

**CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF EFFECTIVE
IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE
FUNCTIONAL EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Education is an important key for achieving an effective implementation of sustainable educational psychology for national development. In Nigeria, effective implementation of sustainable functional educational psychology is faced with the challenges of providing knowledge and services that contribute to national development. As educationists, it is pertinent that we must be able to ascertain the level of growth and development of the child and his or her requirements at different stages which is not being done nowadays. This is due to lack of instructional materials, overpopulation of students, inadequate qualified teachers, school administrators, and wrong personnel in positions, non-participation of teachers in decision-making process and educational programmes, and lack of proper professional training on them offered by the government. Educational psychology is the branch of applied psychology which is developed to help not only students and teacher, but also

principals, school administrators, policy makers and guidance counsellors to know, deal, and understanding all the psychological aspects, situations and the effects of which affects the teaching and learning outcome in any concern. Therefore, this paper highlighted the concept of educational psychology, aspects, challenges, and prospects of its effective implementation and sustainability in order to add value to her educational system and promoting national development.

Keywords: *Education, Educational Psychology, Challenges, Prospects, Effective Implementation, and National Development.*

Introduction

Education refers to the total process of developing human ability and behaviours". It is an organized and sustained instruction designed to communicate a combination of knowledge, skills and understanding value for all activities of life. Education refers to what can be used by man to solve his problems to improve his life and make it comfortable. It is one of the several ways that man employs to bring change in to his all-round development. Education demands efforts and discipline. It is also a formidable tool for man's survival. UNESCO, 2000.

Functional education, which is the main instrument for national development can be achieved in Nigeria if the following essential requirements for good quality education are provided which are, but not limited to recruitment of passionate, dedicated, professional and experienced leaders at the national, state and local government levels. The question becomes, what is wrong with the Nigeria Educational System? There is no doubt that due to immense programmes put in place by various governments in Nigeria to improving the quality of education, much has not been achieved in really spelling out on policies that will fit the entire society. The utmost relevance attached to education in Nigeria was clearly underestimated in the National Policy on Education. But despite the government's commitment to improving her educational system, the quality of education in our schools have been degraded so much thereby giving the present governmental systems serious challenge. Before independence, the system was implemented by different sets of leaders including the Christian Missionaries, the Colonial Government and the Regional Government butlack of a functional educational policy caused by poor administration has been the issue of the educational system since inception. Poor administration is exhibited in

various ways including wrong timing of policy inauguration and programme implementation.

For the system to be standard once again there is need on the part of the nation to ensure political stability. It is only when the politics is stable and organized and all the levels of government display the necessary political characteristics, only then we can have a functional and sustainable Educational Psychology and System.

Concept of educational psychology

Educational Psychology consists of two words ‘education and ‘psychology.’ The term education is derived from the Latin word ‘educatum’ which means to derive out or to bring out the inner qualities (as it was believed that all are present in an individual right from birth, but in passive form) of an individual in a harmonious and appropriate environment so that the best of any individual may be attained in all aspect of psychology, physiology, spiritual, value, ethics and all. Also psychology is concerned with the branch of science that deals particularly with the behaviour of any individual, such that any aspect of mind cannot be excluded. It means it is concerned with the observation, analysis, research and study of any individual’s behaviour in the avenue through which internal mental events takes place because they consequently affect external behaviour and response in one way or another.

Literally both of these words combine to form Educational Psychology can be defined as that branch of applied psychology, which is concerned with the application of psychological principles, theories, phenomenon, research and findings that tends to educate people especially in reference to the psychological concerns, situations and problems, cause and effect relations of behaviour of students and teachers which affects education directly or indirectly.

Moreover, it can be defined as the branch of psychology which deals with the psychological aspects, situations, input-output effects of all the people involved in teaching-learning process, particularly student, teacher and their teaching- learning environment, in special reference to those prime factors which affects their teaching-learning outcome.

Basically, educational psychology is the branch of applied psychology which is developed to help not only students and teachers, but also other people like principals, administrators, policy makers, guidance and counsellors, to know, deal and understand all the psychological aspects, situations and as such their effect which affects their teaching learning outcome in any area of educational, psychological and cognitive concern. It is the branch of psychology concerned with the scientific study of human learning,

the study of learning processes, from both cognitive and behavioral perspectives. These allows researchers to understand individual differences in intelligence, cognitive development, motivation, self-regulation, and self-concept, as well as their role in the teaching and learning processes.

The field of educational psychology relies heavily on quantitative methods which includes tests and measurement that enhances educational activities related to instructional design, classroom management, and assessment. All these help to facilitate learning processes in various educational settings across the lifespan. [Nathaniel Gage](#)(2008) is an important figure in educational psychology as his research focused on improving teaching and understanding the processes involved in teaching. Gage founded the Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, which contributed research on teaching as well as influencing the education of important educational psychologists. Educational psychology has an immense role to enhance learning and understanding, crucial for socioeconomic empowerment and enhance decision making based on wisdom. It creates self- awareness, social awareness, and socio management and as well enhance adequate decision making.

Functions of educational psychology

Educational Psychology is carried out so that one can be able to apprehend the elements and additives which might be concerned with the inside and existence of the learner. Psychology in Education is crucial as it lays down the rightful basis and standards of training. Educational psychology is especially crucial to apprehend the thoughts patterns of the child so that during the stages of development, he/she will be able to broaden his/her mastering and training capabilities effectively. It creates an extraordinary bond among students and teachers and subsequently encourages the scholar to act in a mannerly manner with their teachers and the world at large. Psychology in Education is likewise crucial for any individual as it makes the individual to be able to hassle-fixing not hassle creating. It enables a teacher to study the behavior of the students, helps the curriculum constructors to prepare a suitable curriculum for a particular group of students having equal age (special education). It helps a teacher to study the mental health of students and also education organizers to study the mental health of the persons working in the organization. Furthermore, educational psychology helps a teacher to choose a suitable method of teaching. It helps the teacher and test constructors to prepare a suitable test question for a particular group of students. It helps the teacher and educationist to make various tests for their students patterning to intelligence, interest, personality, attitude, aptitude etc. the functions of educational psychology cannot be overemphasized as it helps

to maintain emotional stability, improve understanding about learners which could improve learning and retention ability for better decision making based on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Organizational performance, relationship with juniors, seniors and staff members could be improved through educational psychology. It also helps to deal with stress and complex situations. Help to develop attitude of gratitude and sympathy, empathy and compassion towards other sections of society.

Hence Educational psychology helps individual and learners to perceive, analyze and understand concept and procedures, encouraging and promoting teaching and learning methods, nourishes the learning methods of an individual so as to be able to achieve a way to enhancing effective and efficient educational sector.

Challenges in implementing an effective functional educational psychology in Nigeria

The success and goals of any level of education depends largely on the effective implementation of its laid-out policies and programmers'. According to Adeleke (2006), education sector in Nigeria has suffered the challenge of inadequate instructional materials and equipment, inadequate qualified teacher, poor funding syndrome, and lack of motivation among others. Elaborating further, there is urgent need to resolve matters surrounding the implementation of effective and sustainable functional educational psychology in her system.

Inadequate instructional facilities:

Instructional facilities also known as teaching/learning materials are any collection of materials including animate and inanimate objects, human and non-human resources that a teacher may use in the teaching and learning situations so as to help achieve the desired learning objectives. According to Ehiamentalor (2011), facilities are those methods which enable production workers to achieve the goals of an organization. Olorok (2006) asserted that the use of instructional materials facilitate learning outcome and leads to interaction within its environment in view of Marianhi (2009) as a relative to animate instructional facilities asserted that a simply, dignified, artistic exterior is suggestive of the purpose for which school building exists that could make the scholars proud of their school and will have a positive influence on their performance at school. Furthermore, Nwachukwu (2005) observed that the public sector of education have experienced setbacks so much and these have led to her low standard and value. Ehiamentalor(2011) postulated that school facilities are the operational inputs of every instructional programme. The school is

like a manufacturing organization where plants and equipment must be in a top operational shape to produce result. Emetarom (2003) asserts that “school facilities can be said to be the physical methods of teaching and learning which will increase the production and achievement of desired results”. Osifila (2004) discovered a significant relationship between adequacy of physical plants and teachers’ effectiveness and students’ academic performance. Other studies (Okebukola, 2005; Okunola, 2005; Agusiobo, 2004) noted that the availability of resources is an important aspect in student learning.

Hence, Instructional materials are alternative channels of communication which a teacher can use to module up information and make them clearer to his learners. Instructional materials are ways and methods of making the teaching and learning process simpler, meaningful and understandable.

Inadequate qualified staff:

This is pertinent in implementing an effective functional sustainable educational psychology program in Nigeria but the reverse is the case these days. This is because it has been noticed that most secondary schools do not have professionally qualified teachers. In most cases, teachers are forced to teach subjects that are not their areas of specialization. This call for urgent attention because teachers are the major pillars of its successful implementation. Lassa (2007) sees the teacher as a key factor to the proper development of the child and consequently they are needed in greater number in all schools because teachers are the cornerstone in any educational system with Nigeria inclusive. The National Policy on Education states that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers (NPE, 2004). Adesina (1980) and Oguntoye (2003) expressed that the qualification and experience of teachers are pre-requisite to the quality of students’ performance. Adesina therefore notes that inadequate teaching and non-teaching staff are obstacles to the successful implementation of curriculum in the educational sector. Shulman (2007) identified the teacher as a major factor in student learning. Adeogun (2006) observed high student teacher ratio in most public schools. This is as a result of non-recruitment of more teaching staff to level up with the increase in the enrolment of students, which in turn has negative effect on effective implementation of educational psychology.

Wrong personnel in positions and non-participation of teachers in decision-making and educational programmes:

For the set objectives of effective and sustainable educational psychology to be achieved, teachers must be involved in decision-making

and planning of curriculum. Obinna (2007) found out that in most cases teachers are purposely sidelined when major decisions on education and matters concerning their welfare are taken. Ugwu (2005) asserted that relevance of a curriculum is determined only when it is implemented. In other words, the relevance of any curriculum depends on the extent to which the classroom teacher is able not only to interpret the curriculum but to implement it. Mkpa (2007) postulated strongly that as an important person in the programme of curriculum implementation, the teacher must be involved in all stages of the curriculum process. Lack of involvement of teachers, according to Akuezilo (2006) equally hinders the curriculum whose key implementers are not well informed of the teaching of such curriculum. In support of the above, teacher involvement in curriculum planning is a strong base for effective implementation and sustainable educational psychology in Nigeria which will also in turn boost her educational system. Adeleke (2006) believes that one of the problems of Nigeria secondary school curriculum content is effectively finishing of a product (implementation), which is saddled with teacher's responsibility. Adeleke postulated that the poor implementation of the secondary school curriculum in Nigeria has caused the missing link between the goals of Nigeria education and its achievement.

Over-population of students

The introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) brought with a sudden population teacher-pupil or student ratio, adverse-effects on the educational system in Nigeria. Overpopulation in the classroom is now the order of the day from Primary to tertiary level. This type of environment is not conducive for effective teaching/learning process and effective teacher/student relationship may not be possible in an overpopulated classroom setting either. This probably explains why some teachers in some tertiary institutions resolve to the use of handouts. (Akande, 2004).

Prospects in implementing effective functional sustainable educational psychology

For the purpose of achieving effective functional sustainable educational psychology and national development, there is the need for a conducive learning environment. As such, the outdated instructional materials in schools and colleges must be improved, qualified teachers who are the pillars of sound knowledge must be involved in the decision-making process so as to ensure a sustainable educational psychology in Nigeria. They must also be properly motivated, the need for salary increment and better working

conditions must be put in place in order for them to put in their best towards facilitating the teaching and learning process. Government at all levels Federal, state and local must contribute their respective quota to the development of education by doing the needful (by building adequate classrooms with well-equipped libraries, laboratories, and all other needed educational gadgets, renovations of all dilapidated classrooms and teachers offices with inscribed quotes and images,etc)in all aspects of the educational sectors. This will ensure a full achievement of sustainable national development. Teachers must be encouraged to go for in-service training to develop themselves professionally and upgrade their qualifications which should be a prerequisite for the teaching profession.

Conclusion

Education is the most important factor of achieving effective implementation of a functional sustainable educational psychology and national development. There are no doubts achieving sustainable national development is the goal of all developing nations, Nigeria inclusive. As such there is the need to invest, motivate and sensitize people on the importance of education. The roles of government at all levels are to enhance the achievement of any development. The government, federal and state ministries of education, school administrators, parents, teachers, counsellors, psychologists and students have starring role to play in reforming and sustaining educational standard towards producing independent citizens that can take care of themselves and others which is the major goal of education as stated in the National Policy on Education. (2004).

Recommendations

Implementation of effective functional and sustainable educational psychology which is the main instrument for national development can be achieved in Nigeria if the following essential requirements for good quality education are provided: There should be recruitment of passionate, dedicated, professionally qualified and experienced leaders at the national, state and local government levels;

There must also be effective implementation of a sustainable functional and updated curriculum that can take adequate care of our developmental needs; Schools must have competent and well-trained educational administrators.

Government should monitor all levels of educational system so as to ensure the presence of a good number of qualified teachers in schools.

Government should provide up-to-date and standardized educational facilities in order to boost the educational system hence meeting both the students and teacher need.

The teaching profession should be well redefined and structured to meet the standard of educational developmental changes in the world.

The teachers/counselor/psychologist roles should be strictly redefined so has to restrict excessive parental interference thereby hindering the progressive roles of the teachers/counselor/psychologist in the school settings

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Challenges and Prospects of Effective Implementation of Sustainable Functional Educational Psychology in Nigeria – Okiemute Efedoma And Kate Ekedama

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