

Evaluation of the NCE Arabic Language Curriculum Objectives and Content in Colleges of Education in North Western Nigeria

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Abstract

This study evaluated the NCE Arabic language curriculum objectives and content in Colleges of Education in North Western Nigeria. The study was conducted with three objectives, three research questions and three null hypotheses. Descriptive survey design was used and the multistage sampling procedure adopted. Frequency count and percentage were used to answer research questions and chi-square was used to test all the null hypotheses at an Alpha 0.05 level of significance. Eighty six subjects were drawn as sample. Questionnaires were used for data collection. The Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) model of evaluation was employed. The study findings indicated that: there was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the suitability of the curriculum objectives, there was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the clarity of the curriculum objectives, and there was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the adequacy of the NCE Arabic curriculum content' for the attainment of its objectives. The study made the following recommendations: that Government should ensure that enough funds are allocated to teacher education; so that purchase of instructional materials including ICT facilities and provision of other facilities are made possible and easier, that Lecturers should adopt methodologies that promote interactive learning and that Language labs should be used in teaching Arabic in Colleges of Education because comprehensive language learning is possible through both classroom and language lab teaching.

Keywords: Evaluation, Arabic Language, Curriculum, Objectives, Content, Colleges of Education

Introduction

The need of highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teacher for all levels of education in Nigeria resulted in the establishment of institutions/faculty where quality teachers can be produced. In Nigeria, this is done in the Colleges of Education and Faculties of Education in the Universities.

Colleges of Education are one of those teacher institutions that are mandated by the National Policy on Education to train those that would later belong to the teaching profession. They are responsible for the award of the Nigeria Certificate in Education. The Nigeria Certificate in Education is the basic qualification and minimum prerequisite for teaching in Nigeria (FRN, 2013b). It is a 3-year certification programme that qualifies the graduates to teach the first nine years of schooling (Lower Basic Primaries (1-3), Middle Basic-(Primaries 4-6), and Upper Basic (Junior Secondary School 1-3).

The Colleges of Education in Nigeria can be categorized, based on ownership as Federal, State and Private Colleges. Colleges that are established and run by Federal Government are called Federal Colleges of Education while those established and run by State Government are called State Colleges of Education whereas the ones established and run by organizations, mission bodies or individuals are referred to as Private Colleges of Education.

Though education is considered a core factor of poverty reduction, sustainable development and economic growth, yet, curriculum is increasingly viewed as foundational to educational reforms which aims at achieving high quality learning outcomes. Curriculum represents a conscious and systematic selection of knowledge, values and skills, so that, teaching, learning and assessment processes are organized by addressing questions like why, what, when, where, how students should learn and who can teach students (Tsui, 2009 as cited in Fatemeh, Mohammad & Azam, 2011). Curriculum is a planned and unplanned concept, content, skills, work habits, approaches and instructional strategies, means of assessment, evaluation techniques, taught within the classroom and the variety of school activities that take place inside and outside of the classroom setting and which have an impact on the present and future academic, social, emotional and physical growth and development of the students (Kapur, 2018). The curriculum embodies a society's educational aims and purposes. The curriculum for NCE Teacher Education Programme in Nigeria is known as Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards.

The Minimum Standards was firstly produced in 1990 and it entailed a study and seminar on the NCE Programmes offered in various parts of Nigeria (Abelega, 2007). These programmes were evaluated and revised. The fourth edition was produced in 2008 and was trailed by wide spread criticism. The latest edition (Specialist Minimum Standards) was produced in 2012, sequel to conferences, critiquing sessions and seminars held (FGN, 2012). The latest review complies with the needs of the New Basic Education Curriculum and addresses the issue of the production of quality teachers in the country. The new institutional structure to guide the implementation of the curriculum consists of seven schools with different departments. The schools are: Arts and Social Sciences, Languages, Education, Sciences, Vocational and Technical, Early Childhood Care and Education and Primary Education, Adults Non-formal Education and Special New Education. The

School of Languages comprise the Departments of Arabic, English, French, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other Nigerian Languages or the division could be the departments of Modern Languages and Nigerian Languages. At the helm of affairs in the schools would be the Deans and the Heads of Departments in each school. The curriculum for the school of languages is embedded in a document entitled Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Languages.

Arabic Language Teacher Education Programme is one of the programmes whose curriculum is included in the Minimum Standards for Languages because the teaching and learning of the language is an essential tool for knowledge acquisition, application and dissemination (FGN, 2012). The Arabic language programme of the Nigeria Certificate in Education is designed for fostering various aspects of language skills. The minimum standards contain the philosophy, aims and objectives, facilities, personnel, content, methods of teaching, and methods of evaluation. For the curriculum to be meaningful, its objectives and contents have to be evaluated determined respectively, for the attainment of the pre-determined objectives.

Curriculum objective is one of the components of curriculum that indicates an intended behavioural change that a learner is expected to exhibit after undergoing a learning experience (Babalola, 2014). It is what is intended to achieve based on the goals and are measurable. Curriculum content on the other hands is another main liver of education quality. It simply means the totality of what is to be taught in a school system. The content component of teaching learning situation refers to the important facts, principles and concepts to be taught (Lunenburg, 2011). Curriculum content must be in line with the learning experiences and there must be clear cut objective to be achieved by the end of each respective programme. It can be in form of knowledge, skills, attitude and values that learners are exposed to. Content involves subject matter drawn on the basis of problems, themes or topics cutting across traditional subjects.

Evaluation task becomes indispensable because a good quality curriculum according to Stabback (2016) is one which is evaluated: in a systematic and planned way- i.e. based on a clear purpose and scope, at different levels in the education system: classroom, school, local area, nationally, using valid and reliable data and within a clear quality framework: regularly and by suitably qualified and experienced people.

Evaluation is a systematic investigation of the value, importance or significance of something or someone along defined dimension (Yarbrough, Shulha, Hopson, & Caruthers 2011). Wheeler (1967) and Gronlund (1981, as cited in Uzoechi, 2012) defined evaluation as a process of determining the extent to which educational objectives have been achieved. It is a process by means of which the worth of some objects can be determined (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004, as cited in Akpur, Alci, & Karatas, 2016). According to them, evaluation is a complicated process which aims at determining the strengths and weaknesses of a curriculum. The results gained through this process enable the decision-makers to revise, improve or continue the curriculum (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009, as cited in Akpur, Alci, & Karatas, 2016). In order to make projection for the future, a continuous and systematic evaluation is required. Therefore, no teaching is complete without evaluation because evaluation helps the teacher, policy makers and educational administrators to find out how effective the teaching learning process or a curriculum is. From the foregoing, it can be seen that educational evaluation can be basically carried out at two main levels:

students and curriculum levels. Evaluation at the students level targets how well a student is performing in a programme whereas, evaluation at the curriculum level aims at determining whether a curriculum has or has not been effectively implemented (Uzoechi, 2012). Evaluation at this level is a form of assessment that uses collected data to estimate the worth of a curriculum (Okoro, 1993, as cited in Poripo, 2012).

Curriculum evaluation refers to the collection of information on which judgment might be made about the worth and the effectiveness of a curriculum. It includes, of course, actually making those judgments so that decision might be made about the future of curriculum, whether to retain the curriculum as it stands, modify it or throw it out altogether (Olaitan & Ali, 2007, as cited in Ifeobu, 2014). It is an empirical, field-based attempt to find out how the use of a particular curriculum content meets the objectives of implementing it (Magaji & Peter, 2020). The important methods and techniques employed in curriculum evaluation include discussion, experiments, interviews (group and personal) opinion of various agencies stakeholders, observation –procedures, questionnaires, practical performance and official record.

At the most fundamental level, evaluation involves making a value judgment about information that one has available. Thus, educational curriculum evaluation uses information to make a decision about the value or worth of an educational curriculum. Caffarella, 2002, as cited in Usun, 2016) defined curriculum evaluation as a process used to determine whether the design and delivery of a curriculum were effective and whether the proposed outcomes were met. According to Okoro, (1991, as cited in Igberadja, 2015), evaluation is usually carried out through two things: through the recommendations of teachers and/or through standards prescribed by government agencies like NCCE and NBTE and/or by examination bodies such as NABTEB and WAEC. The government agencies and examination bodies may have recommended certain levels of resources for teaching and learning of various courses. Such prescribed standards can be the basis for evaluation.

Statement of the Problem

A curriculum is planned, developed, implemented and evaluated for the accomplishment of its objectives. Every curriculum should normally undergo these four stages. This study thus, evaluates the objectives and content of Arabic language teacher education curriculum in North Western Nigeria, in order to provide feedback on the suitability, clarity, the adequacy of the curriculum contents for the attainment of its objectives, and the differences in its evaluation in the Federal and State Colleges of Education in North Western Nigeria. More so, this study is concerned with Context evaluation of CIPP Model of Evaluation.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study was to evaluate Arabic language teacher education curriculum objectives and contents in Colleges of Education in North Western Nigeria. Specifically, the study evaluated the:

1. Suitability of the NCE Arabic curriculum objectives;
2. Clarity of the NCE Arabic curriculum objectives;

3. Adequacy of the NCE Arabic curriculum contents' for the attainment of its objectives.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the course of this study:

1. How do lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education perceive the suitability of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives?
2. How do lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education perceive the clarity of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives?
3. In the perspectives of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education, how adequate are the NCE Arabic curriculum contents for the attainment of its objectives?

Statement of the Hypotheses

To guide this study, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at an Alpha 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the suitability of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the clarity of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the adequacy of the NCE Arabic curriculum contents for the attainment of its objectives.

Research Design

Descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. According to Emaikwu (2011), a descriptive survey design deals with gathering of information about a large population of people by examining a representative sample of the entire population. According to Kolo (2010), a descriptive survey is concerned with events that currently exist and is about factual information. The method helps the investigator to describe the occurrence of variance and relationship between or among variables. This study falls within the ambient of survey design because in an attempt to answer the research questions that guided this study; the researcher depended among other considerations, on the perceptions of a section of the population. This research design was considered appropriate because it was an effective way of gathering data from different sources within a short time at a relatively cheaper cost.

Population

There are four Federal and seven States Colleges of Education in the States of North Western Nigeria. But for the purpose of this study, attention was focused on four States with a Federal and

a State Colleges of Education as the target population. Thus, the population of this study comprised all Arabic lecturers in the sampled Colleges of Education in North Western Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this study comprised 86 participants. The choice of the population and sample size for this study was based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) required population and sample size which says that for the population of 110, the sample of 86 is appropriate. Multistage sampling procedure was adopted to select the population and sample. Thus, the first stage was dividing the North Western Nigeria in to clusters. This was done by dividing the North Western Nigeria in to the existing seven states where at least a College of Education can be found. The states are: Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto and Zamfara. The second stage was stratifying Colleges of Education in these states into: Federal and State owned Colleges of Education. There are eleven Colleges of Education in the states of North Western Nigeria. Four of them are owned by the Federal Government while the remaining seven are owned by the States' Government. The third stage was the purposive selection of clusters with at least, one Federal and one State Colleges of Education. The clusters were Kaduna, Kano, Katsina and Zamfara.

The proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 86 Arabic lecturers from the sampled Colleges of Education. This is reflected in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Distribution of the Colleges of Education, Staff in the North Western Nigeria

S/N	Sampled Colleges of Education	No of Lecturers	Sample Size
1.	Federal College of Education, Kano, Kano State	12	9
2.	Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education, Kumbotso, Kano State	30	23
3.	Federal College of Education, Zaria, Kaduna State	32	25
4.	Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan Waya, Kaduna State	6	5
5.	Federal College of Education, Katsina, Katsina State	9	7
6.	Isa Kaita College of Education, Dutsin Ma, Katsina State	6	5
7.	Federal College of Education (Tech), Zamfara, Zamfara State	8	6
8.	College of Education, Maru, Zamfara State	8	6
9.	Total	110	86

Instrumentation

The instrument used was questionnaire. The questionnaire titled: “Arabic Lecturers’ Questionnaire (ALQ) on Evaluation of Arabic Language Teacher Education Curriculum Objectives and Contents in Colleges of Education in North Western Nigeria” was designed to elicit responses from the respondents (Lecturers). The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A contained the type of the College while section B consisted of questions or statements in relation to the objectives of the study. This is made up of ten (10) items.

Validity of the Instruments

Since the suitability of test items depend primarily upon the judgments of the experts. The contents and face validities of the instruments used were established by subjecting them to scrutiny by appropriate authorities. Included were curriculum experts and specialists as well as Educational Measurement and Evaluation experts and specialists in the Faculty of Education, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, and Nasarawa State University, Keffi. All corrections made were effected. Then the modified questionnaires were then trial tested at Adamu Augie College of Education, Argungu, Kebbi State and Federal College of Education, Potiskum (the Colleges were not part of the study sample).

Reliability of the Instruments

To ensure the reliability of the instruments, test and retest method was adopted. The instruments were administered on a pilot study group of eleven (11) respondents, selected from Colleges of Education, other than the sampled ones, within the study area, on two different occasions, within the interval of three weeks. This group represents 10% of the respondents. Test of reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability Technique. The overall reliabilities of the instruments were 0.749 for the Arabic Lecturers’ Questionnaire (ALQ). This shows that the instrument had high reliability and so was used in collecting data for the study.

Results: The results are presented in the tables below;

Table 2: Lecturers’ Responses on the Suitability of NCE Arabic Curriculum Objective

Key = F=Frequency % =Percentage

Table 2 above revealed that lecturers responded that the NCE Arabic Curriculum Objectives are Suitable.

S/N	Items Statement	Federal Colleges Lecturers'						State Colleges Lecturers'					
		A		D		Total		A		D		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4	The curriculum objectives are clearly stated.	40	85	7	15	47	100	37	94	2	6	39	100
5	The objectives of the curriculum are appropriate.	44	94	3	6	47	100	35	90	4	10	39	100
6	The objectives of the curriculum meet the needs of the students.	42	89	5	11	47	100	33	85	6	15	39	100
	Total	126	268	15	32	141	303	105	269	13	38	118	307

Table 3: Lecturers' Responses on the Clarity of NCE Arabic Curriculum Objectives

S/N	Items Statement	Federal Colleges Lecturers'						State Colleges Lecturers'					
		A		D		Total		A		D		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
7	The curriculum content prepares students for teaching Arabic effectively.	42	89	5	11	47	100	37		2	6	39	100
									94				
8	The curriculum content prepares students for spoken Arabic.	42	89	5	11	47	100	35		4	1	39	100
									90		0		
9	The curriculum content prepares students for written Arabic.	45	96	2	4	47	100	34	87	5	1	39	100
											3		
10	The curriculum content prepares students for further education in the area of Arabic education / studies	43	91	4	9	47	100	38	97	1	3	39	100
	Total	172	365	16	35	188	400	144	346	15	54	159	400

Key = F=Frequency % =Percentage

Table 3 above revealed that lecturers responded that the NCE Arabic Curriculum Contents are Clearly Stated.

Table 4: Lecturers' Responses on the Adequacy of NCE Arabic Curriculum Contents' for the Attainment of its Objectives

S/N	Items Statement	Federal Colleges Lecturers'						State Colleges Lecturers'					
		A		D		Total		A		D		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	The curriculum is suitable	46	98	0	02	47	10	38	97	1	3	39	10
				1		0						0	
2	The curriculum is appropriate for the improvement of the students' language skills	44	94	0	06	03	10	36	92	2	8	39	10
				3		0						0	

3	The total duration of the curriculum is adequate	45	96	0	04	47	10	37	95	3	5	39	10
				2			0						0
	Total	13	288	0	12	44	30	11	28	2	1	11	30
		5		6		1	0	1	4		6	7	0

Key = F=Frequency % =Percentage

Table 4 above revealed that lecturers responded that the NCE Arabic Curriculum Contents are Adequate for the Attainment of its Objectives for the Attainment of its Objectives

Hypotheses

Table 5: Chi-Square Result of the Lecturers' Perceptions on the Suitability of NCE Arabic Curriculum Objectives

		Lecturers' perceptions on the suitability of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives			D f	χ^2 cal.	χ^2 crit.	p-value	Decision
		Disagree	Agree	Total					
Federal Colleges Lecturers	Count	02	45	47					
	Expected Count	2.2	44.8	47.0					Ho1
State Colleges Lecturers	Count	02	37	39	1	.037	3.841	.848	Not
	Expected Count	1.8	37.2	39.0					Rejected
Total	Count	4	82	86					
	Expected Count	4.0	82.0	86.0					

Significance level at 0.05

Table 4 shows the calculated χ^2 -value (.037) and the critical χ^2 -value (3.841) with 1 degree of freedom and at alpha level of 0.05. Since the calculated χ^2 -value is less than the critical χ^2 -value and ($P > 0.05$), therefore hypothesis one is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant

difference in the perception of lecturers from federal and state Colleges of Education on the suitability of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives. This means that the two Colleges of Education lecturers agree that the NCE Arabic curriculum objectives are suitable for the programme.

Table 6: Chi-Square Result of the Lecturers' Perceptions on the Clarity of NCE Arabic Curriculum Objectives

		Lecturers' perceptions on the clarity of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives			D f	χ^2 cal.	χ^2 crit.	p-value	Decision
		Disagree	Agree	Total					
Federal Colleges Lecturers	Count	5	42	47					
	Expected Count	4.9	42.1	47.0					H ₀₁
State Colleges Lecturers	Count	4	35	39	1	.003	3.841	.954	Not Rejected
	Expected Count	4.1	34.9	39.0					
Total	Count	9	77	86					
	Expected Count	9.0	77.0	86.0					

Significance level at 0.05

Table 6 shows the calculated χ^2 -value (.003) and the critical χ^2 -value (3.841) with 1 degree of freedom and at alpha level of 0.05. Since the calculated χ^2 -value is less than the critical χ^2 -value and ($P > 0.05$) therefore hypothesis two is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers from federal and state Colleges of Education on the clarity of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives. This suggests that the two Colleges of Education lecturers agree that the NCE Arabic curriculum objectives are stated.

Table 7: Chi-Square Result of the Lecturers' Perceptions on the Adequacy of NCE Arabic Curriculum Contents for the Attainment of its Objectives

		Lecturers' perceptions on the adequacy of NCE Arabic curriculum contents for the attainment of its objectives			D f	χ^2 cal.	χ^2 crit.	p-value	Decision
		Disagree	Agree	Total					
Federal Colleges Lecturers	Count	4	43	47					
	Expected Count	3.8	43.2	47.0					
State Colleges Lecturers	Count	3	36	39	1	.019	3.841	.890	Ho1 Not
	Expected Count	3.2	35.8	39.0	Rejected				
Total	Count	7	79	86					
	Expected Count	7.0	79.0	86.0					

Significance level at 0.05

Table 7 shows the calculated χ^2 -value (.019) and the critical χ^2 -value (3.841) with 1 degree of freedom and at alpha level of 0.05. Since the calculated χ^2 -value is less than the critical χ^2 -value and ($P > 0.05$), therefore hypothesis three is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers from federal and state Colleges of Education on the adequacy of the sequence of course contents for the attainment of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives. This suggests that the two Colleges of Education lecturers agree that the content of the curriculum is adequate for the attainment of the stated objectives.

Discussion

A finding of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the suitability and clarity of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives. This finding is in line with the findings of Akanbi (2010), Ogungbesan (2012), Otu eleri (2012), Hangasani (2016) whose findings were that the curriculum objectives were adequate for teacher training and prepared them to operate at the higher level. This finding

however differs from the finding of Ajape (2014) which revealed that Arabic programme in Nigerian institutions is not in conformity with the aims and objectives of the NPE and the present Arabic curriculum has not been able to achieve the aims and objectives of teaching Arabic as a foreign language, i.e. the objectives are not suitable as they are not clearly stated.

Another findings of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of Lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the adequacy of NCE Arabic curriculum contents' for the attainment of its objectives. This finding is in line with the findings of Akanbi (2010), Otu eleri (2012), Ngozi (2014), Ubah and Shuaibu (2014), Hangasani (2016), Nwambam, Nnennaya and Nwankpu (2018) who find out that the content of curriculum was adequate and appropriate for the attainment of the curriculum objectives. Contrarily, this finding is not in line with the finding of Eraikhuemen and Oteze (2015) who find out that the content of the NCE Mathematics modules is not adequate for the training of UBE Mathematics teachers. Also, this finding contradict that of Ajape (2014) which revealed that the curriculum contents' of Arabic programme in Nigerian institutions is not adequate for the attainment of its objectives.

Summary of Major Findings

The summary of the findings of this study was as follows:

1. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the suitability of NCE Arabic curriculum objectives;
2. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the clarity of NCE Arabic language curriculum objectives;
3. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education on the adequacy of the NCE Arabic curriculum contents for the attainment of its objectives;

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that: NCE Arabic language curriculum objectives are suitable, clearly stated and that its contents are adequate for the attainment of its objectives.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The government should ensure that enough funds are allocated to teacher education; so that purchase of instructional materials including ICT facilities and provision of facilities are made possible and easier.
2. Lecturers from Federal and State Colleges of Education should adopt methodologies that promote interactive learning.
3. Language labs should be used in teaching Arabic in Colleges of Education because comprehensive language learning is possible through both classroom and language lab teaching, as applied for science subjects.

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