

Curriculum Implementation Factors as Correlates of Academic Achievement in Economics in Sample of Nigerian University Undergraduates

Agnes O. Okeke, Catherine U. Ene & Basil C.E. Oguguo

Department of Science Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Corresponding author: catherine.ene@unn.edu.ng

Abstract

The study examined the relationship between curriculum implementation factors as correlates of academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigeria university undergraduates. Three research questions with three corresponding null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. Correlation survey research design was adopted for the study with a total sample of 62 students (2020/2021 session) drawn through accidental sampling technique. Curriculum Implementation Factors Questionnaire (CIFQ) and Economics Achievement Test (EAT) were instruments used for data collection. Two specialists in Economics Education unit and one specialist in Measurement and Evaluation unit validated the instruments. Internal consistency reliability of the items of the Curriculum Implementation Factors Questionnaire (CIFQ) instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha method and a value of 0.72, 0.76 and 0.84, with overall reliability of 0.77 was obtained while Kuder- Richardson (K-R) formulae 20 was used for the Economics Achievement Test and the index of 0.92 was obtained. The data collected were carefully analyzed using simple regression analysis to answer the research questions while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. Result showed that there is positive relationship between the strike action embarked upon by teacher, adequacy of lecturers, availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigeria university undergraduates. It was recommended that government should ensure adequate provision of infrastructure and avoid strike for proper implementation of curriculum in the university system.

Keywords: Curriculum Implementation, Academic achievement, Economics

Introduction

Education is one of the most important things in life that an individual must have and essential for development of a country. According to Giniely and Venturina (2014), Education is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching and training. Education frequently takes place under the guidance of others. Any experience that has a formative effect on the way one think, feels, or acts may be considered educational. Education is absolutely beneficial for the society on the whole and it's a lifelong process to each person that needs to be reinforced throughout life (Bloom, et al., 2014). Giniely and Venturina further stated that education play a crucial role in preparing and providing leadership to meet challenges and stimulate sustainable development.

Education is a teaching and learning process that involves parents and the teachers whose function is to teach young individuals and learners who will gain the learning imparted by the teacher. However, Economics as one of the subject taught by teachers have grown lots of concern by the stakeholders in education. Economics as one of the social science subject deals with the ways in which men and societies seek to satisfy their material needs and desires. Harper (2001) stated that economics is the social science that analyzes the

production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. Economic growth is the increase in the real output of the country in a particular span of time whereas, economic development is the increase in the level of production in an economy along enrichment of living standards and the advancement of technology (Blaug, 2007). Bloom, Canning and Chan (2014) were of the opinion that economics is an agent of economic growth and development of a country. Economics as a subject is the study of how societies use scarce resources to produce valuable commodities and distribute them among different people.

There's consistency in review and improvement of university education curriculum. However, efforts have been made by stakeholders such as the Nigerian Economic Society (NES), Nigeria Association of Economics (NAE), Institute of Chartered Economists of Nigeria (I. C. E.N.), Nigeria Association for Energy Economics (NAEE), Economics lecturers and economics book publishers to improve the general achievement in economics yet there's still poor academic achievement of students in Economics (Akparanta, 2014; Adeyemi, 2019). Achievement can be seen generally as accomplishment or success. Kulbir (2005) defined achievement as the apparent demonstration of understanding. Concepts, skills, ideas and knowledge of a person and proposed that

grades clearly depict the performance of a student. This is in line with Gimba (2014) who opined that achievement is something that somebody has succeeded in doing after a lot of effort. In other words, it is an attainment of desired goals or objectives. Relating this to education, academic achievement is the students' success in meeting short-or –long-term goals in education. Gimba added that academic achievement can be viewed as the individual's performance up to the desired level in a particular field. According to Abugu (2017), achievement is individual attainment in given task. Therefore, academic achievement is the knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subject usually designed by test scores or marks. This implies that achievement of learner in Economics is evident in scores or type of grades the learner obtained at the end of the Economics course as reported by the teacher. The scores or grades form the basis for promotion to the next class, award of degrees, certificates, prizes, scholarship or admission into the university. Hence, academic achievement must be managed efficiently keeping in view all the factors that can positively or negatively affect the educational performance such as curriculum implementation factors.

Curriculum is the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or programme. It is the expectations for what will be taught and what students will do in a programme of study. Esu, et al. (2004) viewed curriculum as all learning experiences a child has under the guidance of a teacher. Offorma (2005) described it as a vehicle through which education is attained. Offorma further added that curriculum is a programme which is made up three components: programme of studies, programme of activities and programme of guidance. According to Ayodele and Adegbile (2007), it is all the planned experiences provided by the school to assist the learners in attaining the designated learning outcomes to the best of their abilities. It is the blue-print or instrument by which school seeks to translate the hope and values of the society in which it operates into concrete reality. On the other hand, curriculum implementation is the process of putting the curriculum into work for the achievement of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Okebukola (2004) viewed curriculum implementation as the translation of the objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. According to Ivowi (2004) it is the translation of "theory into practice", or "proposal into action". However, some factors such as strike action of lecturers, lack of

infrastructure and inadequate number of lecturers may affect the smooth implementation of the university curriculum.

Strike action is a situation where there's a stop of duties by the employee because of certain disagreements with the employer. It is a period of time when an organized group of employees of a company stops working because of a disagreement over pay or conditions (Mas, 2004). Strike action of lecturers is the incessant strikes and unrest among teachers to conflict and disagreements between teachers and the managers of educational institutions as well as government arising from unpaid or poor salaries and allowances, inadequate and unconducive learning and teaching environment (Sule, 2008). Is a work stopped, caused by the mass rejection of employees to duty post? It usually takes place in response to employee grievances. Nigerian education organization is deviled by persistent strikes by classroom teachers at all levels. Fasunlade (2016) on a study on effect of teachers' strike actions on academic performance of students: a case study of selected secondary schools in Ilesha, Osun state found out that teachers' strike has negative effects on students' academic performance. Another study by Olankule (2011) on assessment of factors affecting implementation of senior secondary school curriculum in Etung Local Government of Cross River State revealed that strike action by teachers contributed to poor implementation of curriculum and poor students' achievement.

Another factor which seems to be a problem to curriculum implementation is inadequate number of lecturers (teaching staff). Teachers are the major implementer of the curriculum and thereby the availability of teachers in all the subjects is essential at all educational level. Garcia and Weiss (2019) were on the opinion that inadequate number of lecturers is inability of staff vacancies at current wages with individuals qualified to teach in the fields needed. It simply means not having enough teachers to handle a subject. It is having a shortage of academic staff. Studies revealed that instability in a school's teacher workforce (i.e., high turnover and/or high attrition) negatively affects student achievement (Jackson & Bruegmann 2009; Ronfeldt, et al., 2013, Kraft & Papay 2014; Sorensen & Ladd, 2018). According to Ladd and Sorensen (2016) found out that a lack of sufficient teachers threatens students' ability to learn. Availability of infrastructure which is another factor capable of affecting the implementation of curriculum is refers to the mount of adequacy of the buildings

used by an organization to run smoothly. Osahon (2010) defined the school infrastructure as physical structures which are known as shelter for educational activities including classrooms, laboratories, workshop, teachers' administration office, toilets, reading rooms, dispensaries, libraries, dining halls and assembly halls. It is the physical infrastructures that support the conduct of students' academic studies and they are considered as the key base for learning in schools (Johnston, 2020). Nyongesa (2011) carried out the study in South Africa which revealed that the school performance is significantly affected by various factors like school environment and location as well as school facilities. David (2017) conducted a study in USA at Michigan University on importance of school infrastructure on quality education improvement indicated that school infrastructure highly correlated students' academic performance in the university. Swando (2016) in a study of teacher availability and quality affect student achievement? An empirical study in Indonesia found out that teacher availability and quality statistically significant to student performance. Anion and Rosmaizura (2018) in a study on impact of facilities on students' academic achievement found out that the impact of facilities like teaching aid, library of learning environment, hostel, sports facilities, parking and transportation of infrastructure were the most important facilities to influence academic achievement of University Malaysia Kelenta (UMK) students in City Campus. Uwimana (2020) in a study the relationship between school infrastructure and students' academic performance in twelve years' basic education (12 YBE) in Gasabo District-Rwanda found out that there was a significant low positive correlation between school infrastructures and students' academic performance in 12 YBE in Gasabo District-Rwanda. However, few literatures have been cited but a major aspect which seems inconclusive is the extent to which incessant teacher's strike and lack of infrastructures have caused damage to smooth implementation of university education especially in Nigeria because these are major problems in the university system. This present study seeks to fill the gap. The study was guided by the following research questions and hypotheses:

1. What is the relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university education students?
2. What is the relationship between inadequate number of lecturers and academic achievement in Economics in sample of

Nigerian university education students?

3. What is the relationship between availability of infrastructures and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university education students?

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university education students.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between inadequate number of lecturers and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university education students.

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between availability of infrastructures and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university education students.

Method

This study adopted the correlation research design. The population of this study comprised of all the 300 level Economics Education undergraduates of Social Science Education Department, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka for 2020/2021 academic session. A sample 62 students were used for the study. The sample was obtained through accidental sampling technique. The choice of the sampling technique was because these were the students who were present at the lecture class at the time the instrument was administered. The choice of the students was because the students are matured enough to know the reason why they are in the university while the 400 level students are the final year students who are facing graduation examination. Two instruments developed by the researchers were used for this study; they are Curriculum Implementation Factors Questionnaire (CIFQ) and Economics Achievement Test (EAT). The instruments CIFQ has two sections: section A and B. Section A covering the demographic data of the students such as student's identification number while section B contains three clusters (cluster A, B and C) with 10 items each on the three Curriculum Implementation Factors. The responses were guided by 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (4 Points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 Points) and Strongly Disagree (1 Point). The 30 multiple-choice item EAT with 4-options of which one option is right was guided with the use of test blueprint which was also constructed by the researchers. The test blueprint was guided by the objectives of the content area on Economics course. Each right item was awarded one mark to get a total of

30 marks if a student got all items right which was converted to percentage. EAT instrument also have a space for student's identification number.

Three specialists from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka validated the instruments to ascertain the face and content validity: two specialists from Economics Education unit of Social Science Education Department and one specialist from Educational Measurement and Evaluation unit of Science Education Department. Their observations were effected in the final draft of the instrument. To determine the internal consistency reliability of the instrument, the instruments were administered to thirty (30) 300 level Economics Education students from another university of the same faculty but outside the studied sample. Internal consistency reliability of the items of the Curriculum Implementation Factors Questionnaire (CIFQ) instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha method and a value of 0.72, 0.76 and 0.84, with overall reliability of 0.77 was obtained while Kuder-Richardson (K-R) formulae 20 was used for the Economics Achievement Test and the index of 0.92 was obtained. The instruments were administered by the researchers with the help of Economics Education lecturer whom the purpose of the study was briefed. The data collected were carefully analyzed using simple regression analysis to answer the research questions while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The interpretation of result was based on Nworgu (2015) guideline, where value of r

0.80 to 1.00 is very high, 0.60 to 0.80 high, 0.40 to 0.60 medium, 0.20 to 0.40 low and 0.00 to 0.20 very low.

Result

Table 1. Regression analysis of the relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement in University Economics Education Students

Variables	N	R ¹	R ²
Strike action by lecturers/ Students achievement	62	-0.828	-0.686

Table 1 revealed that the correlation between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement in sample of university Economics education students is 0.828. This means that there is very high negative relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement in university Economics education students. The coefficient of determination associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.828 is 0.686. The coefficient of determination (0.686) shows that -68.6% of the variation in university Economics education students' academic achievement in Economics course is attributed to strike action by lecturers. This is an indication that 31.4% of the variation in university Economics education students' academic achievement in Economics course is attributed to other factors order than strike action by lecturers.

Table 2. Analysis of variance of the relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement in University Economics Education Students

Model	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	1530.401	1	1530.40			
Residual	32875.270	60	198.15	15.595	0.000	Significant
Total	34405.671	61				

Table 2 shows that an F-ratio of 15.595 with associated exact probability value of 0.000 was obtained. Since probability value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance set as benchmark for decision making on testing the hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, inference drawn is that, the relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement of university Economics education students is statistically significant.

Table 3. Regression analysis of the relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics Education

Variables	N	R ¹	R ²
Availability of infrastructure/ Students achievement	62	0.293	0.086

Table 3 revealed that the correlation between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates is 0.293. This means that there is low positive relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates. The coefficient of determination associated with the

correlation coefficient of 0.293 is 0.086. The coefficient of determination (0.086) shows that 8.6% of the variation in Economics education undergraduates' academic achievement in Economics course is attributed to availability of infrastructure. This is an

indication that 91.4% of the variation in Economics education undergraduates' academic achievement in Economics course is attributed to other factors order than availability of infrastructure.

Table 4. Analysis of variance of the relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates

Model	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig	Decision
Regression	1651.011	1	1651.011	13.114	0.000	Significant
Residual	756.489	60	8.223			
Total	2407.500	61				

Table 2 shows that an F-ratio of 13.114 with associated exact probability value of 0.000 was obtained. Since probability value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance set as benchmark for decision making on testing the hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, inference drawn is that, the relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates is statistically significant.

Table 5. Regression analysis of the relationship between lecturers' availability and academic achievement in Economics Education

Variables	N	R ¹	R ²
Lecturers' availability/ Students achievement	62	0.263	0.069

The data in Table 5 revealed that the correlation between lecturers' availability and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates is 0.263. This means that there is low positive relationship between lecturers' availability and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates. The coefficient of determination associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.263 is 0.069. The coefficient of determination (0.069) shows that 6.9% of the variation in Economics education undergraduates' academic achievement in Economics course is attributed to lecturers' availability. This is an indication that 93.1% of the variation in Economics education undergraduates' academic achievement in Economics course is attributed to other factors order than lecturers' availability

Table 6. Analysis of variance of the relationship between lecturers' availability and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates

Model	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	3242.320	1	3242.320	12.152	0.000	Significant
Residual	43484.599	60	724.743			
Total	46726.919	61				

Table 6 shows that an F-ratio of 12.152 with associated exact probability value of 0.000 was obtained. Since probability value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance set as benchmark for decision making on testing the hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, inference drawn is that, the relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates is statistically significant.

Discussion

The study revealed that there is very high negative relationship between strike action by lecturers and students' academic achievement. The study also revealed that, the relationship between strike action by lecturers and academic achievement of university Economics education students is statistically significant. This indicated that strike action by lecturers has big effect on the students' academic achievement. Besides, there are still other factors that can contribute to the poor academic achievement of students. The

finding of the study is in agreement with the study of Ogundare, et al. (2018) who revealed that strike action by teachers contributed to poor implementation of curriculum. The finding of the study is also in disagreement with the study of Fasunlade (2016) who found out that teachers' strike has negative effects on students' academic performance.

The study revealed that there is low positive relationship between inadequate number of lecturers and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates. This is in agreement with Ladd and Sorensen (2016) study that found out a lack of sufficient teachers threatens students' ability to learn. The result of this study is in disagreement with many studies who found out availability of lecturers have negatively effects on students' achievement (Jackson & Bruegmann 2009; Ronfeldt, et al., 2013; Kraft & Papay 2014; Sorensen & Ladd 2018).

The study also revealed that there is positive relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates. Also, the relationship between availability of infrastructure and academic achievement in Economics Education in sample of Nigerian university undergraduates is statistically significant. The result of the study is in support of the many studies who revealed that availability of infrastructure has positive impact on students' academic achievement (Nyongesa, 2011; David, 2012; Swando, 2016; Anion et al., 2018; Uwimana 2020). None of the reviewed study is in disagreement with the finding of this study.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that a stop in strike action of lecturers will improve the students' academic achievement. Strike action by lecturers will make the students not to achieve highly because the curriculum will not be effectively implemented. Therefore, educational stakeholders especially the government sector in-charge of university education should avoid strike actions by lecturers so as to make sure that the curriculum are achieved, thereby increasing academic achievement of the students. The availability of infrastructures and lecturers that supposed to aid curriculum implementation were not in place.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. The government should ensure that lecturers' remuneration is being given attention so that the rate of embarking on strike will be reduced.
2. The government should ensure that all agreement made with any university associations are kept to avoid strike action by the workers.
3. The government should collaborate with the private sectors to put needed infrastructural facilities in place in the university to support the proper implementation of the university curriculum.
4. The government should ensure that lecturers undergo all necessary training regularly in order to update their knowledge on how to achieve effective curriculum implementation.

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