

**INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF
ECONOMICS CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ONUEKE EDUCATION ZONE,
EBONYI STATE**

SYLVESTER N. OGBUEGHU (PhD, FCAI, FNISM)

Sylvester.Ogbueghu@unn.edu.ng

**Department of Social Science Education
University of Nigeria, Nsukka.**

&

PATRICK IFEANYI NWAFOR (PhD)
**Department of Social Science Education,
University of Calabar.**

&

PAUL IKECHUKWU IFERE
**Department of Arts and Social Science Education,
Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.**

Abstract

This study investigated the influence of teachers' characteristics on the Implementation of Senior Secondary School Economics in Onueke Education Zone. Four purpose and four research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised 2,520 SS II students in all the schools in the four Local Government Areas that make up the zone. A sample of 280 SS II students was used for the study. A four point modified likert type questionnaire titled Teachers Characteristics on Implementation of Economics Curriculum Questionnaire (TCICQ) made up of 24 items was used. The instrument was validated by 3 experts in Social Science Education and Measurement and Evaluation. It was also subjected test re-test reliability given a coefficient of 0.84. The data was analysed with mean and standard deviation. The result indicated that teachers' professional qualifications, experiences, motivational tendencies have significant influence in the teaching and learning of Economics (curriculum implementation) in the secondary schools. Gender of the teacher does not influence his/her ability to teach. This paper recommended that government should only employ teachers with certificates in Economics Education to teach the subject, economics teachers should be trained and re-trained to increase their experiences, that no teacher should teach Economics without instructional materials and that Field trip technique should be used extensively to teach Economics. The paper therefore concluded that the managers of Education in the study area should stimulate teachers' characteristics for effective implementation of school curriculums.

Key words: Teacher, teacher characteristics Economics Curriculum, secondary school, implementation and develop skills.

Introduction

This research is aimed at finding the influence of teachers' characteristics on the implementation of Economics Curriculum in Secondary School in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State. Education is vital for the existence of any society, and proper curriculum implantation is the major means of achieving effective Education. The concept of education is all embracing. Lock as cited in Emmanuel and Mustapha (2011) stated that education is an instrument that accomplishes everything and that nature sets limits to the efficacy of education. Fafunwa, cited in Amudu (2018) stated that education is seen as the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develop the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviours which are of positive value to the society in which he/she lives.

WhiteHead in Danladi (2011) was of the opinion that education is the acquisition of the art of utilization of knowledge for human development and progress. This implies that the only thing that can add value to individual is education. Education means different thing to different people, but from the generic sense, it is the transmission of knowledge from one person to another or from teacher to the learner. Hornby (2000) opined that education is a process of training, and instruction, especially of children and young people in schools and collages designed to give knowledge and develop skills.

Education is one of the primary sectors that helps in achieving development, it delivers the channel through which industrialization is achieved and sustained, moral upbringing upheld and standard of living improved (Orji and Mackae 2013). Ololube (2011a) linked education to:

- the act or process of imparting knowledge, or skills, systematic instruction and teaching;
- the obtaining knowledge or skill through systematic instruction and schooling;
- knowledge or skilled obtained or developed through systematic instruction;
- learning, a programme of instruction of a specific kind or level, for instance vocational education and university education;
- the field of study that is concerned with teaching and learning and the theory of teaching pedagogy.

These definitions highlighted four dimensions of the concept of education as follows: a field of study or profession, education as a programme of instruction, education as a process and education as an institution or agency. For teaching and learning to take place in the secondary schools like any other institutions of learning, curriculum of study must be developed per subject/course.

Curriculum is defined by Indiana Department of Education (2010) as a planned interaction of students with instructional content, materials, resources and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives. Blenkin (2012) defined curriculum as a body of knowledge contents or subjects. In the same vein, Ogunyemni (2009) saw curriculum as the planned and unplanned experiences which learners receive in the process of their formal or semi formal education for the purpose of becoming rounded persons who can contribute meaningfully for the betterment of their society and the world at large. From the above definitions, we can see that for curriculum to be properly developed, it must have planned and unplanned instructional content, materials and resource to ease impartment, pedagogical techniques and processes of evaluation.

Jeffs and Smith (2010) argued that the notion of curriculum provides a central dividing line between formal and informal education. Recognizing the fact that formal educators adopt curriculum theory and practices as their major tool for the impartment of knowledge, although some informal educators do adopt same for all round development of the learners. In conformity to the above statement, Esu (2005) suggested that curriculum refers to those knowledge, activities and experiences, both formal and informal, planned and guided, offered by the school for the benefit of the learner.

Onwuka as cited in Abang (2018) viewed curriculum from two perspectives: the traditionalists and the progressive view points. According to the traditionalist, curriculum is simply a subject matter, course of study or planned learning experiences of the learners under the guidance of the school. For the progressive, curriculum is the guided learning experiences centered around the felt needs of the learners. In other words, it is all the planned and unplanned learning experiences which may be implemented in or out of school but bears direct relevance to efficient and effectiveness in human resources development. Every subject taught in the secondary schools has a well articulated curriculum, of which Economics as a subject is included. This

we call Economics curriculum as developed by the National Education Resources Development Centers (NERDC) in Nigeria.

Economics is a subject that is taught in senior secondary school levels 1 – 3. Economics is a social science which guides people on production, generation of income, and effective allocation of resources so generated to achieve optimum utility (Ogbueghu 2017). Economics can be referred to as social science that deals with the study of how man uses his limited resources to satisfy his unlimited wants. It focuses on production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

Robbins cited in Ogbueghu (2004) defined Economics as a social science that studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. This definition is regarded as most appropriate and acceptable because economics studies the behaviour of consumers at the market with respect to how they buy and react to changes in prices of commodities. The knowledge of economics helps individual to understand, interpret and take rational decisions on both micro and macro economics issues in the society. Pettinger (2017) outlined the importance of the subject of Economics thus:

- it provides a mechanism for looking at possible consequences as we run short of raw materials in course of production;
- it helps us to understand the extent to which we should redistribute income in the society to avoid much macro-economic problems;
- it helps individuals to understand what is happening and investigate into reasons for the existence of poverty, unemployment and poor economic growth;
- it helps to analyse and evaluate the costs and benefits of free movement of labour;
- generally, it makes us to understand why people behave the way they do, as rational beings.

Economics prepares students for careers choice in future, especially in the following areas: business administration, planning, research and statistics, banking, marketing, teaching/lecturing, politics and so on. To achieve these are possible if economics curriculum is well designed to help students gain knowledge on how to make rational decisions on economic situations. This could also be achieved if students are well taught in the classroom using appropriate instructional techniques that would make them active learners, and could build their own knowledge based on the opportunities given to them by their teacher. This entails the implementation of economics curriculum which is done in the classroom by the teacher.

Economics curriculum in the senior secondary school is the learning experiences planned and packaged for students in SS 1 – 3 to learn under the guidance of the teacher. These learning experiences are articulated in a document by the National Education, Research and development Council (NERDC) in Nigeria. This document was reviewed in 2012, and the former 26 themes have been restructured into 16 themes with 49 topics spread over the three years of senior secondary based on the complexity of topics. According to the distribution, the total teaching times and topics available in each year are: SS I is 16 topics, SS 2 is 18 topics and SS 3 is 15 topics. This document described economics as a living subject and has to be taught and learned in a practical and realistic way. Consequently teachers are implored to use collaborative, interactive and learner-oriented instructional strategies. Future wheel techniques, entire education approach, concept mapping, field trips, cooperative learning strategies, and so on are strongly recommended for teacher (NERDC 2008).

National Policy on Education (FRN 2014) stipulated the objectives of the post basic economics curriculum to include enabling students:

- understand basic Economic principles and concepts as well as tools for sound economic analysis;
- contribute intelligently to discourse to economic reforms and development as they affect or would affect the generality of Nigerians;
- understanding the structure and functioning of economic institutions;
- appreciate the role of public policies in National economy;
- develop the skills and also appreciate for rational economic decisions;
- become sensitized to participate actively in National economic advancement through entrepreneurship, capital market and so on;

- understanding the role and status of Nigeria and other African countries in international economic relationships;
- appreciate the problems encountered by developing countries in their efforts towards economic development.

Generally, economics curriculum is based on the principle of equipping senior secondary school (SSS) graduates with basic knowledge and skills to appreciate the nature of economic problems in any society and adequately prepare them for challenges in Nigeria Economy. This well articulated document and its content need to be put into practical use or practice and this we call curriculum implementation. Mezieobi (2013) viewed implementation as a force of any plan without which the plan is only good intention. So implementation means the carrying out of policies into use or practice in order to achieve the stated objectives. Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabus and subjects (Chukumbi & Makamure, 2005). The achievement of the stated objectives of Economics Curriculum in the senior secondary schools depend largely on the effective implementation of its planned programme (Gilbert 2014).

Basically, the establishment of educational institutions was in pursuit of meeting the global needs and requirements of producing manpower that will serve in different capacities and contribute positively to the nations socio-economic development. This cannot be achieved without effective and efficient implementations of curriculum in the classroom by teachers. Mkpa (2007) defined curriculum implementation as the task of translating the curriculum document into the operating curriculum by the combined efforts of the students, teachers and others concerned. Curriculum implementation demands concerted efforts of the end users at all levels in order to achieve the desired objectives.

Okebukola (2004) asserted that curriculum implementation is the translation of objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. However, Garba (2004) described curriculum implementation as putting the curriculum into work for the achievement the goals for which the curriculum is designed to attained. In his word Ivowi (2004) also supported the assertion by defining curriculum implementation as the translation of theory into practice or proposed into action. Onyeachu (2008) concluded that curriculum implementation is the processes of putting all that have been planned as a curriculum document into practice in the classroom through the combined efforts of teachers, learners, school administrators, parents as well as interaction with physical facilities, instructional materials, psychological and social environment. From the above definitions, we can see that curriculum implementation is the practical application of the curriculum documents and involves the interactions between the teachers, learners and other stakeholders in educational industry.

Some Educationists like Esu (2005), Amadoha Emmanuel & Ambe 2014, Danladi & Mohammed (2011) outlined some of the problems that hinder the effective implementation of curriculum to include:

1. poor funding
2. inadequate school facilities
3. problem of quality and quantity of teachers
4. poor time management
5. problem of teaching
6. leadership problem.

These identified problems individually and collectively affect the proper implementation of Economics Curriculum like other subject curriculum. It is often believed that putting the curriculum into operation requires an implementation agent. The teacher is identified as the agent in the implementation process. For curriculum to be implemented, there must be interaction between teachers and learners in a given school environment with the teachers' content activities for the achievement of instructional objectives. This is the reason why this work is interested in probing into the effects of teachers' characteristics in the effective implementation of Economics curriculum in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State.

A teacher is someone who helps students to acquire the content of instruction in an active and participatory manner (Adeyemo 2005). In the word of Ajayi and Shofoyeke (2004), a teacher is the person who impart knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to a group of learners. Similarly, teacher is an instructor expert who knew and identified teaching materials and methods to be used in the class (Woolfork, 2010).

From the above definitions, we can understand that the teacher breaks down the school curriculum into contents, teachable units and deliver same in comprehensible way to the students in the school setting. A teacher in the context of this work is someone who applies available and various methods in helping learners to acquire skills, knowledge, attitudes and ideas that would create the desirable changes in their behaviours. This implies that teacher is the primary implementer of school curriculum due to his personal contact with the learners. For a teacher to implement the curriculum, he/she must possess certain characteristics which could make them effective in teaching.

Teachers characteristics can be defined as those traits, attributes or qualities that are found in classroom teachers that dominate or influence both the instructional and non instructional activities within the school and outside the school system (Adeyemi 2011). Teachers characteristics generally refer to qualities of teachers that can be measured with tests or derived from their academic or professional records. These characteristics as factors facilitate students learning. Firat (2005) identified teachers characteristics to be purposeful, task oriented, relaxed, warm, supportive and sense of order/humor in an integrated manner. Firat, further stated that teachers characteristics are grouped into three, namely, professional, pedagogy and personal. Teachers characteristics play important role in teaching/learning and in the educational attainment because teachers are ultimately responsible for translating policies and principles into action based on practices during interaction with students (Afe 2001). The above statements imply that both effective teaching and learning depend on teachers; no wonder effective teachers has been conceptualized as one who produces desired results in the course his duty as a teacher.

Gao and Liu (2012), classified teaches characteristics as; teacher pedagogical knowledge, professional attitude, classroom performance, gender, qualification, rapport establishing, students motivating, experience teacher knowledge of subject matter, the use of teaching methods and personality traits. Ibe (2013) listed some of the teachers' characteristics to include: teaching experience, teachers qualification, gender, classroom interpersonal relationship with students and teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. Operationally, teachers' characteristics are those attributes, characteristics and behaviours exhibited by teachers economics teachers inclusive in classroom that dominates or could influence both the teacher and the learners' performance during teaching and learning processes in the school.

Teachers' characteristics that this work paid special attention are teachers qualification, teachers experience, teachers gender and teachers motivational ability. Teachers qualification refers to those certificates obtained by teachers after under gone some professional training. It is centered on those necessary criteria such as teachers educational background and professional training he/she has received in the subject area that certified one to teach in any level of education. In Nigeria today such qualifications are being backed up with Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria Certificate. Professional Certificates that Economics teacher should hold are National Certificate in Education (NCE), Bachelor Degree on Economics Education (B.Ed), Masters Degree in Economics Education (M.Ed), and Doctorate Degree in Economics Education (Ph.D).

Teachers Experience has to do with the increased awareness of diversifying search for new ideas, new commitment and challenges. Teacher experience and knowledge of content are unique qualities for teaching effectiveness. Experience improves productivity and performance in job. Teachers experiences increases based on the number of years he has operated in the classroom.

Teachers gender is a social, cultural and behavioural construct that exist between man and woman. Polland and Morgan (2002) referred gender to the socially constructed expectation for male and female behaviour which prescribes a division of labour and responsibilities between males and females granting of different rights and obligation to them. Gender also describes social and historical constructs for masculine and feminine roles, behaviour, attributes and ideologies, which connotes some notions of biological sex.

Teachers motivational ability deals with the competencies to stimulate, interact, communicate and involvement of students by the teacher in the classroom. This helps to stimulate students interest which will enhance academic performances.

Economics as a subject area has most of its content being described in abstract form, and being an important subject that has wide and daily application, required its curriculum to be properly implemented in the senior secondary school. But the problems are the teachers who are the primary implementer of

Economics Curriculum in the secondary schools well trained, experienced and have personal dispositions to do the job/ it is in attempt to find answers to the above question that has necessitated this work and the choice of area of study, Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State, is also necessitated by the fact that no similar research has been carried out there.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to find the influence of teachers' characteristics on the implementation of Economics Curriculum in senior secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study intends to determine:

1. the influence of teachers qualification on the implementation of Economics Curriculum in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone.
2. the influence of teachers experiences. On the implementation of Economics Curriculum in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone.
3. the influence of teachers' gender on the implementation of Economics Curriculum in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone.
4. the influence of teachers motivational ability on the implementation of Economics Curriculum in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone.

Research Questions

1. do teachers qualification influence his/her ability to teach Economics in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State?
2. do teachers' experiences have effect on their ability to teach Economics in secondary school in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State?
3. can teachers gender influence their ability to teach Economics in the secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State?
4. do teachers' motivational ability enhances their teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State?

Method

This study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the SSII students in 52 public secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State. The choice of SSII students is ideal because they have studied Economics in their first year and is not an Examination class. The zone is located at the central part of Ebonyi State. It has common boundary with Cross River by the East and Enugu State by the West. The people of this zone are predominantly businessmen, farmers and few civil servants. They are very creative in extractive and manufacturing of various minerals and food and have a very rich culture. This zone is made of four Local Government Areas, namely: Ishielu, Ezza North, Ezza South and Ikwo.

There are 2520 SSII students in the 52 public secondary school in this zone and this constitutes the population of the respondents for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample from the population for the study. Out of four local government areas, two were used for the study (Ishielu and Ezza South). Four public secondary schools each were used from the two local government areas, making a total of eight (8) schools with a total number of 280 students, as the sample population. Four points likert type scaled instrument titled: Teachers' characteristics on its implementation of Economics Curriculum Questionnaire (TCICQ), made up of 24 items was used for the study. The items have a response scale of Strongly Agree (SD), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively. The instrument was validated by experts in social science Education and Measurement and Evaluation. The instrument was also subjected to test re-test method of reliability using product-moment reliability statistics after been administered to 20 SSII students in Ebonyi and Izzi Local Government Areas in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. A reliability coefficient of 0.84 was determined. Copies of the questionnaire were administered by hand with the help of two research assistants to the respondents, and the entire copies (280) were received. Data for the study was analyzed with statistical mean and standard deviation.

Results

The research questions with their item statement were arranged in tables for proper analysis

Research Question One:

Do teachers' Qualification influence their ability to teach Senior Secondary School Economics

Table 1

	Item Statement	SA	A	D	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Economics teachers who possessed B.Sc. Economics Education do illustrate their lessons better than those who have B.Sc. Economics.	180	60	22	3.44	2.1	Accepted
2.	M.Ed. Economics holders teach better in secondary school than Ph.D Economics holders.	100	120	12	3.01	1.8	Accepted
3.	Economics teachers with NCE Economics bias many teacher better counterpart with B.Sc. Ed. Economics.	6	34	40	1.49	0.7	Rejected
4.	Economics teachers who do not have Education Certification can teach better than their counterparts with Education bias.	12	21	65	1.51	0.69	Rejected
5.	Higher Degree Certificate is a prerequisite for proper implementation of Economics Curriculum (teaching it).	212	52	11	3.68	2.3	Accepted
6.	Professionalism in Education is necessary for Economics teachers to teach well in the class.	232	43	3	3.80	2.5	Accepted

From the analysis on table 1 above, only items 3 and 4 were rejected, although they were also supporting the idea that teachers qualification and professionalism in Education is a necessary condition for the implementation of Economics Curriculum in secondary schools.

Research Question Two:

Do Teachers' experiences have Influence on their ability to teach Economics at secondary school level?

Table II

	Item Statement	SA	A	D	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Economics teachers that have taught for many years can demonstrate the content of Economics with ease.	221	47	9	3.21	2.3	Accepted
2.	Economics teachers who are WAEC/NCO Examiners do teach for better understanding than their counterparts who are not examiners.	210	56	12	3.40	2.3	Accepted
3.	Economics teachers who have published Economics textbooks do illustrate the content of Economics better in the class.	195	68	10	3.61	2.4	Accepted
4.	Economics teachers who were just employed or few years in the class do teach better.	12	54	72	1.77	2.1	Rejected
5.	Knowledge of mathematics do help Economics teachers to teach qualitative aspect of Economics very well.	231	43	5	3.8	2.5	Accepted
6.	Economics teachers who are computer literate do teach Economics better.	161	85	30	3.43	2.3	Accepted

From table II above, only item four was rejected. The overwhelming responses showed that teachers experiences are necessary for the proper implementation of Economics Curriculum at the secondary school level.

Research Question Three

Can teachers' gender influence their ability to teach Economics at secondary school level?

Table III

	Item Statement	SA	A	D	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Male teacher do teach Economics better than their female counterpart.	102	32	112	2.12	1.1	Rejected
2.	Female Economics teachers do teach better than their male counterparts.	103	31	110	2.13	1.1	Rejected
3.	Male Economics teachers do teach quantitative contents of Economics.	30	45	78	1.92	1.3	Rejected
4.	Female Economics teachers do demonstrate Economics contents geometrically than male ones.	5	8	42	1.21	1.1	Rejected
5.	Being male or female is not a barrier in teaching Economics in secondary schools.	211	43	21	3.64	2.3	Accepted
6.	Gender of an Economics teacher affects their ability to teach Economics in secondary schools.	5	17	45	1.34	0.9	Rejected.

From the above table III, it was observed based on responses that gender of an Economics teacher does not influence his/her ability to teach the contents of Economics in the secondary school, that is implementing Economics Curriculum in the secondary school.

Research Question Four

Do teachers' motivational ability enhance the teaching of Economics at secondary school level?

Table IV

	Item Statement	SA	A	D	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Students do pay attention more to a well simplified Economics content by teacher in the class.	195	53	30	3.58	2.2	Accepted
2.	Proper use of instructional materials enhances the understanding and interest of students in the subject of Economics.	176	69	22	3.46	2.1	Accepted
3.	Economics teachers' verbal and geometrical presentation ability do stimulate students interest and zeal to learn.	210	62	6	3.71	2.4	Accepted
4.	Economics teachers' cheerfulness in the class during instruction do motivate students to learn more.	182	85	10	3.59	2.5	Accepted
5.	Economics teachers use of calm or harsh approach do motivate students to learn.	5	12	47	1.31	0.7	Rejected
6.	Being regular and punctual to class by Economics teachers do stimulate students interest to learn.	192	73	13	3.63	2.3	Accepted

From table IV above, it was observed from the responses that teachers' motivational ability enhances the teaching and learning of Economics in the secondary schools.

Discussion

The finding on table I, only two items had a mean below the benchmark of 2.50 while the rest are above the benchmark. This indicated that the respondents were of the opinion that teachers qualifications and professionalism are necessary conditions for the implementation of Economics Curriculum. This is in line with the views of Ololube (2013), and Emmanuel & Ambe (2014), that teachers' professional qualification is a prerequisite for the implementation of any school subject curriculum.

The result on table II, showed that all except one of the items were accepted, and had mean above the benchmark of 2.50. This implies that the respondents agreed that teachers' experiences greatly influence their ability to implement Economics Curriculum. This finding agreed with that of Etiubon and Benson (2014), which showed that there was significant influence of teachers' experience on the quality of Economics instruction.

On table III, all except one item had a mean below the benchmark, this indicates the respondents agreed that gender of a teacher do not influence their ability to implement the Economic Curriculum in the

secondary schools. This finding agreed with the findings of Stephenson and Smith (2008) which revealed that gender has insignificant influence in the implementation of school curriculum.

From table IV, it was observed that only one item that has a mean below the benchmark, while the rest are above the benchmark. It indicates that the respondents agreed that teachers' motivational ability enhances the teaching and learning of Economics in the secondary schools. This findings agreed with that of Ujah (2008) which showed that teachers' motivational ability in the class increases students interest and zeal to learn.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations are made:

1. that government should only employ teachers who have certificates in Economics Education to teach Economics in the secondary schools.
2. Economics teachers should be given the opportunities by the government and school management to increase/improve on their experiences through training and re-training.
3. that no economics teacher should be allowed to teach any content of Economics without the use of instructional materials.
4. field-Trip technique of instruction should be used as much as possible in the teaching of some contents of Economics Curriculum.

Conclusion

This study concluded that teachers professional qualifications, experiences, and motivational tendencies greatly influence their ability to teach senior secondary Economics effectively. Consequently, gender of the teacher has no influence in their ability to teach senior secondary school Economics to the understanding of the students. Based on these finds, the managers of Education in the study area should as much as possible stimulate and improve on issues that can increase teachers characteristics being the major implementer of Economics curriculum.

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