

REVIEW OF CURRICULUM CONTENT IN NIGERIA FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Quality education is a programme that provides learners with the strength and capabilities required to become economically, socially and morally productive as well as justifiable income and contributes to a peaceful and democratic society. Education and governance are mostly mentioned in most literature because it is believed that quality education enhances good governance. This paper argued that education in Nigeria does not guarantee Good Governance hence, the bad leadership. Quality education should be one that promotes societal norms and values which are positive predictor of good governance. It was therefore concluded that our indigenous education be made part of our school curriculum since the society have lost its norms and value system which account for bad governance. It further noted that curriculum content should enhance the customs, moral and collective wellbeing of the people which will set the pace for good governance. It was recommended amongst others that indigenous curriculum content should be made part of the school curriculum which will promote quality education, Good Governance and National Development.

Keywords: Curriculum Content, Good Governance, National Development

Introduction

Education is a valuable assets that societies uses as an instrument for economic, social and political development. It is intrinsically useful that its positive impact on the society and individuals is so numerous and uncountable that no society can ignore. Education enriches culture, values and everything that characterizes us as human beings. In the social sphere, education is necessary in all aspects to achieve better levels of social welfare and National Development. The primary purpose of education is to produce effective members of the society whose three “Hs” – head, heart and hands have lived as effective and acceptable human beings. The Head corresponds to the cognitive domain: faculties of thinking, reasoning or understanding, the seat of intelligence; the Heart stands for effective domain:the faculties of development of feelings, emotions, value, attitude and habits and Hand refer to the psycho-motor domain which is the faculties for the neuro-physical co-ordination, physical ability, motor manipulative skills (Achuonye and Ajoku 2013).An effective education should be one that prepares members of the society to be able to fulfil their personal needs and to perform their civic obligation. Education strives to achieve those goals mentioned above through what it offers to its citizens. What schools offers to its learners come in the form of content (knowledge, skills, values, attitude, etc) engendered through carefully planned activities. The totality of what the schools offers to learners in attempt to achieve its goals are summed up and termed the “curriculum content.”(Kisat, 2018)

The content of any curriculum is an embodiment of the attitudes, knowledge and skills which a society intends to impart to her citizens through the school and other socializing agencies. The survival and prosperity of a nation depends upon that society's capacity to apply its knowledge to resolve practical problems. Okoro (2014) in this regard identified the school as miniature society through which the society can address its problems and needs. In any society where there are problems or where changes are needed, the curriculum is the instrument to be used to address and effect such changes since the needs and aspirations of the society are embedded in the curriculum content. Orji and Job (2013) Declared that the declining quality of education at all levels has far reaching negative impact on a nation's moral, civic, cultural and economic sustainability. This explains why the state of education in Nigeria continues to be National discuss. It is important to note that discussions on education and its reforms is necessary to make it contribute to Good Governance and National Development.

Studies have shown that National Development and Good Governance are enhanced by having leaders who are well-read. It is a general belief that a well-educated leader is an added advantage for any nation and there is a relationship between a leaders' level of education and Good Governance (Zayyad 2013). It seems that this assertion is not applicable in Nigeria. Despite the established fact that highly educated leaders developed good policies for economic growth in their countries, influence international public opinion towards their countries and easily attract foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to their countries, including separating their personal interest from the public good. It is puzzling that the more highly educated Nigerians ascend to political power, the country experiences bad governance. So, what went wrong in Nigeria? Is it the quality of their academic qualifications? Is it the system? Has having more educated leaders resulted in the current sophistication of corruption in Nigeria?. It is known that most of Nigeria's current leaders attended the best schools in/outside the country and the constitution of the country is modest enough to guide those in power. So, what could be responsible for poor governance by our leaders? Proffering solution to the question above is the reason for this paper.

Conceptual Clarification Good Governance

Governance is the way in which governments exercised power for the management and distribution of a country's social and economic resources (Ogundiya, 2010). It is the process by which a state's affairs are managed effectively in the areas of public accountability, fiscal responsibility, administrative and political responsibility, responsiveness, and transparency, all of which must show the interest of the governed and the leaders. Governance is the process by which government makes and implements policy decisions that influence the citizens of a nation. Abdullahi, (2019) affirmed that Governance is the way and manner of how power is exercised through a country's economic, political, social and civil society to use the country's resources for socio-economic development which have an impact on each household, individual or nation. The concept of "Governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilization. Governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented (Odo, 2015).

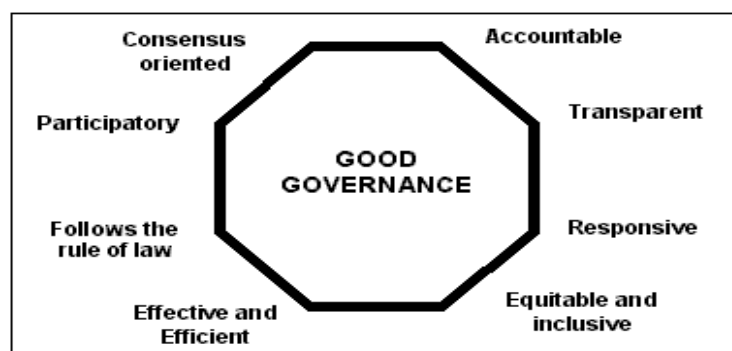
Yap (2010) noted that Government is one of the actors in Governance. To explain actors in Governance, Yap (2010) quipped; other actors involved in Governance vary depending on the level of government that is under discussion. In rural areas, for example, other actors may include influential land lords,

associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, research institutes, religious leaders, finance institutions political parties, the military etc. The situation in urban areas is much more complex. It provides the interconnections between actors involved in urban Governance. At the National level, in addition to the above actors, media, lobbyists, international donors, multi-national corporations, etc. may play a role in decision-making or in influencing the decision-making process. All actors other than Government and the military are grouped together as part of the "civil society." In some countries in addition to the civil society, organized crime syndicates also influences decision-making, particularly in urban areas and at the national level. Similarly, formal government structure are one means by which decisions are arrived at and implemented. At the National level, informal decision making structure such as "kitchen cabinet" or informal advisers may exist. In urban areas organized crime syndicates such as the 'Land Mafians' may influence decisions making. In some rural areas, locally powerful families may make or influence decision making. Such informal decision making is often the result of corrupt practices. Yap, (2010). The assertion of Yap above represent the case of Nigeria where successful Government depends on informal decision makers in making decisions for the country which often leads to bad Governance.

Good Governance is described as the government of the society. It is the rightly exercising of authority, the ability to problem- solving and conflict resolution, the capacity to manage resources efficiently for development, and high level of responsiveness to the needs and the interest of the citizens (Otoghile, Igbafe, & Aghontaen, 2014)). Good governance is, among other things, about being participatory, transparent and accountable.

Characteristics of Good Governance

Yap (2010) represented the characteristics of Good Governance with the diagram below



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The aforementioned features of Good Governance include the conduct of comprehensive management where stakeholders are allowed to have a say in the decision-making process. The scope of governance is wide as it includes all the day-to-day activities of the government, such as the exercise of authority on the economic, political and administrative at all levels of government. Good Governance is integral to economic growth, eradication of poverty and hunger, quality education and sustainable development. The issue of Good Governance is a problem that has crippled the growth of many countries in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Some of the aforementioned features of Good Governance may be lacking in Nigeria hence, the hardship we are facing.

National Development

National development can be described as the overall development or a collective socioeconomic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. Mezieobi (2013) conceptualized National Development as: A process of systematic transformation of the overall social, economic, political, scientific and technological life of a nation via effective, coherent, co-ordinate management system, result-oriented social mobilization strategy in which the citizens actually participate and exhibit positive attitudinal commitment in the overall reconstruction process for the improved human conditions of the people.

According to Gbenda and Akume (2009), education provides the intellectual feat which is required for social, economic, political and technological development of a nation. Education is intended to improve the personal life of the student in terms of the knowledge and skills, which he requires and which enhance his quality of life and contributes to the well-being of his society. One of the objectives of education therefore is to adequately equip the child with the necessary skills and knowledge needed for effective participation and contribution to National Development (Chima, 2006). National Development is the ability of a country to improve the social well-being of its citizens through the provision of such social amenities as medical care, infrastructure, quality education and other social services.

In this study, National Development operationally refers to the ability of a country to mobilize resources to improve the social welfare of the people, by providing social amenities like education, portable water, transportation, infrastructure, medical care etc. It implies the wellbeing of a covert majority of the citizens in material terms, decreases in inequality levels. Above all, National Development implies the guarantee of security of lives and property in the nation state. This National Development can only be attained through education. This is

why the National Policy on Education (2004) stated that education is an instrument par excellence for effecting National Development. Any functional and efficient education system should be able to improve the economic development of the nation. One of the major economic functions of education is to ensure that the needed manpower for economic development is trained. This can help the society to reduce poverty among its people by enabling them to employ effective tools of production. Apart from the above, nation building and industrialization is a major aim of education. Thus, producing citizens with appropriate occupational skills and knowledge to plan and manage the economy efficiently through education can lead to improving the status of the nation's economy (Agbo, 2014). From all indications, it is clear that Nigeria educational system has failed to stimulate National Development and it could be traced to poor quality of education in terms of curriculum contents.

Curriculum content

According to Offorma (2016), curriculum is regarded as the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes presented to the learner in order to change their behaviour to become functional members of the society. A well-plan curriculum must reflect the culture of the people for which it is planned for it to be a functional curriculum. Curriculum content consists of all the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are designed to be studied by the learner at school. It is an organisation or a prescribed pattern of subject matter which addresses the needs, problems, values and dreams of a society to be achieved through the school. It includes issues in the society, about the child and knowledge needed to achieve the set objectives (Amadioha, 2010). There is need to re-examine our curriculum content especially in the area of societal norms and values now that our societies are morally bankrupt.

A functional curriculum reflects the culture of the people. The essence of Education is to produce the total man; someone who can use what he/she has learnt in school to solve problems. Culture is maintained and modified through education and must be integrated in school planning. Agwu, (2009) assert that integration means what the school offers must be related to what the community requires. In the organization of the content and learning experience. It is the merging of related content and experiences from different subject area into one area of knowledge. It deals with using content from one subject area to solve problem in another content area. Every curriculum is based and covers the cultural universal, cultural specialties, and cultural alternatives. These are reflected in the school curricula (Offorma 2016). Our discussion therefore is on

the inclusion of the cultural elements in the school curriculum to show the relationship between what is taught in the school and what the learners' experiences in life. It is our opinion that curriculum planners should re-examine the school curriculum with a view to raising people of good conscience for Good Governance and National Development.

Education and Governance in Nigeria

There is a linear relationship between Good Governance and functional education. There cannot be a functional education where a country's resources are not well utilized for its citizens. It is a general belief that a well-educated leader is an added advantage for any nation and there is a relationship between good governance and leaders' level of education

(Zayyad, 2012). It seems that this assertion is not applicable in Nigeria. So what went wrong? Some of our leaders attended good schools across the globe but when in position of authority, fails to exhibit the characteristic of Good Governance which leads to corruption and this could be due to the facts that the society has lost its norms and value system.

The problem of Governance in Nigeria is multi-facets in nature. For the purpose of this conference, we will focus on quality of education as the cause of poor Governance in Nigeria. It is our believe that if the quality of Education in terms of curriculum content is improved, half of the problem of governance will be solved because education is the bedrock of a developed nation. The quality of our educational system is such that breed people with the ethos of class materialism, unemployment, moral laxity, and culture of imitation amongst other (Agin-Obu, 2016). In most societies, standards of behavior are passed from one generation to the next. It is the duty of every functional education to transmit the culture of the society from one generation to the next. Through education, youths learn the customs, traditions, beliefs and lifestyle of their people. Ako and James (2018) explained that education will be meaningless if it is not directed at solving societal problems, conserving the cultural heritage, inventing and discovering new ideas and technologies that are essential tools for cultural improvement. Education should develop moral and social consciousness among the youths so that they can uphold the moral and social values of their societies. Morality as observe by Denga (2011) is basically concerned with the development of sound character in the child so that virtues like goodness, rightness, truth, respect for law, and authority, forgiveness, honesty, sympathy, diligence, self-imposed discipline and obedience among other virtues are internalized by the child. One of the important aims of the Nigerian educational system is the inculcation of six value clusters one of which is moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and

human relation. This includes, specific moral values of being God fearing, honest, responsible and forgiving. The question one may ask is: is the Nigeria educational system achieving this very important aim of developing a sense of moral values in the Nigerian child which would consequently lead to good governance and national development? .The knowledge acquired through formal education assists citizens to bring desirable change to their community in particular leading to good governance and national development in general. From all indications, educational system in Nigeria has not been able to fully inculcate moral values into the Nigerian child looking at the activities of youths in the areas of examination malpractices, cultism and other social vices in our schools and universities.

Abekhale (2009) observe, the situation in Nigeria has been worsened by the behavioural pattern of our youths, many of them no longer believe in hard work, which our forefathers bequeathed on us. Many are no longer patient; there is no commitment and no aspiration. Our educational system has instilled on the youth different types of values other than the indigenous norms and ideologies which formed the basis of our indigenous organization. The curriculum content is not robust enough to accommodate our believe system, values and norms as Nigerians hence, the corrupt tendency among our leaders. The society have lost its norms and value system, no one questions the source of one's wealth in the society anymore, and this is because the current educational system does not encourage spiritual and moral values. Therefore, we advocate that social studies and civic education curriculum content should be reviewed to include the content of our indigenous education. Though, there are some aspects of societal values in these subjects but not in the form of indigenous education. These indigenous educational contents should be taught at all levels of education and should be made a core subject. Indigenous system of education was designed to inculcate discipline, sense of responsibilities to the leaders and share of values and culture of the community. If it is made part of our curriculum content, the society will have men and women of good conscience that will be good leaders. Agina-Obu (2006) summarized the curriculum content of indigenous education to include; Rooted in activities of communal needs, Perverseness - embracing all aspects of practical life, Involving moral standards character, ability to play active role in the community and an understanding of the history of the community, Stipulates learning activities to have relationship with real life, Social, religion, psychological, physical, vocational and emotional lives, Cognitive, Affective and Psycho-motor development are encouraged (Agina-Obu, 2006).

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From this, it could be seen that our indigenous education is functional, co-operative and humanistic, which are lacking in our educational system which have given rise to moral decadence in all ramifications. If the indigenous curriculum content as listed above forms part of the organization of our learning experience and content, the problem of governance will be appreciably solved.

Conclusion

In Nigeria, Education is still facing some problem militating against the expected outcome in the society today such as good governance and economic development. The curriculum content lack societal value system that will guide the conscience of our leaders. Though, there are some aspects of societal values in social studies and civic education but not in the form of indigenous education. Indigenous system of education was designed to inculcate discipline, sense of responsibilities to the leaders and share of values and culture of the community. We therefore need a curriculum content that will encourage spiritual and moral values which will produce people of good conscience that will govern with the fear of God which will lead to Good Governance and National Development.

Suggestions

1. Indigenous education should be made part of the school curriculum
2. Indigenous educational should be made a core subject that will be taught from primary school to tertiary level
3. Government should organize workshop and seminar for teachers on the importance of Indigenous Education in the society.

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