

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN THE KRA OF ECONOMIC RECESSION.

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ABSTRACT

Change in a nation's economy, especially negative changes, affect the implementation of a curriculum. Beginning from the oil glut of 1981, economic recession emerged. This renders the government unable to fully finance the implementation of the national policy on Education. This being the case there is the need for the search of alternatives. This *paper* views economic recession as it relates to curriculum implementation and suggests that complementary means of assisting the government to evolve, such as improvisation, prudent management and the like.

INTRODUCTION:

The educational process of any society is considered relevant when it satisfies the needs and aspirations of its people. The term curriculum could easily be referred to as a planned course of instruction derived, from the needs of the society, the family and the individual. In simpler languages curriculum refers to the set of planned experiences and opportunities under the guidance of a School aimed at **influencing** the learner towards satisfying the identified needs and aspirations.

The effectiveness of the instructor and students as well as the facilities for the teaching/learning process is largely based on and influenced by the curriculum. The instructor gathers instructional materials based on the contents of the curriculum. In another parlance, the students receive instruction based on the provision of the curriculum.

Nigeria, in its attempt to attain economic and technological self reliance, has experienced changes in the curriculum of school; hence the emergence of the National Policy on Education. The National Policy on Education evolved as a result in the realisation that our educational system should meet the emerging needs of the rapidly growing economic and technological break through.

The Implementation stage of a curriculum is considered as crucial for the achievement of the identified needs and aspirations. But the implementation of any curriculum is very complicated, difficult and energy usurping. The implementation of the curriculum involves through knowledge of the needs and aspirations of the society as articulated in the curriculum ; the policy makers, the administrators, the instructors the learner, the supervisors and the parents. Furthermore, curriculum implementation involves materials, equipment as well as facilities. Curriculum implementation depends on thorough as well as effective co-ordination of the identified principle factors in the curriculum implementation.

The instructor is considered as invaluable in the implementation of any curriculum. The curriculum is the theory while the implementation is the practice though knowledge of a curriculum is also crucial to the effective implementation of the curriculum. Hence, the instructor should be fully educated about the curriculum. This will lead to an articulate and effective dissemination of ideas, which in turn, will lead to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the curriculum.

Inspectors, supervisors and educational administrators play crucial role in the implementation of the curriculum. They co-ordinate, supervise, inspect and direct the implementors toward the realisation of the goals stated in the curriculum. Hence, the need to educate them fully on the curriculum.

Parents and members of the society also play crucial role in the implementation of any curriculum. They assist, encourage and support both the instructors and the learners towards the realisation of the goals stated in the curriculum.

Although, the instructor, the learner, the administrator and the society play crucial role in the implementation of a curriculum, economic resources are considered very crucial to be effective implementation of any curriculum (Ibrahim,

1995). For a meaningful implementation to take place, certain equipment, materials and in addition, the Implementors need attend course that will update their knowledge. In a nut shell finance is very crucial to implementation of a curriculum.

During the era of oil boom, Nigeria had the financial capability to finance the implementation of the National Policy on Education. With the emergence of economic recession many projects started during the oil boom could not be completed (Sambo, 1994), In fact new projects, even those considered as crucial to the economic and technological development of the country, could not be embarked on. Equipment and materials considered necessary for the effective implementation of the National Policy of Education could not be procured. Where they are made available they are grossly insufficient. .

Changes in the economic environment of a nation affect its programmes - curriculum implementation inclusive. As long as such changes follow a definable trend curriculum implementation can conveniently adjust to them. Such was the case during oil boom. Beginning of the oil short of 1981, economic recession, a difficult and less predictable economic phenomenon emerged. This left the nation uncertain on how to approach, respond and adjust to the situation.

Although finance is one of the most important factors in curriculum implementation, it is also, the one factor that creates the greatest headache during economic recession. The implementation depends solely on the availability of fund, which in turn, depends on the economic standing of the nation. The implementation of the National Policy on Education rests squarely on the government while viewing the financing of the implementation of the curriculum from the viewpoint of the governments, we should bear in mind that the government has numerous other commitments equally demanding the attention of the government. Such commitments include health, security, roads, water, electricity and others.

The effective implementation of a curriculum depends on the availability of relevant, modern and qualitative equipment, materials and infrastructure on the one hand and the welfare of the implementors on the other hand. Since government cannot shoulder the full responsibility of implementing the National Policy on Education, there is the need for the search of alternatives. Such alternatives include:

- (i) Improvisation of equipment and materials.
The instructors should as much as possible, improvise for the equipment and materials they run short of:
- (ii) Prioritizing projects:
Government should ensure that the projects they embark on are viable and useful for the nation. Thus, government should minimise embarking on too many ambitious projects.
- (iii) Realistic goals and objectives: Some of the goals and objectives in the National Policy on Education are unrealistic, unattainable and too ambitious. The goals and objectives should be realistic, attainable and workable.

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