

INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Educators seem to misperceive the diverse logics to which institutional curricula and teachings are made effective with due consideration to institutional differences. Thus, the paper focuses on conceptual analysis, various institutional logics of curriculum, different instructional curriculum design, various instructional logic of teaching, building blocks of successful instruction and concluded that; institutions make use of different logics in developing curriculum while curriculum designs are of different patterns and the only way to succeed is to adopt the pattern that will suit the purpose upon which it is made for, like wise teaching is being done in a different ways which include transmissive, transactive or transformative mode and the reviewers felt that, the best among them is transactive mode of teaching that has to do with lively interaction between the teacher and the learners. It is however recommended: a curriculum should be designed to suit the purpose upon which it is made for, stakeholders concerned with the responsibility of designing the curriculum should be very much conversant or familiar with the different patterns of curriculum design and they should understand when and where each design will be considered and transactive is recommended, this is due to its suitable nature of making the student active and full participant in teaching and learning process. The paper will be of great relevant to curriculum designers, planners, developers, teachers, curriculum students at all level of educational system as well as those with kin interest in curriculum and teaching.

Keywords: curriculum, institution, logic, Nigeria, teacher

Introduction

Instructional curriculum design and dominant instructional logic of teaching practicing in most of the Nigerian schools and institutions tend to be inappropriate to satisfy the current demand of Nigerian system of education. This is due to the fact that, a curriculum should be designed in such a way that the document itself will serve as a tool for developing thinking and problem-

solving skills through integration and active learning. Relationships should be built through opportunities for communication and teamwork and provide the building blocks for instruction. It should motivate, engage and prompt students to learn and achieve what is expected. This will be successful when it is measure by standardized tests and other indicators of student success. It can easily be achieved through teaching a balanced curriculum, teaching an integrated curriculum, differentiating instruction to meet individual student needs and providing active learning opportunities for students to internalize learning (Tomlinson, 2003). However, appropriate logics are paramount important while designing curriculum and thus lead to the effective teaching. Thus, institutions make use of different logics in curriculum designing and teaching depending on the level and fundamental rules governing such institutions with whole view to deliver effective instruction. Having realised this, it is clearly justified the need to discuss the instructional logic of curriculum and teaching.

Conceptual Analysis

It is ideal in a review paper like this to analyse the key concepts of the paper in order to guide and simplify the understanding of the readers. It is on the basis of this, the paper explains the concepts of instruction, logic, curriculum and teaching in a very simple language to aid the total understanding of the readers.

Concept of Instruction

Instruction is defined as the act or practice of teaching. It can also be seen as how to teach the curriculum. Instruction implies a systematic, structured method of teaching. An instruction can also be seen as approaches that are structured, sequenced, and led by teachers (Obanya, 2016).

Having said these by scholars, the reviewers are with the opinion that an instruction is referred to as all the activities involve in teaching and learning process.

Concept of Logic

Logic in education can be used to help practitioners and evaluators better understand a program's mechanic and structure and chart a course toward improved policy and practice. It is a representation of the assumptions and theory of action that underlie the structure of an education program. A program can be a strategy for instruction in a classroom, a training session for a group of teachers, a grade-level curriculum, a building-level intervention, or a district or state wide initiative. Developing logic at the beginning of program planning gives you a framework for charting the links between your program's resources, activities, and outputs and its intended outcomes. It enables you to evaluate your program once it begins. And it helps you communicate to your stakeholders what you want to accomplish, how you intend to reach your goals, and how you will track your progress. Planning a program requires time, effort, participation, and collaboration of stakeholders, including students, teachers, administrators, community members, policymakers, and program evaluators (Hall, 2002). From the foregoing details, the reviewers see logic in this context as process or strategy one follows to prefer relevant curriculum design and teaching activities.

Concept of Curriculum

Curriculum is defined as the lessons and academic contents taught in a school or in a specific course or program (Sleeter, 2001). It is considered to be the complete atmosphere to transform peoples' life (Obanya, 2016). It is concerned with all activities in the school which lead to the

development of the learner ranging from cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Tyack, 2007). Curriculum is defined by Indiana Department of Education, (2010) as the planned interaction of pupils with instructional content, materials, resources and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives. Coles, (2003) sees a curriculum as a policy statement about a piece of education as a way to indicate the way in which policy is to be realized through programmes of action. Denga, (2005) viewed curriculum as a planned and unplanned experience which is exposed to learners within and outside the school environment for their collective growth. To this end, curriculum can be seen as all the learning activities planned and unplanned, guided and executed by school with the total aim of transforming the societal members and achieve its goals and objectives.

Concept of Teaching

Teaching is an act, practice, occupation, or profession of a teacher. It is a process of imparting knowledge or skill to; give instruction to: it is a way of providing appropriate reinforcement and conduct effective assessment. It includes effective classroom management skills, preparation and use of instructional materials and communication skills (Arora, 2002). It is the reviewers' understanding to explain teaching as the process of changing peoples' behavior via instruction involving the teacher and the learner at a particular interaction.

Various Institutional Logics of Curriculum

Here the paper in an effort to make it highly beneficial and interesting to the reader, it looks at how institutions at different levels realised their curriculum for instructional consumption. The

institutions under discussion include; universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, secondary and primary schools.

Logic of Curriculum in the Universities

In the universities, the development of a new course or programme of studies is initiated by the subject department. Here, specialist academics put together topics as they know them to have been taught elsewhere. The department presents these to the Faculty or Academic Board where approval essentially gives authorisation for the course to start. The higher bodies of the institution, like the Senate and Governing Councils of the Universities, endorse the decision of the Faculty Board under normal circumstances. These activities are part of curriculum development in the Universities (Okebukola, 1997).

Logic of Curriculum in Colleges of Education and Polytechnics

At Colleges of Education and Polytechnics institutional level, individual institutions previously formulated their curriculum but the current situation in Nigeria is quite different. Thus, National Commission Colleges of Education (NCCE) formulates and distribute the curriculum designed for all Colleges of Education in the country. In the case of polytechnics, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) takes responsibility of formulating and distributing the curriculum to all the polytechnic in the country (Yusuf, 2012).

Logics of Curriculum in Primary and Secondary Schools

At Primary and Secondary school levels it is the National Educational Research and Development Council in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education, subject specialists,

curriculum experts, relevant societal members and Examination Bodies formulate the curriculum and later distribute to various states for their consumptions with the supports of Education Research Centres (ERC) of various state (Ben-Yunusa, 2000).

Different Instructional Curriculum Design

Curriculum is design with solely aim to achieve what its design for. Therefore, for a curriculum to be relevant, appropriate logic and strategies should put in place to design an instructional curriculum for it to suit the purpose upon which it's desired. It should be noted however that, the design of a curriculum can be likened to the design or construction of a building. A building is usually designed according to the purpose it will serve. Likewise a curriculum designed to serve the purpose it meant for. So, in developing a curriculum, experts have to consider the purpose of the curriculum and how the activities of the teacher and the learner are to be organized to enable them achieve the purpose (Yusuf 2012). According to Ben-Yunusa, (2000) curriculum planners have identified at least four patterns of curriculum design with major focus on the subject matter areas or fields. Inline of the above, bellow are some of the curriculum design:

- i. Subject-Centered Curriculum;
- ii. Broad-Fields Curriculum;
- iii. Activity-Based Curriculum; and
- iv. Core Curriculum.

Subject-Centered Curriculum: is that pattern of curriculum organization in which curriculum content is structured into compartmentalized bodies of organized knowledge. It is about the oldest pattern of organization because its origin can be traced back to the organization of seven

liberal arts (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic-and the- arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music) constituted the curriculum. The emphasis on the seven liberal arts gave way to the modern subject design by the 1870s. From that time on, the emphasis shifted in favor of such modern subjects as physics chemistry, biology, literature, and many others (Ben-Yunus, 2000).

Broad-Field Curriculum: The position held by the advocates of the broad-fields curriculum is that there is an unprecedented explosion of knowledge in recent times. This trend which results from research efforts of contemporary times will surely result in a situation in which too many subjects will be available to students for study without sufficient time in the time table for their study. This necessitated evolving integrated subjects that draw their content from across the older established disciplines. This alternative is the choice of the advocates of the broad-fields curriculum. They believe that the idea of subject autonomy or purity of disciplines is untenable in these days of knowledge explosion (Ben-Yunus, 2000). According to Doggoh, (2007) Broad-field curriculum is a type of curriculum designed to combat the compartmentalization problem created by subject curriculum. It is a curriculum that brings together related disciplines into a kind of fusion.

Activity-Based Curriculum: The main feature of the activity curriculum is its interest in child growth through visible active experience. Element of this design are structured with the learners' flit need and interests in mind. The rationale behind this design is both psychological and philosophical. Psychologically, the activity curriculum is based on the Gestalt, and other learning theories that highlight the importance of activities in learning. The philosophical bases of the design are progressivism and pragmatism, both of which stress the importance of the learner and activities in any learning engagement (Ben-Yunus, 2000).

Core Curriculum: The core curriculum may be regarded as those learning experiences which are fundamental for all learners because they are drawn from the common individual and social needs as competent citizens of a democratic community (Kessler, 1956). A true curriculum according to Burnett, (1951) attacks the problems common to all youth. It is a functional approach to harmonizing the concerns of youth, on the one hand, with the demands of society on the other, without unduly emphasizing one or neglecting the other. Core curriculum is made up of those education experiences which are thought to be important for each citizen in our democracy. Students and teachers do not consider subject matter to be important in itself. It becomes meaningful only as it helps the group to solve the problems which have been selected for study (Hall, 2002).

Instructional Logic of Teaching

Instructional logic of teaching may be either transmissive, transactive or transformative in nature. In fact, teachers can be quite empowered by the knowledge and skills in teaching that is at times transmissive, and other times transactive or transformative depending on the one to serve the particular purpose at a time. A transmissive orientation typically means that information is transmitted from teacher to students. For example, safety procedures are best taught from a transmissive orientation. Here, the teacher simply has to say "pay attention, this is the way it is done, step 1 through step 6." A transactive orientation typically means that the question "what should be learned?" is democratically negotiated. Here, the teacher may work with small groups and say: "Let's discuss your ideas for how we should handle this situation." In a transformative mode, the teacher provides content and methods that are truly empowering the students. For example, the teacher may provide a civil liberties lesson that empowers the students to take

advantage of their freedoms of speech. There are time when teachers consciously ought to be transmissive and other times when they ought to be in a transactive or transformative mode. The key is to know and recognize the difference in the instructional teaching (Kunjufu, 2002). Dewey, (1992) is with the view that, the transmission function of schooling is viewed as transmitting facts, skills and values to students. This orientation stressed mastery of conventional school subjects through traditional teaching methodologies, particularly text books learning. In the transaction position, the student is seen as rational and capable of intelligent problem solving. Education is viewed as a dialogue between the student and the curriculum in which the student reconstructs knowledge through a dialogical process. The concept dialogical is described as a third idiom that relates academic language used in schools to concrete experience and colloquial discourse use in everyday life. The transformation position focuses on personal and social change, with attention to ecological interdependence and the inter relatedness of phenomena generally. The historical root of this position is traced to Rousseau. The transformation position conceives of social change as a movement toward harmony with the environment rather than as an effort to exert control over it.

This position embodies the idealistic notion that students should learn what they want to learn. To reviewers, transaction instructional logic of teaching considered to be appropriate as it serves as a shift from traditional teaching where a teacher dominates the whole of teaching and learning process. While in transactional instruction the learner is consider as active participant during his interaction with the teacher.

Building Blocks of Successful Instruction

The building blocks for successful instruction according to Noguera, (2003) are as follows:

1. Knowing the Learner: Teachers need to know as much as possible about their students to teach them well, including learning styles and pace, multiple intelligences, personal qualities such as personality, temperament and motivation, personal interests, potential disabilities, health, family circumstances, and language preference;
2. Traits of a Quality Teacher: The teacher believes all students can learn, has the desire and capacity to differentiate curriculum and instruction, understands diversity and thinks about students developmentally, is a risk taker, is open to change and well-versed in best practices, is comfortable challenging the status quo, knows what doesn't work, is able to withstand staff dissension that may arise;
3. Quality Curriculum: Curriculum needs to be interesting to students and relevant to their lives, appropriately challenging and complex, thought provoking, focused on concepts and principles and not just facts; focused on quality, not quantity; stress depth of learning, not just coverage;
4. Classroom Learning Environment: The ideal learning environment includes a balanced student population, appropriate grade and program placement, priority seating based on student needs, has a reasonable class size, practices positive discipline, arranges furniture to promote group work, uses flexible grouping, and has adequate teaching supplies;
5. Flexible Teaching and Learning Time Resources: Includes team teaching, block scheduling, tutoring and remediation within school, before and after-school programs, homework clubs, looping classrooms;

6. Instructional Delivery and Best Practices: Includes flexible grouping, cooperative learning, learning stations and centers, web quests, tiered assignments, individual contracts, literature circles; and
7. Assessment, Evaluation and Grading: Includes portfolios, observations, skills checklists, oral and written reports.

Conclusion

Based on what has been reviewed in the context of this paper, it's conclude that institutions make use of different logics in developing curriculum while curriculum designs are of different patterns and the only way to succeed is to adopt the pattern that will suit the purpose upon which it is made for, like wise teaching is being done in a different ways which include transmissive, transactive or transformative mode and according to reviewers, the best among them is transactive mode of teaching that has to do with lively interaction between the teacher and the learner.

Recommendations

Going by the above relevant text in the literature reviewed, the recommendations are as follows:

1. a curriculum should be designed to suit the purpose upon which it is made for;
2. stakeholders concerned with the designing of curriculum should be very much conversant or familiar with the different patterns of curriculum design and they should understand when and where each design will be considered; and

3. transactive mode of teaching should be given more priority while teaching, this is due to its suitable nature of making the student active and full participant in teaching and learning process.

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