
**PRINCIPAL UTILIZATION OF CURRICULUM CONTENT RESOURCE AND
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' IN
SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between principal utilization of curriculum content resources and academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 2,719 principals, 72,676 teachers and 45, 987 students in all public secondary schools in Southwest,

Nigeria. The sample for the study was 990 respondents, comprising 90 principals and 900 teachers from 90 public secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure which involved, simple random, stratified, proportionate and purposive sampling techniques was used to select sample for the study. Three set of instruments tagged “Principal Utilization of Curriculum Content Resource Questionnaire (PUCCRQ)”, “Students Affective and Psychomotor Domain Questionnaire (SAPDQ)” and an Inventory on students’ academic performance were used for the study. The three instruments were validated by experts. PUCCRQ and SAPDQ had reliability coefficients of 0.76 and 0.74 respectively. The data were analyzed using inferential statistics involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students. . Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students were good. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school principals should ensure that there is efficiency in the utilization of curriculum content resource through proper planning and implementation for enhanced students’ academic achievement.

Keywords: Principal, Curriculum Content Resource, Academic, Achievement, Secondary School

Introduction

Education is not just a commodity for sale. It is a social good. It is the social responsibility of any government to its people. It is the engine of growth, development and transformation of any society. Education has been seen as a veritable tool for the development of a society; it molds, builds and sharpens the individual’s character and make him valuable in the society. Onyebuenyi and Oluka (2022) defined education as the process by which a man is made useful through the inculcation of moral and acceptable ethical standards for wide understanding and effective utilization of the resources within his environment and beyond. Education through its pedagogical dispositions equips an individual with the necessary capabilities to survive in a society.

Academic achievement has been conceptualized as the scholastic position of a learner after a given period of time. Academic achievement refers to “how an individual is able to demonstrate his or her intellectual abilities, character development and skill acquisition” argued that “academic achievement is a measure of output and that the main outputs in education are expressed in terms of learning, that is, changes in knowledge, acquisition of skills and attitudes of individuals as a result of their experiences within the school system (Bello, Bukar and Ibi, 2016).

According to Anderson, Krathwohl, Airansian, Cruikshank, Mayer, Pintrich, Raths, Wittrock (2017) students' academic achievement includes cognitive domain, affective domain and psychomotor domain. Cognitive domain aims to develop the mental skills and the acquisition of knowledge of the individual. The cognitive domain encompasses six categories which include "knowledge; comprehension; application; analysis; synthesis and evaluation". Knowledge includes the ability of the learner to recall data or information. This is followed with comprehension which assesses the ability of the learner to understand the meaning of what is known. This is the case where a student is able to explain an existing theory on his or her own words.

This is followed by application which shows the ability of the student to use the abstract knowledge in a new situation. The analysis category shows the ability to integrate different elements or concepts in order to form a sound pattern or structure to help establish a new meaning. The category of evaluation shows the ability to come up with judgement about the importance of concepts. The cognitive domain reflects academic performance of students. Academic performance basically referred to how well students perform in their school work, namely the curricular programme.

Undoubtedly, this crucial level of education is confronted by diverse challenges. Prominent among the challenges is poor academic achievement of secondary school students. The poor academic achievement of secondary school students encompass the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. The cognitive domain is concerned with the academic performance. The researcher observed that the academic performance of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria is poor.

Observation showed that this level of education is not living up to expectation as the academic achievement of students in secondary level of education is observed to be poor in Nigeria and Southwest, Nigeria. The observed poor academic achievement manifest in three forms which are cognitive domain, affective domain and psychomotor domain. The cognitive domain also referred to academic performance. The researcher observed that the academic performance of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria is poor. The issue of poor academic performance of students in senior secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria has been a source of worry to all stakeholders in the education sector considering the huge investments that are allocated into the sector by parents and government to educate the learners. To recall, comprehend, apply, analyze and integrate different elements and ability to harness crucial concepts are all categories of cognitive domain. Observation shows that when learners are unable to recall, comprehend, apply, analyze and integrate different elements and ability to harness crucial concepts which are all categories of cognitive domain, poor academic performance will be the end product.

Owadie (2012) stated that the academic performance of secondary school students in external examination conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) were not encouraging and this was to the dissatisfaction of the general public Report on academic performance of students' in the senior school certificate examination (SSCE) conducted by West African Examination Council (WAEC) in Nigeria was poor in 2015 where 39 percent obtained five (5) credits and above including English Language and Mathematics (Eguridu, 2015). In 2016 May/June West African Senior School Certificate Examination, only 878,040 candidates representing 39.19 percent obtained credits in five (5) subjects and above including English Language and Mathematics. In 2017 May/June West African Senior School Certificate Examination, of that number, 923,486, candidates representing 41.22 percent obtained minimum number of credits in five (5) subjects and above including English language and Mathematics (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). In 2018, out of the number, 1,572,396 that sat for the examination, a total of 786,016 candidates representing 38.98 percent obtained credits and above in a minimum of five subjects including English Language and Mathematics. When compared with what was obtained in the same examination in 2016 and 2017, showed a decline. In 2019, 50.18 percent obtained credits and above in minimum of five (5) subjects including English Language and Mathematics (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). And this is below the expectation of the general public. However, to compare the candidate performance for 2018 and 2019 examination with that of 2016, which was 39.19 percent and in 2017, 41.22, it appears that the academic performance of secondary school students' is fluctuating, just as it is declining.

In Ekiti State, the percentage of students who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council was 20.33 percent in 2015, 25.06 percent in 2016, 27.19 percent in 2017 and 30.18 percent in 2018 in all public secondary schools (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). In 2019, the state took 12th position out of the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory which was to the dissatisfaction of the state government and the entire stakeholders. In Lagos State, the percentage of candidates who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council was 37.27 percent in 2015, 63.0 percent in 2016, 65.50 percent in 2017 and 60.72 percent in 2018 in all public secondary schools (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). In 2019, Lagos State took 10th position making the state as the only state in Southwest that made top 10 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). In Ogun State, the percentage of candidates who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council was 32.89 percent in 2015, 45.8 in 2016, 40.14 percent in 2017 and 41.69 percent in 2018 in all public secondary schools. In 2019, the percentage of students that obtained five credits and above including English Language and Mathematics was 43.56 percent (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). In Ondo State, the percentage of candidates who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council was 41.99 percent in 2015.

44.08 percent in 2016, 44.27 percent in 2017 and 42. 21 percent in 2018 in all public secondary schools. In 2019, the percentage of candidates who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics was 40.45 percent (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020).

In Osun State, the percentage of students who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council was 18.08 percent in 2015, 45.78 percent in 2016, 43.50 percent in 2017 and 40.85 percent in 2018 in all public secondary schools. In 2019, the percentage of candidates who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics was 42. 32 percent (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). In Oyo State, the percentage of candidates who obtained credit level passes in five subjects in English Language and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council was 21.63 percent in 2015, 36.52 percent in 2016, 43.58 percent in 2017 and 37.87 percent in 2018 in all public secondary schools (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). Oyo state was ranked 26th among the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory in 2019 results released by West Africa Examination Council.

In 2020, the analysis of the statistics of the performance of candidates in the examination shows that out of 1,538,445 candidates that sat for the examination, 1,338,348 candidates representing 86.99% obtained credit and above in a minimum of any five subjects with or without English language and Mathematics in Nigeria and the Southwest states are not left behind (Areghan, 2020). The implication of the persisted decline in academic performance of students in West Africa Examination Council results indicates that majority of the students might not have been opportune to gain admission into higher institutions. In other words, poor academic performance as recorded in recent years was so great that many students fall short of the requirements necessary for admission into tertiary institutions.

Academic achievement constitutes not only cognitive domain. Affective domain and psychomotor domain are also components of academic achievement. It appears that over the years, the emphasis of schools has been on the cognitive domain at the expense of affective and psychomotor domains. Bandele (2002) argued that the affective and psychomotor domains exert great influence on the cognitive domain as well as making beneficiaries of the educational system live a fulfilled life and contribute meaningfully to the development of the society.

Affective domain which has to do with character development includes punctuality in school, attentiveness in class, neatness, honesty, and relationship with others. Observation shows that secondary school students are not punctual in school, students are not attentive in class and look unkempt most of the time. It also appears that secondary school students are dishonest and have poor

relationship with others as this reflected their involvement in examination malpractices in various schools. It appears that when secondary school students are punctual in school, listen attentively in class and have good relationship with their teachers and fellow students, it improves their academic achievement. Otherwise, when secondary school students are not punctual in school, do not listen attentively in class and lack good relationship with others, the consequent result is poor academic achievement.

Psychomotor domain is another component of academic achievement. Psychomotor domain which has to do with practical skills includes skills development, sports/games, club/societies, fluency and hand-writing. It appears that when secondary students developed in skills, participate in sporting activities, speak fluently and have good hand-writing, they are said to achieve academically. Hence, when secondary school students are not well developed in skills, in a situation where recreation center for sports and games are not provided, students will not have access to sporting activities. Also, observation reveals that most secondary school students are not fluent in speaking languages while the hand-writing of some are poor. It appears that when secondary school students are developed in skills, engaged in sporting activities, clubs, with good hand-writing and can speak fluently, it enhances their reasoning and the consequent result is improved academic achievement. Hence, where all these are not readily accomplished, academic achievement may be impeded.

As a result of the observed decline in the academic achievement of students in public secondary schools, one marvels if the high rate of the students' poor academic achievement is not a reflection of utilization of curriculum content resource in the school. In other words, the inability to properly utilize curriculum content resource could be bane for the observed poor academic achievement of secondary school students. The school principal who is the school manager of the school has the responsibility to properly utilize curriculum content resource. The school principal has a role to play in the utilization of curriculum content resource. The consequences of the failure of the principal to effectively utilize curriculum content resource hinges on the tone on the school and academic achievement of students. The study examined principal utilization of curriculum content resource vis-à-vis academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria.

Curriculum refers to what a learner is required to encounter, study, practice and master (Black and Willians, 2016). Curriculum content utilization is content planning for effective curriculum delivery. The planned curriculum sets out the content of the study, the areas of stress, step by step presentation of learning outcomes, methods of teaching, specified skills and knowledge while the implemented curriculum ensure that all these specifications are met. However, the content of the curriculum is a resource that is expected to be well utilized by the principal. It appears that when the content of the curriculum is well utilized, it results to an improved academic achievement. For instance, when the

content of the curriculum is well utilized in physical and health education, it promotes the achievement of motor skills in learners and overall academic achievement student. The researcher observed that for curriculum to be implemented, there must be collaboration among principals, teachers and students in a given environment using teaching methods and approaches for the achievement of instructional objectives. It appears that if the content of the curriculum is not well utilized by the principal and teacher, curriculum will not be effectively implemented and this will result to poor academic achievement of students.

Utilization of Curriculum Content Resource and Academic Achievement

Jessica (2016) examined the influence of curriculum Quality on students' achievement. The study explained the influence of curriculum customization at the school level. The independent variables in this study were: curriculum design, curriculum development, influential forces that derive curriculum, social economic status including free and reduced lunch status, teachers with graduate degrees, attendance rates, percentage of special education students, instructional time, percentage of English Language learners, student mobility and faculty mobility rate. The study revealed that curriculum implementation have a positive influence on the achievement of students.

The study examined the relationship between principal utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement in public secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria.

The following research questions were raised for the study

What is the extent of principal utilization of curriculum content resource of secondary school in Southwest, Nigeria?

What is the level of academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria?

The research hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:

There is no significant relationship between principal utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of 2,719 principals and 72,676 teachers in all public secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample for the study consisted of 90 principals and 900 teachers to assess their school principals'

collaboration skill. The sample was selected using multistage sampling procedure. The respondents were drawn from 90 public secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. In stage one, three states were selected from southwest geo-political zone using simple random sampling technique. In stage two, simple random sampling technique was used to select two senatorial districts from each of the state. In stage three, simple random sampling technique was used to select 3 local governments from each senatorial district. In stage four, proportionate random sampling technique was used to select public secondary schools from each of the local government. In Ekiti State, 4 public secondary schools were selected from each local government. In Ondo State, 5 public secondary schools were selected from each local government and in Osun State, 6 public secondary schools were selected from each local government. In stage five, simple random sampling technique was used to select 10 teachers from each school and purposive sampling technique was used to select principal with at least three years of experience from each of the ninety public secondary schools earlier selected. Three self-designed instruments tagged Principal Utilization of Curriculum Content Resource Questionnaire (PUCCRQ), Students Affective and Psychomotor Domain Questionnaire (SAPDQ) and an Inventory on Senior School Certificate Examination results in the May/June 2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2017/2018, 2018/ 2019 and 2019/2020 academic sessions. The instruments were subjected to face and content validity. The instruments were validated by experts to ascertain the appropriateness and representation of the contents in measuring what it is meant to measure. Test retest method of reliability was used, the two sets of responses were correlated and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability of the PUCCRQ and SAPDQ and 0.76 and 0.74 were obtained for both instruments which were considered high enough for the study. Inferential statistics was used to analyze the obtained data. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The cut-off point was compared with the mean score. Once the mean score is higher than the cut-off point, the level shall be considered high. Once the mean score equals the cut-off point, the level shall be considered moderate and once the mean score is lower than the cut-off point, the level shall be considered low.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of principal utilization of curriculum content resource of secondary school in Southwest, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean showing the extent of principal utilization of curriculum content resource of secondary school in Southwest, Nigeria.

Variable	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN
Principals' Utilization of Curriculum Content Resource	418 (46.4)	417 (46.3)	33 (3.7)	32 (3.6)	3.35

Cut-off point = 2.50

Table 1 presents the extent of principals' utilization of content resource in secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. The result depicts that, using a criterion mean score of 2.50 for the rating scale; all the items had mean scores above the cut-off point. This implies that the extent of principals' utilization of curriculum content resource in secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria was high.

Research Question 2: What is the level of academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria?

In order to answer the question, responses on items 1-10 in Section B of "Student Affective and Psychomotor Domain Questionnaire (SAPDQ) were obtained and subjected to statistical analysis involving frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Also, SSCE results of the schools were obtained using an Inventory on WAEC SSCE Results and subjected to statistical analysis involving frequency counts and percentages. The results are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Level of academic achievement of secondary school students (Affective and Psychomotor domains)

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN
	Affective domain					
1	Students value the cultural heritage of the society	420	270	160	50	3.18

		(46.7)	(30.0)	(17.8)	(5.6)	
2	Students are well disciplined	350 (38.9)	350 (38.9)	140 (15.6)	60 (6.7)	3.10
3	Students are obedient to school authority	410 (45.6)	270 (30.0)	160 (17.8)	60 (6.7)	3.14
4	Students are very respectful	310 (34.4)	380 (42.2)	170 (18.9)	40 (4.4)	3.07
5	Students are punctual in school activities	510 (56.7)	220 (24.4)	130 (14.4)	40 (4.4)	3.33
	Psychomotor domain					
6	Students display high level of skills in cultural activities	400 (44.4)	320 (35.6)	120 (13.3)	60 (6.7)	3.42
7	Students display high level of skills in sporting activities	440 (48.9)	420 (46.7)	20 (2.2)	20 (2.2)	3.31
8	Students display high level of skills in drama activities	400 (44.4)	410 (45.6)	60 (6.7)	30 (3.3)	3.43
9	Students display high level of skills in laboratory activities	550 (61.1)	230 (25.6)	80 (8.9)	40 (4.4)	3.32
10	Students display high level of skills for self-development	500 (55.6)	230 (25.6)	130 (14.4)	40 (4.4)	3.18

Cut-off point = 2.50

Table 2 present the level of academic achievement of secondary school students (Affective and Psychomotor domains). Using a criterion mean score of 2.50 for the rating scale, all the items on Table 3 had mean scores above the cut-off point. This implies that the level of academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria is high.

Table 3: Level of academic achievement of secondary school students (Cognitive domain)

Sessions	Students Enrolment for SSCE	5 credits & above with English Language & Mathematics	5 credits & above without English Language & Mathematics	4 credits	Below 4 credits
2015/2016	9743	5119 (52.5)	2333 (23.9)	1401 (14.4)	890 (9.1)
2016/2017	9665	5001 (51.7)	2353 (24.3)	1377 (14.2)	934 (9.7)
2017/2018	8466	4501 (53.2)	2179 (25.7)	1195 (14.1)	591 (7.0)
2018/2019	11680	6664 (57.1)	2648 (22.7)	1747 (15.0)	621 (5.3)
2019/2020	12421	7004 (56.4)	2822 (22.7)	1676 (13.5)	919 (7.4)
Total	51975	28289 (54.4)	12335 (23.7)	7396 (14.2)	3955 (7.6)
Average					32.49

Table 3 present the level of academic achievement of secondary school students (cognitive domain). Table 4 shows that, out of 51,975 students who enrolled for Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) between 2015 to 2020; 28289 students representing 54.4% obtained 5 credits and above with English Language and Mathematics, 12335 (23.7%) had 5 credits and above without English Language and Mathematics while 7396 (14.2%) and 3955 (7.6%) students had 4 credits and less than 4 credits respectively. Therefore, level of academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria was moderate. The level of academic achievement of secondary school students was moderate on the basis of the number (28,289) and percentage (54.4) of students who had five credits and above with English Language and Mathematics.

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between principal utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to utilization of principals' curriculum content resource were computed using items 1-5 in Section B of "Principal Utilization of Curriculum Content Resource Questionnaire (PUCCRQ)" while academic achievement of secondary schools was obtained using items 1-10 in Section B of "Student Affective and Psychomotor Domain Questionnaire (SAPDQ)" as well as an Inventory on WAEC SSCE results. These sets of scores were subsequently subjected to statistical analysis involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Principals' utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria

Variables	No of schools	Mean	SD	Rcal	Pvalue
Principals' Utilization of Curriculum Content Resource	90	16.79	1.12	0.649*	0.000
Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students	90	36.16	4.14		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows that the computed rcal (0.649) is significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. The correlation between principals' utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students is moderate and statistically significant in a positive direction. This implies that there is significant relationship between principals' utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria.

Discussion

The study showed that the extent of principals' utilization of curriculum content resource in secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria was high. The level of academic achievement of secondary school students was moderate on the basis of the number (28,289) and percentage (54.4) of students who had five credits and above with English Language and Mathematics. The study showed that there was significant relationship between principals' utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students. This shows that students will achieve better academically if curriculum content resource are properly utilized. What could be responsible for this finding is the fact that essential curriculum content resource are available both in quality and quantity and are utilized as it's expected by the secondary school manager and this brought about good academic achievement of the students also. This finding is in line with the study of Jessica (2016) that curriculum implementation have a positive influence on the achievement of students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principal utilization of curriculum content resource and academic achievement of secondary school students were good. Principal utilization of curriculum content resource was crucial factor that influence academic achievement of secondary school students in Southwest, Nigeria.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school principals should ensure that there is efficiency in the utilization of curriculum content resource through proper planning and implementation for enhanced students' academic achievement.

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