technical colleges or institutions that run technical programmes. Technical college is an institution where technology education is provided. Technical colleges are institutions that provides training which covers human ability to shape and change the physical world to meet needs, by manipulating materials, equipment and tools with techniques. Curriculum is the learning experiences and intended learning outcomes systematically planned and guided by the school through the reconstruction of the knowledge of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development of the learner. Curriculum is the instrument through which the society via the schools educate her citizens. Curriculum implementation entails the interaction of the learner and the curriculum contents under the guidance of the teacher in order to acquire desired knowledge, attitudes, abilities and skills. Technical teachers play significant role in the curriculum implementation in technical college this is because every teacher has a way of preparing and delivering their lessons. For technical college curriculum implementation to be effective, professionally trained technical teachers should be employed to teach technical subjects, the basic needs of technical teachers regarding lesson delivery should be met. It is recommended among others that, technical teachers should be encouraged to participate in decision making and curriculum planning, provision of infrastructure, equipment and machines in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State should be made.

KEYWORDS: Technical teachers, Curriculum, Curriculum implementation, Technical College

Introduction

In order to achieve the objectives of technical education as outlined in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2013) an instrument that serves as a vehicle of operation in technical college is required, and that instrument is the technical college curriculum which has to be effectively implemented by qualified technical teachers. Though there are so many agents of curriculum implementation ranging from government activities of provision of equipment and learning materials, human and material resources, physical facilities to payment of salaries of all the

personnel both teaching and non-teaching concerned with the implementation of curriculum. Classroom is the centre of curriculum implementation and the technical teacher is at the middle of contents leading to the achievements of curriculum objectives and the learners in technical college.

Technical college is an institution where technology education is provided, is an institution in which students learn about the processes and knowledge related to technology (FME, 2001). Technical college is an institution that provides training which covers human ability to shape and change the physical world to meet needs, by manipulating materials, equipment and tools with techniques, it is an institution where the academic and vocational preparation of students for job involving applied science and modern technology is carried out (Batchman and Nathaniel, 2019). Hence, this paper is focused on the technical teacher's role in the effective implementation of technical college curriculum.

The Concept of Technical Education

Technical education refers to deliberate interventions to bring about learning which will make people more productive (or simply adequately productive) in designate areas of economic activity (e.g. economic section, occupations, specific work tasks). This is the distinctive purpose of technical education. In this definition, technical education refers to a range of learning experiences, which are relevant to the world of work, and is also aimed at providing better living.

At the background of the Master Plan for Technical Education Development in Nigeria in the 21st century Federal Ministry of Education (FME) (2001), stated that; an important ingredient for success in the effort of government at alleviating poverty, eradicating corruption, attaining food security, achieving universal assuring drastic reduction in violent crime and communal violence involving unemployed youth, among others, is the effective delivery of technical education. It is therefore the vision of the Nigerian Government since the beginning of the 21st century to have: an emergence of a vibrant Nigeria catalyzed by virile technical education system that is characterised by high public esteem, and high internal efficiency a democratic Nigeria triumphant over poverty, corruption and victorious in its struggle for gainful self-employment of its youth, through an enriched curriculum of its technical delivery system and a peaceful Nigeria, where the knowledge skills and attitudes of its technical education trainees and graduates assure fulfillment for the individual prosperity for the nation as well as socio-economic sustainability (Onweh in Uko, Ugboaja, Ibe, and Obnadike, 2016).

Generally, in Akwa Ibom State and in Nigeria, there is demand on the technical teachers to be competent in teaching variety of subject at the secondary school/technical college level. The programme of technical education in University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State College of Education and or in other Universities in the nation where Technical Education teachers are produced is meant to produce competent teachers who can cope with the teaching of Basic technology courses for the junior secondary schools and be competent in at least three of the Senior secondary school subjects namely:

- i. Applied Electricity
- ii. Auto Mechanics
- iii. Building Technology and Construction
- iv. Electrical/Electronics
- v. Metal work Technology

- vi. Technical Drawing
- vii. Woodwork Technology

The faculties/colleges of Education in most Universities, Colleges of Technology and Colleges of Education (Technical) where technical subjects are expected to be taught have few qualified and committed teachers to teach all the identified courses. This paucity of personnel informs the need for adequately trained technical teachers for such positions. Again, with the current emphasis on self-reliance and job creation for the Nigerian teeming population, this programme is expected to make significant contribution to the Nigerian education industry. And this would never be achieved without a qualified technical teachers leaving up to the expectation of proper implementation of technical college curriculum.

The Concept of Curriculum

Curriculum can be defined as the learning experiences and intended learning outcomes systematically planned and guided by the school through the reconstruction of knowledge of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development of the learner (Veronica, 2011). Curriculum is the instrument through which the society via the school educates her citizens, both adult and young. Curriculum is planned and implemented in accordance with the societal needs. Need is the gap between what is and what ought to be. Therefore, whatever the society wants is designed, and programmed through her curriculum which is handed over to the implementers (which are the teachers). Veronica (2011) maintained that curriculum is the mechanism through which the educational system inculcates into the learner, the knowledge, skills and attitudes which the society has prescribed.

The activity of all nations educational system is controlled by its curriculum. Curriculum is the educational container of the nations; its implementation should therefore be regarded as serious as the curriculum itself. No matter how lofty the technical college curriculum is designed, if it is not effectively implemented, the objectives of the technical college cannot be achieved.

Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation according to Obilo and Saugoleye (2015) “involves the dissemination of the structure set of learning experiences, the provision of resources to effectively execute the plan, and the actual execution of the plan in the classroom setting, where the teacher-learner interaction takes place.”

Curriculum implementation entails the interaction of the learner and the curriculum contents under the guidance of the teacher in order to acquire desired knowledge, attitudes, abilities and skills. In accordance with the above, Obilo and Saugoleye (2015) stated that in curriculum implementation, the learner for whom the programme is being planned interacts with the contents and materials in order to acquirer the necessary skills, attitudes and abilities.

Curriculum implementation equally connotes the activities of all those concerned with the provision and distribution of materials that will enhance the achievement of the teaching and learning objectives. Such materials include, textbooks, instructional desk, etc, this is because for the curriculum contents to be effectively implemented at any stage of the educational system, some materials which are expected to complement the classroom activities of the teacher should be

provided for effective implementation at the classroom levels of any of the educational programmes.

Non participation of teachers who are the curriculum implementers in curriculum planning constitutes a clog in the effectiveness and efficiency of their work as curriculum implementers.

Technical Teachers Role in Curriculum Implementation in Technical College

In all successful curriculum development and implementation, the teacher is the crucial element. This is because every teacher has a way he prepares his lesson, and delivers it. Nnabuike (2012) is of the opinion that the performance and efficiency of teachers can among other things depend on the extent which they can participate in curriculum decision which they implements. Curriculum implementation which is at the centre of the curriculum process is the stage where all the curriculum contents are made to come in contact with students through the various activities of the teacher and other agents.

Adebayo (2012) viewed curriculum implementation as the task of translating the curriculum concept into operating curriculum by the combined efforts of the teachers and society. Ifegbo and Ukegbu (2009) are of the opinion that curriculum implementation is a process of putting a document or an instructional programme into practice. It is pertinent to note that the process of putting either document or instructional programme into practice cannot be completed without the efforts of the teachers.

Zumwatt in Akwesi (2012) asserted that curriculum implementation is the practical application of theory into practice in a way that the eventual outcome is evidenced through the learners' performances in new programmes. In technical college, the overall technical college objectives can only be achieved if the instructional objectives at the various classroom/workshop levels are achieved probably as a result of technical teacher effectiveness, but if the technical teacher is ineffective, the instructional objectives of technical college cannot be achieved.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) in her National Policy on Education (NPE), Section for technical education, the goal of technical education in Nigeria is to provide:

- a. Trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly craft, advance craft and technical level.
- b. The technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development.
- c. Training and impart the necessary skills to individuals for self-reliance economically.

The above goals of technical education would never be achieved without proper implementation of the technical education curriculum by the technical teachers in various technical colleges.

Technical teachers are the key players of curriculum implementation in technical colleges and as such can mar or enhance curriculum implementation. This is referred to as make and break rolled (Stone, 2011). A teacher as defined by Stone (2011) is one who has been trained in the art of teaching. Stone further opined that a quality teacher is not a person who only obtains a degree in

his subject area, but such a person must in addition be knowledgeable in the science and art of teaching. Esler (2017) identified the following as the quality of a good teacher; ability to understand the purpose and methodology of several new developments in the subject area; ability to implement inquiry techniques; ability to plan instruction to include both the process and the products of his subject; and ability to relate instructions to affective development of students. Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) asserted that an essential part of teachers' knowledge that goes beyond special topics within a curriculum is the subject matter that is to be taught. The importance of teachers in curriculum implementation cannot be overemphasized.

Challenges of Teachers in Curriculum Implementation

Generally, most schools and technical colleges in Nigeria lack infrastructure and other facilities that enhance teaching and learning. This is evidenced from UNESCO (2014) report which indicates poor infrastructure like shortage of desks and chairs. In some technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State, there are no adequate workshop equipment and machines. This contribute greatly to the hindrance of technical college curriculum implementation by the technical teachers in their respective technical colleges. UNESCO (2014) report further stated that most schools especially secondary schools lack water and sanitation facilities. The implication of the above is that a teacher leaves his class for his house or to any other place of convenience whenever he or she is pressed by nature during school hours. Equally, there is the tendency that students could contract some contagious diseases as a result. Consequently, the coverage of some important curriculum content could be missed by both the students and the teachers.

Furthermore, Okebukola (2015) stated that other issues affecting curriculum implementation by the teachers include the following:

- a. Inadequate teaching material
- b. Insufficient funding
- c. Overcrowded curriculum
- d. Too much workload for the teachers
- e. Inadequate supervision
- f. Lack of incentives
- g. Employment of unqualified teaching personnel, that is, employment of public officers like teachers are in the hands of government, when government employs an unqualified persons to teach in schools especially unqualified technical teachers to teach technical subject in the technical college as a result of connection or membership of the same political parties, curriculum implementation at the classroom and or workshop in the case of practical subject in the technical college is adversely affected because no one can give what he does not have.

Ifiok (2012) in his opinion stated that 'lack of required background and orientation relevant to curriculum on the part of the teacher leads to poor attitudes towards the implementation of a new curriculum, no matter how expertly the pages of the curriculum were designed.'" Achuonye and

Ajioku (2012) asserted that training has positive effect on the teachers' efficiency towards teaching. He also stated that teachers with lower educational qualification will definitely implement the curriculum in the wrong way. He also maintained that quacks jump into the teaching field because of dearth of teachers, lack of job satisfaction, most of the teachers in Nigeria are not well paid, the poor salary are not even regular. Their promotions are not released as at when due. There are cases of non-payment of teachers leave allowances. Moreover, many of the teachers are not sure of their pension and gratuity. All these could make them loose focus on the actual teaching job and focus on means of personal survival at the detriment of curriculum implementation. Adebayo (2012) in his own contribution to the above, stated that, the performance of a person on a job is a function of two variables vis; the individual's skill on the job and the motivation he received to apply the skill. Lack of job satisfaction by the technical teacher can affect technical college curriculum implementation negatively.

Measures for Effective Curriculum Implementation in Technical Colleges

Since the technical teachers are the implementers of technical college curriculum in technical colleges, their basic needs regarding instructional delivery should be met. Professionally trained technical teachers should be employed to teach technical subjects in technical colleges:

Provision of infrastructure/facilities, instructional materials, teachers' participation in decision and curriculum planning, adequacy of qualified teachers, adequate funding, motivation of technical teachers are required for effective curriculum implementation in technical college. Government and non-governmental organizations should strive to provide conducive learning environment by making available the necessary facilities like good classrooms, desks and chairs, instructional materials. Technical teachers should be encouraged to go on training and re-training programmes, seminar/workshops to be abreast with the current curriculum trends and new methods of teaching. Technical teachers should also participate in other stages of curriculum process, such as the planning and development stage. Technical teachers should be more creative and innovative in their work to enable them improvise where the actual materials/resources are not available. Working conditions of the technical teachers should be improved to enable them put in their best in their services. Whenever a new curriculum is introduced, teachers should be made to go on training on the implementation modalities. Technical teachers should be made to teach only subjects of their specialization.

Conclusion

Technical education in technical colleges is a professional activity which has become so knowledge intensive. Professional work can no longer simply proceed from a fixed educational background, rather education provided in technical colleges must be smoothly incorporated as part of work activities fostering growth and exploration. Technical teachers who are actually the implementers of the curriculum in technical colleges must be proficient and adequately equipped to leave up to the expectation of the objectives of the curriculum in technical colleges.

Similarly, students of the programme require technical educational tools, equipment and environments whose primary aim is to help cultivate the desire to learn and create and not to simply communicate subject matter divorced from meaningfully and personalized activity. Recognizing the fact that technical education is the bedrock of any national development, the problem of curriculum implementation in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State should be addressed so that

it can be maximized towards productivity and sustainable development in Akwa Ibom State and Nigeria in general.

Recommendations

Based on the information provided in this work, the following recommendations are made:

1. Technical teachers should be encouraged to participate in the decision making and curriculum planning.
2. Technical teachers should be motivated as appropriate for effective curriculum implementation in technical colleges.
3. Provision of infrastructure, equipment and machines in technical colleges should be encouraged.
4. Government and non-governmental organizations should strive to provide conducive learning environment for the students in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

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