

Evaluation of Curriculum Use Disposition of Basic Education Teachers in Osun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper investigated curriculum use disposition of basic school teachers in Osun State using the descriptive research design. A sample of 727 teachers was selected from the basic schools in the study area through the simple and systematic random sampling techniques. Data were collected using Teacher Curriculum Usage Disposition Questionnaire (TCUDQ). Simple linear regression was used to analyze three hypotheses raised at the .05 significance level. There was no significant difference in curriculum usage between lower and upper basic teachers ($t = .277, p > .05$), on-the-job training attended ($Beta = .209, t = 6.500, p < .05$) and highest qualification ($Beta = .194, t = 5.893, p < .05$) significantly predicted curriculum usage, and years of teaching ($Beta = .037, t = .960, p > .05$), class size ($Beta = .019, t = .512, p > .05$) and number of teachers in class ($Beta = -.026, t = -.695, p > .05$) did not significantly predict curriculum usage. We recommend, among others, that on-the-job training opportunities for basic teachers should be provided by government.

Key Words: Curriculum usage, on-the-job training, highest qualification, class size, number of teachers in class

Introduction

All over the world, education is seen as a significant determinant of national development. This is attested to by the National Policy in Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) which emphasized the importance and indispensability of education in the development of the nation. Since other levels of education (secondary and tertiary) are based on primary education, the latter is therefore fundamental to the achievement of the national objectives.

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) reviewed the then prevailing 6-3-3-4 (6 years of primary education, 3 years of junior secondary education, 3 years of senior secondary education, and 4 years of tertiary education) curriculum and improved upon it by designing the basic education or 9-3-4 (9 years of basic education, 3 years of senior secondary education, and 4 years of tertiary education) curriculum. The basic education curriculum spans 9 years and involves an integration of primary education and junior secondary education which are restructured as Lower Basic Education Curriculum (Primary one to three), Middle Basic Education Curriculum (Primary four to six) and Upper Basic Education

Curriculum (JSS: junior secondary one to three) (Abass, 2018). The basic education curriculum focuses on the development of science and technology and enhancement of enquiry, intellectual and manipulative skills and societal values.

Teachers play a crucial role in the effective implementation of the 9-3-4 curriculum and a lack of teachers' adequate knowledge about the curriculum would lead to its failure (Nwoke, 2017). When teachers are well trained in the use of curriculum, it helps to maintain the same level of consistence in its implementation irrespective of the location. Goldberg et al (2001), Olkin, (2004) in separate studies found that training enables teachers develop effectively. National Policy on Education (2004) corroborated this in its affirmation that the education system is a function of teachers' quality. Teachers' dispositions therefore affect curriculum implementation. They are a function of teachers' personality characteristics and represent personal attributes that affect their interactions and behaviour toward others in and outside the school. These can impact pupils' motivation and performance and career development of the teachers themselves.

Damon (2015) defines a disposition as a

personality characteristic or trait that is fixed in the temperament and prompts an individual to behave in certain ways. It is in the heart of the personality and determines our individuality or identity. Dispositions are composed of teachers' traits which determine their behaviours. They include attitudes, views, interests, appreciations, ideals and adjustments mechanism. These tendencies are intertwined and relate to the teacher's proclivities, views, feelings, cognitions, values, beliefs, and other unique features. Dispositions may be positive (desirable) or negative (undesirable). Whereas desirable dispositions of the teacher can lead to a more effective teaching and the achievement, personal or social good, undesirable dispositions can inhibit both teaching and learning and result in personal and social dysfunctions.

Katz (1993) describes disposition as a determinant of unforced, conscious or voluntary behaviour. She also averred that dispositions strictly differ from concepts such as skills, attitudes, traits, habits, thoughts, and motives. A person may have skills and knowledge but lack the ability to put them into meaningful use. Thus, teachers' possession of certain traits does not automatically mean that they will utilize the traits for the utilization of the curriculum.

Several dimensions of disposition have been previously investigated. These include moral dimensions of teaching, collaborative, mentoring, multicultural and personality dispositions as well as dispositions in leadership for administrators (Aubrey, 1998; Brown, 1997; McMann, 1996; O'Connor, 2013; Ray, 2013; Ritchhart, 2011; Williams, 2015; Yost, 1997). However, studies examining disposition toward curriculum usage have been scarce, particularly among primary school teachers in Osun State, although the place of teachers' dispositions in education has been investigated by a number of researchers. The variables that have been found to influence teachers' disposition toward different aspects of education include improved teacher preparation, perspectives towards teaching and learning, student-teacher relationships, teacher-teacher relationships, teachers' educational

level, critical and creative thinking skills and classroom environment. Further studies are required in order to determine other relevant factors that may be influencing curriculum use disposition in primary schools. These researchers will therefore seek to determine the extent of primary school teachers' disposition to curriculum usage in Osun State as well as how certain individual and job characteristics relate to or influence curriculum usage in the study area.

Research Questions

1. Is there significant difference in the curriculum usage disposition of those that sufficiently attended training and those that haven't?
2. Is there any significant difference in curriculum usage between lower and upper basic teachers among basic school teachers in Osun State?
3. Which of highest qualification, years of teaching, class size, number of teachers in class, and number of on-the-job training attended predict curriculum usage among basic school teachers in Osun State?

Methods

Design

Descriptive design was conducted to execute the study. The design allows for exploring variations in the responses of the sample on each variable and at the same time establish the interrelationships among the variables under investigation.

Sample

A sample of 736 basic education teachers was selected from 16 of the 30 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Osun State through the simple and systematic random sampling techniques. Through the support of Osun State Universal Basic Education Board, the researchers were able to bring all the selected teachers together at the LGA level.

Instrumentation

Teacher Curriculum Usage Disposition Questionnaire (TCUDQ) was the only instrument that was administered on the

participants. The instrument has two sections. The first section sought participants' demographic characteristics while the second section bothers on the disposition of the basic education teachers to curriculum usage. Reliability was determined through the split-half method and the estimated reliability coefficient was .73. This is reliable enough to measure the disposition.

Data Analysis Procedure

Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages as well as regression analysis were used for data analysis. Tests were carried out at the .05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: Is there significant difference in the curriculum usage disposition of those that have been attending training and those that have not?

Table 1: Independent t-test showing curriculum usage disposition of teachers' attendance in training Group Statistics

	Training	N	Mean	Mean diff	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2 - tailed)
curriculum usage	insufficient training	385	28.36	-0.47	3.69	-1.62	688.29	0.106
	sufficient training	337	28.82		4.01			

Table 1 showed the independent t-test of curriculum usage disposition of teachers' attendance in training. Teachers with sufficient training (Mean=28.82 SD=4.01) has the higher mean than teachers with insufficient training (Mean=28.36 SD=3.69). The mean difference between the two was -0.46. An independent t-test conducted showed that the observed difference was not statistically significant, $t = -$

1.62, $Df=688.29$, $p>0.05$. It shows that there is no significant difference in the curriculum usage disposition between teachers with sufficient attendance in training and those with insufficient attendance in training.

Research Question 2: Is there any significant difference in curriculum usage between lower and upper basic teachers among basic school teachers in Osun State?

Table 2: t-test of difference in curriculum usage between lower and upper basic teachers

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	t	Sig.
Lower Basic	320	28.67	3.776	724	.277	.782
Upper Basic	402	28.59	4.127			

Table 2 revealed non-significant results ($t = .277$, $p > .05$), indicating no significant difference in curriculum usage between lower and upper basic teachers among basic school teachers in Osun State. The mean curriculum usage of lower basic teachers (28.7) is only slightly higher than that for upper basic teachers

(28.6).

Research Question 3: Which of highest qualification, years of teaching, class size, number of teachers in class, and number of on-the-job training attended predict curriculum usage among basic school teachers in Osun State?

Table 3: Coefficients of the multiple regression analysis for the prediction of curriculum usage by class size, years of teaching, number of teachers in class and number of the on-the-job training attended

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	28.155	.503		56.013	.000
Highest qualification	.076	.017	.194	5.893	.000
Years of teaching	.017	.018	.037	.960	.338
Class size	.004	.009	.019	.512	.608
Number of teachers in class	-.012	.017	-.026	-.695	.487
Number of on-the-job training	.156	.012	.209	6.500	.000

Dependent Variable: Curriculum usage

Table 3 revealed that with all the predictor variables entered into the model simultaneously, each of the number of on-the-job training attended (Beta = .209, $t = 6.500$, $p < .05$) and highest qualification (Beta = .194, $t = 5.893$, $p < .05$) significantly predicted curriculum usage, and that there were non-significant contributions of years of teaching (Beta = .037, $t = .960$, $p > .05$), class size (Beta = .019, $t = .512$, $p > .05$), and number of teachers in class (Beta = -.026, $t = -.695$, $p > .05$) to curriculum usage among basic school teachers in Osun State.

Discussion

The investigation of curriculum use disposition of basic school teachers in Osun State was triggered by the need to enhance the disposition toward curriculum usage among this category of people with the ultimate purpose of enhancing the implementation of the basic education curriculum. The researchers therefore looked at some specific factors such as highest qualification, years of teaching, class size, number of teachers in class, and number of on-the-job training attended that could affect curriculum usage. Three research questions were raised to this effect.

The first research question examined if there is any significant difference in the curriculum usage disposition of those that have been attending training and those that have not. Teachers with sufficient training are better in their disposition to the usage of curriculum. Though the difference between the two groups was not significant. This implies that the training had little effect on the participants. There will be need for more effort in the monitoring process of various training programs in order to achieve the desired result among teachers. This finding affirms the findings of Goldberg et al (2001), Olkin (2004) and Khan et al (2011) who found that teachers on the job training has positive relationship with organizational performance.

The second research question asked, "Is there any significant difference in curriculum usage between lower and upper basic teachers among basic school teachers in Osun State?" This research question was subjected to appropriate statistical test of significance and found to be tenable, leading to the conclusion that there is no significant difference in curriculum usage

between lower and upper basic teachers among basic school teachers in Osun State. This implication of this finding was that curriculum usage is evenly spread among the basic teachers, irrespective of the class taught.

The third research question asked, "Which of highest qualification, years of teaching, class size, number of teachers in class, and number of on-the-job training attended predict curriculum usage among basic school teachers in Osun State?" It was found that only number of on-the-job training attended and highest qualification predict curriculum usage among basic school teachers in Osun State. This finding corroborated what one would ordinarily expect that one of the major objectives of education and training was to enhance teachers' ability to implement the curriculum. Therefore, highest qualification and number of on-the-job training attended are expected to increase teachers' curriculum implementation. The finding that years of teaching did not predict curriculum usage however contradicted expectations because more experienced teachers are expected to have significantly greater curriculum implementation ability than the less experienced teachers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that teachers' on-the-job training and highest qualification would increase positive attitude toward national curriculum usage, while years of teaching, class size, and number of teachers in class and would have no such influence. Curriculum usage by lower and upper basic teachers was not significantly different. The following recommendations were therefore made:

- (i) Government should provide and intensify purposeful on-the-job training opportunities for basic teachers.
- (ii) Employment of basic teachers should be strictly based on merit such that only qualified and trained applicants are employed to occupy the position of basic teachers.
- (iii) Seminars, workshops and meetings should be held where basic teachers can brainstorm and make suggestions that

- can help to enhance curriculum usage.
- (iv) Government and school authorities should increase teacher training through seminars, workshops and meetings where they can brainstorm and make suggestions geared towards enhancing curriculum usage.
- (v) Further investigations should be conducted on the subject of this study but with participants drawn from the secondary and tertiary levels of education. This study should also be replicated in other states of the federation outside Osun State in order to assess the generalizability or external validity of the findings of this study.

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