

Curriculum Innovation: Imperative for Lifelong Learning in Business Education in 21st Century

By
Dr. Commy Precious GODDYMKPA Ph.D,
Faculty of Education
University of Uyo
&
Blessing Daniel UDO
Department of Vocational Studies
Faculty of Education
University of Uyo

Abstract

The paper examined curriculum innovation as imperatives for lifelong learning business education, the 21st century Nigeria with a view to discuss the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century Nigeria. The paper discusses the concept of business education concept of curriculum innovation and concept of learning. The objectives of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning the 21st century Nigeria includes to enable educational practices to change from time to time so as to reflect the consequence changes and demands in the Nigerian society; to provide the means of trying new research findings and to improve performance of the school system so as to realize results oriented. The challenges against effective curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning business education in the 21st century Nigeria are the feeling of inertia among the teacher staff, the administration or the community; people feel insecure about uncertainty of things to happen; rapidity to change; lack of knowledge; and lack of support. The paper concluded that curriculum innovation and development efforts like the society in which it is practiced is not static. Curriculum practices innovation continuously in response to the changes and needs of the society. The recommendations are among others that government, curriculum experts, teachers, parents, learners, psychologists, subject specialists and all the stake holders who are expected to participate actively in the curriculum planning, development and innovation should actively participate in the curriculum innovation as imperatives for lifelong learning in business education the 21st century Nigeria.

Key Words: Business education, Curriculum Innovation long life and Learning.

Introduction

From an education point view, only genuinely new ideas and innovations would be sufficient in providing alternatives that lead to a more sustainable path of development. Since the worlds countries, Nigeria inclusive, is not likely to return to stable time with permanent jobs and steady economic development, the key competences needed in the future have to reflect more than before on, flexibility and innovation.

On the other hand, curriculum is not static, rather, it is dynamic and flexible in nature due to changing needs and values of society, dynamism of knowledge, increase in faculties that improve teaching and learning, new findings in educational research challenges posed by technological innovation in different parts of the world and so on. Curriculum innovation and development efforts like the society in which it is practiced is not static. Curriculum practices innovation continuously in response to the changes and needs of the society. It is against this background and direction that this paper intends to examine the curriculum innovation as imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century Nigeria with a view to discuss the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century Nigeria.

Objective of the study

1. To examine the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria
2. To find out the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria

Research questions

1. What is the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria
2. What are the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria.

Concept of Curriculum:

Curriculum is defined as the planned and guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes, formulated and provided under the auspices of the school, for the learner's continuous and willful growth in cognitive, affective and psychomotor competence (NTI, 2007). It is programme of studies and activities designed so that learners will attain as far as possible, certain educational goals and objectives. Curriculum thus involves all the actions of the school, which are aimed at getting the child to begin a course and at the end attain educational goals Indiana Department of Education (2010). It comprises of the courses or subjects and their contents to be studied by learners at all levels of education. Among such subjects is Islamic Studies. On the hand, curriculum is set of learning opportunities intending to achieve broad goals and related specific objectives. It is a set of courses and their contents offered at a school or university. It is considered to be the complete atmosphere to transform peoples' life (Obanya, 2016). Ben-Yunusa (2008), sees curriculum as a variety of learning experiences that pupils engage in under the guidance of teachers. Form the above, one can concluded that, curriculum is a set of courses and their contents offered by the school deliberately or undeliberate in order to educate the students and transform them to be active, effective and responsible in the society.

Business Education: Curriculum Innovation

Innovation is a deliberate, novel specific change in the curriculum. Innovation can also be defined as purposeful change. It is a deliberate change aimed at achieving positive results. Innovation in education is to create something new in the school curriculum (Okam, 2012). Innovation in education can be in the area of policy, objectives, contents, materials, methods, learning experiences, evaluation or strategies.

Innovation in curriculum means modifications or alternations of what used to be in existence. Innovation relates to casual initiatives by separate groups or persons. Curriculum innovation according Offorma (2016), is any alternation in the aspects of curriculum, educational policy, philosophy, values, objectives, organizational structures, materials, teaching strategies, students experience, assessment and learning outcomes. From the above, the authors see curriculum innovation as any adding, subtracting, deleting or creating anything new in any curriculum components (that is, objectives, contents, methodology, learning experience and evaluation) or in any related issues in curriculum.

Concept of Learning

Learning is a continuous process in the sense that it start from the womb and does not cease or stop until one goes to the grave. Learning is a process in which past experiences or practices result in relatively permanent change of behaviours in an individual (Okam 2000 in Aliyu & Yusuf, 2016). Learning is basically a process of adopting and improving the achievement. What is learnt can be measured by those things that we observe in the behavior of the individual or those that can be inferred. There is continuity in learning and it builds on experience and practice. A major feature of the learning activity is that it results in the modification of existing behavior pattern in a way which affects future performance or attitudes. Learning does not however occur on its own, it comes up through interaction with another person or things. From the above, one can conclude that learning results in promoting behavior of an individual and that of the society for better tomorrow.

The Objective of Curriculum Innovation Imperatives for Lifelong Learning in the 21st Century Nigeria

1. To enable educational practices to change from time to time so as to reflect the consequent changes and demands in the Nigerian society.
2. To provide the means of trying new research findings
3. To enable classroom teachers to acquire new knowledge that would make them more.
4. To enable classroom teachers to solve some instructional problems encountered in the teaching and learning processes.
5. To improve performance of the school system so as to be result oriented.

Taxonomy of Curriculum Innovation Process Imperatives for Lifelong Learning in the 21st Century Nigeria

Taxonomy means the various steps or stages that can be adopted to bring about curriculum innovation. The taxonomy of innovation process can be classified into seven broad categories as quoted by (Yusuf, 2012) namely.

1. **Research:** This is the stage at which the problems of either the teachers or students are identify usually by an innovator. The problem may be related to students' difficulties in understanding certain concepts, skills or at best, the content they are taught, or methods and strategies used for the instruction, or problems associate with teacher factors and characteristics, among others.
2. **Development:** This involves development of instruments and other instructional materials that may be found useful in solving the problems identified under the research stage.
3. **Dissemination:** This is the act of spreading information and ideas to the target population. The target population here refers to the teachers, students and other persons or group of persons that require the use of the taxonomy process.
4. **Demonstration:** This involves trial of the new ideas already developed. This usually occurs at the pilot stage of the development of the instruments and other materials of interest.
5. **Implementation:** Adoption takes place here, and materials and ideas developed under research are put into practice in the classroom on a large scale.
6. **Installation:** At this stage, the new materials are now in use by the teachers, publishing houses and indeed everybody that needs the services of the materials to bring about improvement in the system.
7. **Institutionalisation:** At this stage, the new ideas and packages now form part and parcel of the whole system. This stage does not require much monitoring since it does not need much counseling nor conviction, as users of the materials are now happy and seem satisfied with the state, function and worthwhileness of the materials in bring about desired innovation and expected results.

Challenges Against Effective Implementation of Curriculum Innovation Imperatives for Lifelong Learning in Business Education in the 21st Century

Among the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperative for lifelong learning in the 21st century Nigeria include with the following:

1. **Inertia:** The feeling of inertia among the teaching staff, the administration, or the community is one of the largest barriers to curriculum innovation. Many people think it is just easier to keep things as they are. People have traditions to which they adhere and institution they cherish, and they do not wish to change them. Many people comfortable with the school set up as a bureaucracy. Wanting to keep things as they are is often mixed with believing that things do not need to be changed or change being suggested is unwise and will thus be unproductive in meeting the objectives of the school. Some say that schools are fine and just remain to be maintained, whereas others view that the schools are not responsive to the times and require major modification. The status-quo tend to be maintained if those suggesting change have not presented precise goals of the new programme being suggested, that is, they have not planned adequately what the new programme would look like or indicate way in which the new programme would be superior to the existing one. Teachers, sometimes, view innovation as a just signaling more work, sometimes else to add on to an already overloaded schedule for which little or no time is allotted. Usually no extra money or reward is earmarked for the extra work either. Moreover, teachers tend to be conformist in nature, not innovation. They fell to have succeeded in the school system as it has existed and would like to continue safe, no matter they have to remain a low profile in a bureaucratic system run by the administrators. They claim to have found success as students and now as teachers in the same system and for this reason they see no reason for change it.
2. **Insecurity:** People feel insecure about uncertainty of things to happen. Those who are comfortable with present are reluctant to change for a future which they cannot comprehend or see clearly. They prefer to stay with certain known deficiencies than venture forth to uncertain future, even if the innovations most likely would be improvements. Bringing new students or parents or content into curriculum realm or organizing the programme in new ways, makes many teachers uneasy.
3. **Rapidity of Innovation:** This refers to the factors which makes people resist innovation anticipating another innovation in curriculum soon. Many people feel that if something is implemented this year, it would most likely be abandoned when another innovation appears and this will thus make all their effort useless.
4. **Lack of knowledge:** Sometimes people resist innovation and its Implementation because they lack knowledge. They either do not know about the at all or they have little information about it. Curriculum leaders must furnish all affected parties, that is, teacher, parents, learners and community members with information about the nature of the programme and its rationale, ideally, school representatives of the reasons for the new programme should inform stake holders either directly or indirectly.
5. **Lack of Support:** People resist innovation if not financially or time support is given to the effort. A project for which no monies are budgeted is rarely destined to be implemented. Often, the authority budget monies for materials but fail to allocate funds for the creation of the curriculum plan, its delivery within the classroom or necessary in service training. Teachers are required to

help implementation of curriculum innovation, but the school leaders (head teacher or principal) or the school district leader (district education officer or superintendent) should be one to initiate innovation and provide the ingredients and processes for constructive innovation. On the other hand, teachers are virtually and untapped source of energy and insight, capable of profoundly innovating the schools if they act as a group and direct their energies to local and state policy matters. It seems that curriculum leaders encounter a number of problems in implementing curriculum innovation. But resistance to change is sometimes perceived as good because it call upon the innovation agent to think carefully about the innovation and to consider the human dynamics involved in implementing programme (Sing,2014).

Methodology

Research design

Descriptive survey design was used for the study.

Population

The population of the study consisted of widows in Akwa Ibom State.

Sampling and Sampling Technique

The respondent in the study consisted of 200 respondents. These were obtained through the purposive sampling method:

Instrumentation

The researcher developed an instrument tagged, “Curriculum Innovation: Imperative for Lifelong Learning in Business Education Questionnaire (CIILLBEQ)”.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment and Correlation analysis were used in analyzing the data. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level.

Results and Discussions

Result

Research Question One

The research question sought to find out the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria. In order to answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data collected as shown in table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive analysis of the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria.

Variable	N	Arithmetic mean	Expected mean	R	Remarks
Lifelong Learning	576	16.65	12.5	0.85*	*Strong to Perfect relationship
Curriculum Innovation		15.80	12.5		

Source: Field Survey

Table 1 presents the result of the descriptive statistics of the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria. The two variables were observed to have strong to perfect relationship at 85%. The arithmetic mean for lifelong learning 16.65 was observed to be greater than the expected mean score of 12.5. In addition to that, the arithmetic mean as regards curriculum innovation 15.80 was observed to be higher than the expected mean score of 12.5. The result therefore means that there is significant influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria.

Research Question Two

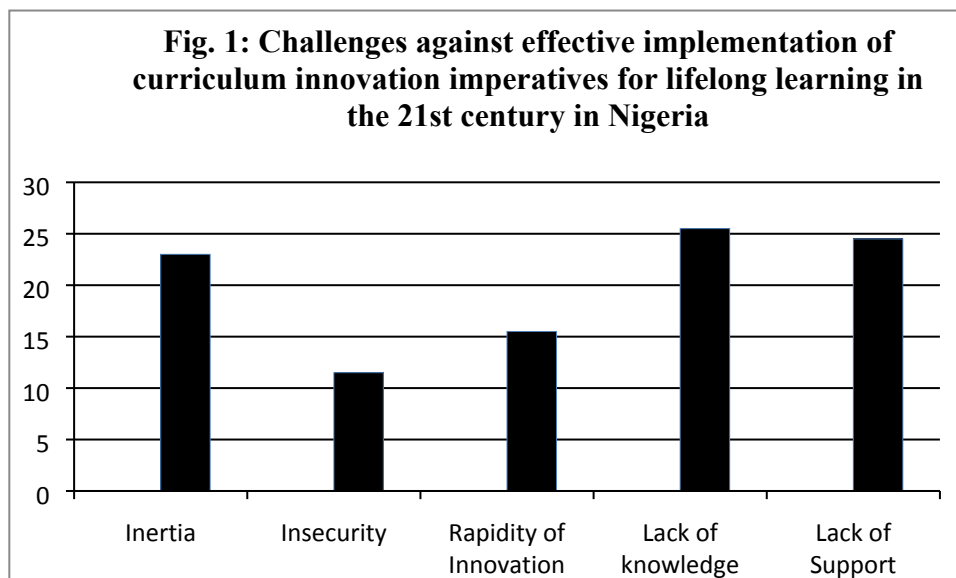
The research question sought to find out the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria. To answer the research question, percentage analysis was performed as can be seen in table 2 and figure 1.

Table 2

Percentage analysis of the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria.

Challenges	Freq	Percentage (%)
Inertia	46	23
Insecurity	23	11.5
Rapidity of Innovation	31	15.5
Lack of knowledge	51	25.5
Lack of Support	49	24.5
TOTAL	200	100%

SOURCE: Field survey



SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 2 and figure 1 present the percentage analysis of the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria. From the result, it was observed that the highest percentage of the respondent 51(25.5%) were respondent who said the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria includes lack of knowledge, seconded by respondents 49(24.5%) who said lack of support. This was followed by respondent who mentioned inertia 46(23.0%). The second to the least respondents on the subject matter said rapidity of innovation 31(15.5%), while the least number of respondents 23(11.5%) said insecurity.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria. In order to test the hypothesis regression analysis was performed on the data, (see table 3).

Table 3: Regression Analysis of the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria.

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.85 ^a	0.72	0.72	1.09	0.72

***Significant at 0.05 level; df= 198; N= 200 critical R-value = 0.139**

The table shows that the calculated R-value 0.85 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.139 at 0.5 alpha level with 198 degree of freedom. The R-Square value of 0.72 predicts 72% of the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria. This rate of percentage is highly positive and therefore means that there is significant influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria. It was also deemed necessary to find out the extent of the variance of each case of independent variable (curriculum innovation) as responded by each respondent (see table 2).

Table 4: Analysis of variance of the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	610.68	1	610.68	514.92	.000b
Residual	234.82	198	1.19		
Total	845.50	199			

The above table presents the calculated F-value as (514.92) and the P-value as (000). Being that the P-value (000) is below the probability level of 0.05, the result therefore means that there is significant influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

From result of the data analysis in table 2 and figure 1 it was observed that the challenges against effective implementation of curriculum innovation imperatives for lifelong learning in the 21st century in Nigeria as responded by the respondent includes Inertia, Insecurity, Rapidity of Innovation, Lack of knowledge and Lack of Support. The result of the analysis affirmed the opinion of research experts and authors on the subject matter.

The result of the data analysis in table 3 was significant due to the fact that the calculated R-value 0.85 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.139 at 0.5 alpha level with 198 degree of freedom. The R-Square value of 0.72 predicts 72% of the influence of curriculum innovation on lifelong learning of business education in Nigeria. The significance of the result is in agreement with the findings of research experts and authors on the subject matter. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

Conclusions

Curriculum innovation and development effort like the society in which it is practiced is not static. Curriculum practices innovation continuously in response to the changes and needs of the society. Only genuinely new ideas and innovation would be sufficient in providing alternatives that lead to a more sustainable path of development. Since the worlds countries, Nigeria inclusive, is not likely to return to stable times with permanent jobs and steady economic development, the key competences needed in the future have to reflect more than before on, flexibility and innovations.

Recommendations

In view of the above discussion, the paper therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. Government, curriculum experts, business teachers, parents, learners, psychologist, subject specialist and all the stake holders who are expected to participate in the curriculum innovation as imperatives for lifelong learning in business education in the 21st century Nigeria.
2. Ministries of Education and relevant educational and professional bodies like Curriculum Organization of Nigeria (CON) should organize in-service training, workshops and seminars for business education teachers. This should help in enlightening them on the use of the innovative instructional for lifelong learning in the business education 21st century Nigeria.

3. Government at all levels should intensify effort in providing the essential instructional materials needed for learners to benefit maximally in the teaching and learning process of business education.

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