

# UNPREDICTABILITY IN EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: A DEFICIENCY IN LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE: SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATION ON CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

BY

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## Abstract

*The paper centered on assessing the unpredictability in education policy implementation: a deficiency in learners' performance: Sociological Implication on Curriculum Development. The paper considered the basic importance of education to the general well-being of mankind cannot be overemphasized. Education is a fundamental human right. The relationship between education and development has been established, such that education is now internationally accepted as a key development index (UNDP, 2016). The paper also looks at the issues with educational policy formulation as it has affected the educational section and the overall effect on the learner's performance. The educational system in Nigeria has been greatly affected by bad and unplanned policy formulation and implementation which is a product of the general lack of continuity of standards in the current educational system in the country. However owing to the problems outlined in the study, the study forecasted some basic sociological implications on the curriculum with an emphasis on countries that have excelled internationally in their educational policies.*

**Keywords:** *Unpredictability, Education policy, Implementation, Sociological Implication. Curriculum Development*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is seen as an instrument of excellence. This is due to its unending impact on the dissemination of what is worthwhile and ensuring a stable life (stability of the mind) to foster equity in knowledge advancement among countries. This implies that investment in education is a Sine qua no to global peace, security, and economic development the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life. This is why sociology is very essential to all students in tertiary education. Thanks for the introduction of the General Studies programme at all levels of education in Nigeria.

In common sense, Sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Sociologists investigate the structure of groups, organizations, and societies, and how people interact within these contexts. When exploring educational policies, sociologists are intrigued by four specific areas, including government educational policy, educational equality, and the privatisation of education and the marketization of education.

The National Policy on Education section 1, sub-section 5 stipulates the philosophical and sociological implication of educational policy as it reads that Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen. The policy further stressed the full integration of the individual into the community, and the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the

primary, secondary, and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system. Also, the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provided in Section 18 holds that it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that its policy is towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels. This implies that irrespective of the culture, norms, values, and ethics of society, everyone is capable of receiving free and compulsory education in society. The policy is well spelled with a clear-cut focus in theory, but in practical or real-life situations the planning is often defective, making implementation difficult. The latter effect is on the beneficiaries of the policies which has been clouded with a series of problems such as poor funding and thus poor educational infrastructures, inadequate classrooms, teaching aids (projectors, Computers, Laboratories and libraries), paucity of quality teachers and poor/polluted learning environment. This underscores the need for quality policy formulation.

When policies are properly formulated, it will ensure that every official action of an institution organisation must have clear-cut backing. It is regarded as an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative action will take place (Terry (1977, 2019), to the author, a policy defines the area in which decisions are to be made but it does not give the decision. A policy brings about a meaningful relationship between business objectives and organizational functions as it discourages deviations from planned courses of action. Okoroma (2003) rightly posits that educational policies are initiatives mostly by governments that determine the direction of an educational system. To this end, the aim of educational policy is directed towards increasing the quality of life of people. The objective of any policy is to satisfy individual needs, community pressures, and the degree of complexity and sophistication to which socialized personnel must be educated and trained to meet these demands. Implementation of policy has been a central issue in Nigeria. It should be recalled that the National Policy on Education is anchored on Nigeria's philosophy on education as enunciated through the nation's objectives. Which includes: i. A free and democratic society ii. A just and egalitarian society and iii. A united strong and self-reliant nation. A great and dynamic economy and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (FRN, 1998). This aims has not been fully actualized in recent times as Adesina (2004) notes that planned implementation is constrained by the following reasons:

Firstly, over-estimation of available resources because estimated resources are greater than actual available resources to implement a programme. Secondly, under-estimation of the costs of implementing a plan. This is a serious problem in that cost estimates do not make adequate provisions for inflation and actual implementation costs become unmanageable. Finally, inaccurate statistical data: planning education requires accurate and up-to-date data. Plans that do not adequately provide for this usually have implementation problems. These philosophical and sociological aims can only be achieved if the formulated policies are well implemented.

### **The theoretical background of the study**

The study is anchored on the conflict theory by Karl Marx (1818–1883), Max Weber (1864–1920), Talcott Parsons (1902–1979), and Ralf Dahrendorf (1929–2009) have formulated theories as to what causes conflict, its normalcy, and the impact it has on societies. The authors see conflict theory as a theory that looks at society as a competition for limited resources. Conflict can help integrate and stabilize society. It brings groups together to battle inequity as well as there is lots of goodwill in the act of reducing inequity. Conflict theory interprets racial relationships as racism creating disenfranchisement and suppression of subordinate groups. This keeps the competition away from the dominant group, meaning that there will be less threat to power. Conflict theory covers the intersection theory, which is the suggestion that we cannot separate the effects of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or any other attributes.

### **Concept of educational policy**

The essence of the policy is to ensure that every official action of an organisation must have a basis or backing. Terry (1977: 1989) posits that a policy is an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative action will take place". According to him, "a policy defines the area in which decisions are to be made but it does not give the decision Lindblom (1959:86) when he describes policymaking as a "process of successive approximation to some desired objectives in which what is desired itself continues to change under

reconsideration". A good policy can be reviewed as the need may arise. Lindblom believes that a wise policymaker cannot expect all their policies to achieve a one-hundred percent success.

### **Educational Policy and its deficiency in Learners' Performance**

The poor learner output in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria has posed a series of concerns to stakeholders in the academic environment. A major reason that may have been responsible for this problem may be faulty educational policy implementation. The distortions in the educational system on the ineffective implementation are engendered primarily by lack of political will, lack of continuity of programmes, and corruption. The situation has hindered national development and, until urgent action is taken to review Nigeria's educational system, its national aspirations will continue to be compromised. The long-lasting decay in the educational section in Nigeria has been attributed to the faulty educational policy and its implementation most stakeholders in the educational environment has blamed the distortions in the educational system on the ineffective implementation lack of continuity of programs, and corruption. The situation has hindered national growth and development for decades. The discontinuation of the National Policy on Education fashioned after the American system has practically affected our educational system to a large extent. The introduction of innumerable courses to students without taking cognizance of their philosophical, sociological, and psychological dispositions has been attributed to the total dearth of our educational system in the country. Asian countries such as Japan, China, and India have considered the sociological implication of their educational policies which has made them strive as world powers. Because the formulation of an educational policy sets the stage for implementation which, according to Ukeje (1986), is perhaps the most important aspect of planning. Planning is usually an action that succeeds in policy formulation but precedes implementation. Unfortunately, educational policies and goal attainment have been irreconcilable due to implementation constraints. It is a well-established fact that it is difficult to realize planned objectives one hundred percent. But our experience in planning education in this country shows a disturbing gap between planned objectives and attained results ... As professionals in the field of education, it may be pertinent to identify whether those critical gaps are results of faulty planning or faulty implementation (Oyakhilome 1986:2). Policy implementation in education is a conspicuous national problem that has taken center stage in Nigeria. In the words of Adesina (1977) notes that planned implementation is constrained by the following factors:

Firstly, over-estimation of available resources – this is a situation where estimated resources are greater than actual available resources to implement a program

Secondly, under-estimation of the costs of implementing a plan happens when cost estimates do not make adequate provisions for inflation and actual implementation costs become unmanageable

Thirdly, over-reliance upon external assistance – plans that substantially rely upon assistance from foreign sources for their implementation run into hitches when such aid fails to come.

Finally, inaccurate statistical data planning education requires accurate and up-to-date data. Plans that do not adequately provide for this usually have implementation problems.

### **Promoting quality education with an emphasis on sociology**

In tertiary institutions, the Center for general studies has been regarded as the engine room of students' growth and development. This is because it houses compulsory courses that are fundamental to the overall success of the learner in school. Ignoring the indispensable role of the Center for general studies may pose a negative impact on the learners' quest for knowledge advancement. It is against this backdrop that the study posed some salient ways in which education can be fostered for improved performance. It is for this reason that the following recommendations are proffered

- i. Education should be completely separated from politics: the political atmosphere in Nigeria has affected the educational system. This is so because political issues have shadowed educational matters. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century where every nation is craven human capacity building. Our politicians in Nigeria are busy craven

for political positions. Thus, the right to education has been denied to the citizens and political leaders may be non-committal as the provision of education becomes a discretionary matter.

- ii. The entrenchment of education as a non-negotiable right of every citizen in the constitution would help check corruption in that sector. Corruption is largely responsible for the failure of the National Policy on Education and other policies in Nigeria.
- iii. Mismanagement of educational resources at any level should be made a serious offense attracting a minimum of five to ten years imprisonment. This should be included in the next constitution of Nigeria. It is believed that in the presence of corruption, no new system of education can succeed.

## **SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATION ON CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Building a strong curriculum that can stand the test of time is anchored to the place of the learner in society. No nation can function outside the individuals in the society and for this to be achieved, the sociology. It has been proven that perspectives used by sociologists to identify everyday interactions and functions in society are changing every day. Curriculum planners should therefore recognize the place of sociology and its place in society, especially on the part of the learners. This is because Sociologists comb through perspectives and should recognize the changes in each as society moves forward and times change. Thus, sociology as a course will liberate the concept of political, social, philosophical, and psychological development from its Western bias and promotes cultural diversity in society as a whole. In summary, every effort should be made to promote sociological studies at all levels and eradicate corruption from all spheres of Nigeria's various programmes so that the curriculum will be enriched in society in general

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