

## EXTENT OF TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION IN THE SELECTION OF CURRICULUM CONTENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE

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### **Abstract**

The role of teachers in the achievement of educational objectives cannot be overemphasized. They are the major key players in curriculum implementation at the classroom levels. Teachers can make or mar a nation, where they fail to implement the designed contents, the educational objectives may not be achieved. They are at the middle between the contents and the learners. Unfortunately, the extent of teachers' participation in the selection of the contents they implement is not yet known. Thus, this study therefore investigated the extent of teachers participation in the selection of curriculum contents in secondary schools in Enugu State. The population for the study was 8,909 teachers in the 287 secondary schools in Enugu. The sample for the study was 688 made up of (285 males and 403 females). One research question and one hypothesis were posed for the study. Mean scores were used to answer the research question while the hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance and appropriate degree of freedom. The major finding was that teachers participate in the selection of curriculum contents in secondary schools in Enugu State to a little extent. The educational implication was indicated, based on that recommendations were made.

**Keywords:** Teachers' Participation, Selection, Curriculum Contents, Secondary Schools, Enugu State

## Introduction

Curriculum is the totality of all the programmes (both activity, instruction and guidance) designed to achieve the educational objectives of any nation. It is all the learning experiences and intended learning outcomes systematically planned and guided by the school through the reconstruction of knowledge of cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the learners (Akundolu in Eya, 2012). Curriculum of any nation consists the educational aims and objectives, the contents, methods and materials for the actualization of the objectives and evaluation activities etc. Curriculum is the instrument through which the society via the schools educate its citizens, both adult and young. Therefore, the quality of education of every society is subject to the quality of the society's curriculum. Curriculum is designed, and implemented in accordance with the societal needs. "Need" being the difference between "what is" and "what ought to be". Based on this whatever the society wants through it's education is designed and programmed in the curriculum which is handed over to the implementer (the teacher) for transmitting and inculcating to the learners.

Akubulo (2017) is of the opinion that curriculum content does not entail the subjects, which have already been specified as contained in the National Policy on Education. She maintained that emphasis should be on the contents or course outline or topics that are contained in each of the subject areas. Selection is the process of choosing something from group of thing. Therefore, selection of curriculum contents entails the process of choosing those particular contents commensurate with the age and level of instruction of the learners. Participation is the act of taking part in an activity or event. Participation in the selection of curriculum contents therefore, means taking part in the process of choosing the contents which they implement at the classroom levels.

Teachers are the main implementers of the curriculum contents. Teachers are at the centre between the curriculum contents and the learners. Even at this, the extent to which the teachers participate in the selection of the curriculum contents which they implement is not certain. It is pertinent to state here that the educational objectives as enshrined in the curriculum cannot be achieved if the various instructional contents are not achieved at the classroom levels. Therefore, there is the need to determine the extent of participation of

the teachers in the selection of curriculum contents which they inculcate to the learners. The teachers takes the final decision as regards to actual learning experiences designed to be provided to the learners and so not involving or incorporating him in the planning and development process is like separating the curriculum from the instruction (Mkpa and Izuagba, 2009) in Obilo and Sangoleye, (2015). The implication of the above is that in as much as the design and how its objectives should be achieved cannot be separated, teachers cannot be separated from curriculum planning and development if effective implementation is to be achieved (Obilo and Sangoleye, 2015). In line with the above synergy, teachers should be involved in the selection of the curriculum contents which they implement.

Although, there are other personnel whose work are quite as important as that of the teachers (for example, the school counselor, it is the teacher who is solely responsible for the implementation of curriculum objectives and contents (Nwanze, 2015).

Akubulo (2014) in Nwanze (2015) opined that, “among the important roles of the teacher in curriculum implementation and interpretation are:

- i. Breaking down of the syllabus presented by curriculum planners into smaller segments such as scheme of works modules and units.
- ii. Selecting and organizing learning contents in such a way as to make learning meaningful and easy.
- iii. Selecting appropriate learning objectives among others.

The focus of this work is on item (ii) selecting and organizing learning contents in such a way as to make learning meaningful and easy. The extent to which teachers actually participate in the above function is to be determined by this study. It will also be necessary to find out whether gender effects the teachers participation in the selection of curriculum contents.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The major issue of academic concern for this study is that without teachers' participation in the selection of curriculum contents, the implementation of the contents may be more challenging than otherwise. Teachers are at centre between the content and

the learner, participating in the selection of the contents will give teachers the fore knowledge of the contents of which they are going to deliver to the students and this in turn will enable them prepare ahead to face the challenges they will encounter in the classroom in the course of content delivery. The poor performances of students in both the internal and external examinations could be attributed to poor implementation of the curriculum contents by the teachers. It could also be as a result of poor knowledge of the desired curriculum content delivered to the students.

It is not an over statement to say that the extent of involvement of an individual in programme planning goes a long way to determining his or her active participation in the implementation/delivery of such programme.

Therefore, since the extent of teacher's participation in the selection of curriculum contents for the secondary schools in Enugu State is not yet determined; the problem of this study is therefore to determine the extent of teachers' participation in the selection of curriculum contents for secondary schools in Enugu State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to find out the extent of teacher's participation in the selection of curriculum content. Specifically, the study aimed at determining:

1. The extent of male and female teachers' participation in the selection of curriculum contents.

### **Research Question**

1. To what extent do secondary school male and female teachers participate in the selection of curriculum contents?

### **Research Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female teachers of secondary schools in Enugu State on the extent of their participation in the selection of curriculum contents.

### **Methodology**

The design for the study was survey. The population for the study was 8,909 teachers in the 287 secondary schools in Enugu State. The sample for the study was 688 respondents made up of (285 males and 403 females) teachers selected through stratified random sampling. The questionnaire was used in collecting data on the extent of teachers participation in selecting curriculum contents in secondary schools in Enugu State. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and was validated by three experts: Two in curriculum and instruction and one in measurement and evaluation. The instrument had reliability co-efficient of 0.89. The reliability of the instrument was established by using the test-retest reliability method and the reliability co-efficient was determined using Pearson correlation method. The questionnaire elicited responses of the teachers on the extent of their participation in the selection of curriculum contents. Mean score was used to answer the research question, while the postulated hypothesis was answered using t-test statistics of 0.05 level of significance and appropriate degree of freedom.

Results: Table 1: Mean scores and Standard Deviation of male and female teachers on the extent of their participation in the selection of curriculum content. N = 680 (M=280: F=400)

S/N	Item Description	$\bar{X}_1$	MALE		FEMALE		DCC for male	both and female
			SD <sub>1</sub>	DCC	X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>		
1	Teachers participate in the selection of content connected with the learners experience (learnability)	2.17	0.89	LE	2.17	0.90	LE	LE
2	Teachers participate in the selection of content that meets the community needs and aspiration (utility)	2.44	1.01	LE	2.10	0.85	LE	LE
	Teachers participate in the selection of content that gives priority to learner's interest when new learning is being introduced.	2.40	1.01	LE	2.35	0.83	LE	LE
3	Teachers participate in the selection of content that contribute to the understanding and mastery of the basic principles of the subject.	2.46	0.99	LE	2.31	0.89	LE	LE
4	Teachers participate in the selection of content that comprise facts which are up to date (validity)	2.06	1.00	LE	2.26	0.99	LE	LE
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.25</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>LE</b>

Data in table I indicate that male teachers had a mean score of 2.25 with the standard deviation of 0.43 on items assessing their participation in selecting curriculum content. And their female counterparts obtained a mean score of 2.24 with a standard deviation of 0.86. This means that both male and female teachers participate to a little extent in selecting curriculum content.

### Hypothesis I

**Table 2:** the t-test of significant difference in the means scores of male and female teachers on participation in the selection of curriculum content. N = 680

Gender	Cases	df	X	SD	t-cal	t-cri	Decision
Male	280	678	2.25	0.98	0.13484	1.9600	Do not reject Ho <sub>1</sub>
Female	400			2.24			

For hypothesis one, t-cal (0.1384) is less than the t-cri. (1.9600) at an alpha level of 0.05 since at the calculated value is less than the critical value at the given alpha level, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The researcher therefore upholds the null hypothesis and concludes that the mean scores of male and female teachers on their extent of participation in selecting curriculum contents is not significantly different.

### **Discussion**

The finding of this study as indicated from research question I, table I with respect to teachers participation in the selection of curriculum contents, the grand mean response score of male teachers is 2.25 while the female teachers obtained an overall mean response score of 2.24, this is a direct allusion that both male and female teachers participate to a little extent in the selection of curriculum content. The finding is in line with Mkpa (2004) who submitted that the Nigerian experiences show that the teachers are involved almost only at the classroom level when it comes to teaching. He argued further that in other processes, the teacher are not often involved and that hardly does he even know when and where the decisions influencing the other aspects of the curriculum are taken. Therefore it could be deduced from the above that the degree of commitment expected from the teachers can hardly be demonstrated since they are meant to play an acted script. This in no small measure is bound to affect the performance of students in their academic work. The test of difference in the mean of male and female teachers on their extent of participation in selecting curriculum content revealed that they did not differ significantly in their participation on the above issue.

This negates the findings of Adams (2005) that disparity in educational opportunities existed between male and female, and based on this, the chances are that male teachers are more disposed to have an upper hand in the selection of curriculum content which does not seem to be the cases as the finding appear to suggest.

### **Educational Implication**

- i. The poor participation of teachers in the selection of curriculum contents affect their productivity and generally leads to students' poor academic performances. This is

because the extent of ones involvement in a programme planning determines the strength of his participation in the programme.

- ii. The General Education objectives may likely going to be achieved to a very great extent if instructional objective at the various levels of instruction are achieved by the teachers probably for participating in the selection of the contents they teach.

### **Recommendation**

1. Government and other stakeholders in education industry should consider it a matter of priority to ensure that teachers participate actively in all the phases of curriculum process especially in the selection of contents which they teach. This will not only reduce the rate of failure on the side of the students, but will equally boost the morale of the teachers.

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