
The Role of Curriculum Development in Enhancing the Teaching and Learning of Industrial Relations in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper specifically focuses on curriculum development, which is a cardinal process in teaching and learning. Particular reference is given to the discipline of industrial relations which its understanding and practice is cardinal to ensuring workplace harmony, peace and enhance performance. It reveals the challenges as well as prospects of curriculum development in order to enhance teaching and learning of industrial relations.

Key words: Curriculum development, Teaching, Learning, Industrial Relations

INTRODUCTION

The central focus of contemporary education process is the design and development of accepted curriculum in every discipline. In any discipline where there is no curriculum, such system is not considered to be objective, and may not achieve the desired result of teaching and learning. In view of this, the Nigerian National Policy on Education have the central goal of developing curriculum in all subjects and at all levels of education in order to ensure that our educational system is result oriented, and that disciplines produce practitioners that can compete with their contemporaries all over the world.

The major purpose of education is to provide teaching and learning. Where these two cardinal objectives are not achieved in any education system, it is appropriate to conclude that the system has failed to realize its goals. It is this understanding that necessitated this paper on “the role of Curriculum Development in Enhancing Teaching and of Industrial Relations in Nigeria”.

This paper aims at analyzing the concept of curriculum and the process of curriculum development. It also aims at determining if curriculum development in any way enhances teaching and learning. In an academic exercise such as this, certain terms have to be operationally defined as they are used. In this regard, I will consider the operational definition of the following terms: Curriculum Development, Teaching, Learning and Industrial Relations.

Wheeler (1980:11) defined curriculum “as the planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the School”. Wasagu (2000) on the other hand, considered Curriculum Development as the process of implementing the theoretical plan to attain educational ends. Teaching in ordinary parlance is the act of giving systematic information, instruction, or training to a person, while Learning involves, gaining knowledge or skill by receiving systematic instruction about a knowledge area or skill. Industrial relations is a multidisciplinary academic area of pursuit and practice that focuses on the tripartite relationship that exists among employers or the organisations, employees or their representatives (trade unions) and the state (government or its agency) acting as a referee (Acker and Wilkinson, 2003).

METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL STATEMENT

This paper is purely an exploratory presentation, relying entirely on secondary data in terms of textbooks, journals and other publications. It is touring in functionalism, to examine the consequences of curriculum development, teaching and learning on the practice and discipline of industrial relations, following Mertins (1936) functional theorization.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

A curriculum is the total educational experience offered to the learner in a school setting including the time-tabled subjects and all those related aspects of certain life changing behaviours. To Fafumera (1974:58) Curriculum "involves the whole of the educative process, that is the total environment in which education takes place. Hass (1980) considered curriculum as "all the experiences that individual learners have in a programme of education whose purpose is to achieve broad goals and related specific objectives which is planned in terms of a frame work of theory and research or past or present professional practice".

From this conceptual positions, Onwuka (1996) developed five major functions of curriculum, to include:

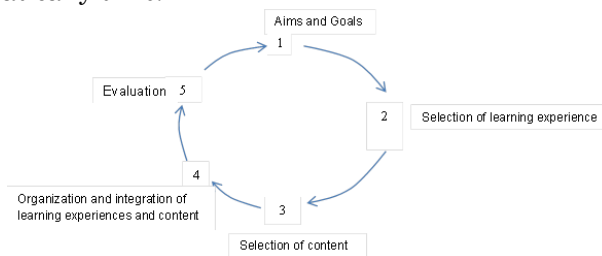
1. To determine educational directives including the decision of the type of society people want to live and serve in
2. To determine the principles and procedures which will help educators in selecting and arranging instructional programmes.
3. It concerns itself with the application of the chosen principles.
4. It determines and assesses what changes have been brought about.
5. It determines the next steps to be taken.

In terms of the functionality of curriculum, it is appropriate to examine briefly Wheeler (1980) analysis of Curriculum process which implementation result in the development of curriculum. The curriculum process consists of five phases, namely:

1. The selection of aims, goals and objectives
2. The selection of learning experiences calculated to help in the attainment of these aims, goals and objectives.
3. The selection of content (subject matter) through which certain types of experience may be offered.
4. The organization and integration of learning experiences and content with respect to the teaching-learning process within school and classroom.

5. Evaluation of the effectiveness of all aspect of phases 2, 3 and 4 in attaining the goals detailed in phase 1.

The phases in curriculum development centred round the very goals of education which is the ability to change behaviour. In this regard, all education processes aim at changing behaviour of employees, employers and other stakeholders. When these phases are strictly followed, it increases the probability that the aims of education will be attained with regards to industrial relations which is work place harmony. Education involves teaching and learning and since curriculum entails all educational activities and experiences, it is right and proper to say that both teaching and learning become part of curriculum development. The Curriculum process can be presented diagrammatically thus:



Curriculum Development entails planning process that results in broad and specific curriculum design. It is decision making that involves selecting and organizing the components of teaching and learning situation. Activities involved in curriculum development includes: determination of curriculum development centres, subject matter activities, resources, specification of suggested objectives and measuring devices. The various phases of curriculum development mentioned above need to be amplified.

AIMS, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A three-step process is necessary here. Determination of ultimate goals, mediate goals and proximate goals, so that specific goals can be planned at the classroom level. Ultimate goals are the expected outcomes expressed as patterns or categories of behaviour. Ultimate goals are statements of desirable acts, feedings, attitudes and

knowledge, integrated in a pattern and exhibited in appropriate situation. Mediate goals are the patterns of expected behaviour at given stages over the educational period. Mediate goals are statements of intended behaviours in classes of situations at given stages. Proximate goal is the curriculum or course of study. Proximate goals are not discrete, but linked in the same way as other kinds of goals. Specific goals are derivable from others as it relates to objectives of various aspects of contents, as in a complex whole (system) every part has its own objective which merged together in achieving the goal of the system.

THE SELECTION OF LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The means of instilling or changing behaviour are through learning experiences. Selecting appropriate experiences to bring about the desired behaviour become very important. Three types of experiences are cardinal, namely; physical, mental and emotional experiences. These three experiences occur in the same person in rapid succession. In phase two, the problem is to select adequate learning experiences in order to achieve the goals set up in the preceding phase. For instance, at the level of mediate goals, learning experiences must be considered in a less general way, for they are intended to contribute to behavioural outcomes which may involve less maturity.

As the students of industrial relations develop, they can be immature and mature at the same time. In so far as a student is not through with learning, he is immature both in knowledge and in skill development. A good curriculum will produce learners who are able to describe and critique the concepts of labour and employment relations as well as provide solutions to solve work place problems (Bassey, Attah and Bassey, 2012).

SELECTION OF CONTENT

This phase of the curriculum process is the one that is bulks & largest in educational thinking today, so that the selection of subject matter or content tends to become the principal concern of many curriculum

makers. Every learning experience involves content, in that a person is acting upon or being acted upon by some other person or thing.

The result is behaviour change with respect to an environment. For purposes of conservation, application, extension and prediction, various aspects of this environment may be arranged and organized from a particular point of view. One point of major importance in considering content is that it cannot be directly related to the general aims of education, as for example in the statements that subject A is studied to enable the student to handle abstractions, or subject B is studied to make students develop a capacity for communication. Learning content in industrial relations include: definition, history and development, theoretical foundation, labour unions, negotiation, collective bargaining, work team, mediation, arbitration, industrial safety, ethics, labour law, performance management, diversity and equity, employment contract, leadership, human rights in workplaces, labour policy, relationship management, compensation, conflict resolution, research and analytical methods in labour relations (Queens University, 2015).

When the selection of content is approached by way of behavioural objectives and experiences suitable to achieving them, problems of Sequence, continuity and integration will be considered in relation to learning experiences as well as to subject matter. The concept of commonly determined behaviour can be used to indicate, for instance, what content can contribute to the more general cognitive objectives which are not restricted to one subject field. Curriculum process in the realm of content can be considered in terms of three main steps, the aim of which is to make the general more specific, allowing the selection of content believed or known by experience to be appropriate to the ultimate, mediate and proximate goals of formal education.

The recent interest in the structure of knowledge opens up the possibility of choosing contents for reasons more cogent than the traditional organization of textbooks or even of curriculum guides. It is clear that content must be related to learning experiences and to organization, and that all three must be carefully considered in relation to goals.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND INTEGRATION OF EXPERIENCE AND CONTENT

The major task in this phase is the combining of information about experience, including developmental sequences and stages discovered in the second phase (selection of learning experiences) with information derived from the taxonomic analysis of phase 3 in order to set up educational experiences designed to achieve the goals in the first phase. This fourth phase leads directly into the teaching-learning situation, it seems likely that the principles which should operate in this phase are best derived from those which govern learning situations in general and those in school and classroom in particular. At more specific level of the classroom work unit, organizing centres must be selected as foci for lessons or units. In so far as no lesson is self-contained, but should refer to what is past and lead on to what is to come, organizing centres at this level may be thought of as integrating centres.

EVALUATION

The final phase is the curriculum process is the coming to conclusions about the success or failure of the educational enterprise by means of some measurement or assessment of change in behaviour. This involves the evaluation of the operations that were performed in each of the previous phases. There is another point of view from which evaluation as a part of curriculum planning must be considered. In so far, as it is an attempt to change behaviour, education is concerned with behaviour at what may be three different levels. First, there is initial behaviour, the behaviour that the individual or group displays before the educational experience. Then there is the behaviour resulting from the educational experience which may be called the actual outcome. Finally, there are the behaviours specified in the goals set out in phase I. These may be called intended outcomes. The evaluation process is very crucial as the analysis of evaluation may lead to possible curriculum review or redesign where the curriculum fails to lead to expected outcome i.e. effective teaching and learning.

Learning and teaching are two major concepts that are tied together. Teaching leads to learning, where teaching does not result in learning the effectiveness of the teaching process is in question. What a student learned is part of his experience of school which teaching forms a major element. The classroom teaching being a major element of education is embedded in curriculum as seen in phase four of curriculum process. It is therefore very important to examine the role of curriculum development in enhancing Teaching and Learning.

THE ROLE OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN ENHANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Formal education is enhanced by curriculum development. Education involves teaching and learning, which result in behavioural change in the learner. Firstly, curriculum development provide guide and focus to teaching and learning process. Without curriculum, learning and teaching will not be focused oriented. Students will study randomly without focus on specific skill orientation and subject area. If this was to be behavioural change, curriculum would not have been the outcome of teaching and learning.

Curriculum development brings 'flexibility into teaching and learning, this is so because curriculum simplifies what is to be studied by the students and what the teacher will teach. It helps in adapting to the needs of the changing learners and the society. Consequently, curriculum helps enhance students' adaptation to the changing conditions and needs of the people. Curriculum development provides direction educationally, in terms of making the objects of education to realm with needs and expectation of the society in which education takes place.

Curriculum development enhances teaching and learning as it determines the principles and procedures which will help educators in selecting and arranging instructional programmes. Curriculum also guides in the application of selected and chosen principles which education intends to impact.

As evaluative process, curriculum development enhances teaching and learning as it provides parameters to examine the effect of behavioural changes occasioned by education. It also reveals the effect of these changes on the society and provide avenue of review to ameliorate possible dysfunctional effects.

Curriculum development leads to advancement of human being through learning and teaching which result in the advancement of the society.

Finally, curriculum development leads to the creation of resources units- unit plans, course outline and other curriculum guides that teachers and learners may use to facilitate the learning process. Beane, Toebfer and Alessi (1986) concluded that of all curriculum planning activities, curriculum development are often regarded as the most crucial since it basically defines the nature of the learner's day to day life in the school.

THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECT OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum is shaped by the culture of the society in which it operates. It will be affected by social values, social needs and social problems. If the curriculum remains static in a dynamic society, especially in periods of rapid social change, it is likely that the education which is meant to induct the young learners into society and to promote an intelligent understanding of it will cater only for needs and values which no longer exist.

Indeed, it may be still further lacking, in that new needs and work place practices have arisen for which no attempt is made to cater. In order to deal with problems like these, it is obvious that knowledge of society is required, that they should be a careful and detailed analysis of changes and trends in the other social institutions. Other barriers to effective curriculum implementation include: Absence of motivation; Inadequate resources; Lack of clarity about the implementation aspect of any curriculum change; Vulnerability; and Skepticism.

Considering the problems enumerated above, it is candid to say that if these problems are overcome, the prospect of curriculum

development in Nigeria is very promising. Advance in curriculum development will make for total advancement in teaching and learning in all levels of education.

CONCLUSION

Curriculum development is a core ingredient of any educational system without curriculum the goal of education which is teaching and learning cannot be achieved. Since enhancement of teaching and learning are tied to curriculum development, it is very crucial to re-examine our curriculum in order to eliminate ineffective education process and enhance teaching and learning.

Industrial relations growth and development as a discipline is critical to work success and harmony among key stakeholders in work places. Designing curriculum which incorporates contemporary work place practices, challenges, needs and expectations is a key to ensuring industrial peace, harmony and performance in modern world of work and should be vigorously pursued.

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