



Assessment of Recommended Textbooks for Senior Secondary Schools Government Curriculum Implementation in Osun State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The study assessed relevance of the contents of recommended Government textbooks as specified in the Government curriculum. It examined appropriateness of learning activities provided in the recommended Government textbooks and finally determined the readability of the recommended Government textbooks used for teaching in Osun State secondary schools. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised teachers of both private and public secondary schools as well as Government textbooks used in senior secondary school in the state. The sample for the study consisted of 120 Government teachers selected using multistage sampling procedure and six recommended Government textbooks. Thirteen Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected from the State's three Senatorial Districts using simple random sampling technique. Five private and five public secondary schools were selected from each LGA using simple random sampling technique. From the selected schools, one Government teacher was selected purposively. Six recommended Government textbooks were purposively selected based on their popularity with teachers and students. The instrument used in this study was Adapted Textbook Evaluation Model of Richard (ATEMR, 2002), which emphasized Pre-evaluation Analysis (PeA), Pre-evaluation Evaluation (PeE) and Evaluation During and After Use (EDAU) respectively. The reliability coefficient of the test was 0.78 using Cronbach's alpha indicating that the instrument was reliable. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts, percentages and means statistical method of data analysis. The findings showed that the recommended Government textbooks used in Osun State secondary schools were readable for the students. The study concluded that the contents of recommended Government textbooks were relevant and reflect those specified in the Government curriculum; contained appropriate learning activities and that the recommended Government textbooks used in teaching Government secondary schools in Osun State secondary school were readable.

Keywords: Textbook, Government, Secondary School, Readability, Curriculum Implementation

Introduction

Education in all countries is seen as the basis for literacy, skills development and technology improvement, as well as a tool to use all resources and donations from the environment for development. In Nigeria, the importance of

education is indicated in the national education policy, which states: education will continue to be highly valued in the national development plan, as education is the most important tool for change; any fundamental change in the intellectual and social perspective of any society

must precede the educational revolution (FRN, 2014).

The International Bureau of Education (2016) believes that the curriculum is a conscious and systematic selection of knowledge, skills and values: a choice that forms the way to organize the curriculum, training and assessment, considering issues such as what, why, when and how students must learn. The main goal of a quality curriculum is to give students the opportunity to acquire and develop knowledge, skills and values, as well as relevant skills and competencies to lead a meaningful and productive life. A quality curriculum maximizes the potential for effective learning improvement.

According to Fafunwa (1974) in Ehindero and Aladejana (2010), the curriculum has three main characteristics: defined and dynamic goals based on the values of society and the needs of the child as a citizen and qualified person; It must be flexible and provide for the necessary growth to achieve its goals; and he had to integrate a continuous assessment process into it to help determine to what extent the educational process reaches its goals, as indicated in terms of the final product. In primary schools, curriculum content is determined by some groups outside the school that serve as a point of reference and source of standards

Curriculum development involves a lengthy process and the task is the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education, although State governments have always been involved in curriculum development. According to Daramola and Jekayinfa (2007), the Federal government and State governments develop curriculum objectives and obtain feedbacks and input, while national curriculum and textbooks bureau work in collaboration with the government. Once the objectives of the curriculum are set, the scheme of studies will then be made bearing in mind the "National Education Policy, curriculum objectives, market needs and global trends.

Immediately after the Scheme of Studies had been made, various subject-specific syllabi will be developed based on consultation with various Institutes. Textbooks are developed in accordance with the approved curriculum for the federation under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and other educational institutions in the country. Finally, the government will then

make a poppy and provide teacher training which will therefore implement the curriculum at the school level.

However, the importance of Government in the school curriculum cannot be over-emphasized. The need for Government arose as a result of people living and working together, which may bring about conflicts, disagreement and crises. Therefore, there is need to have a body to regulate their daily activities and if there is no such body or agency, anarchy may reign in the society. To this end, people began to study Government as an academic field, which involves the study of political institutions in the State, ideas, values and doctrines about politics, the view of political thinkers of what constituted the welfare of the people.

Government becomes a social science subject that is taught in schools and colleges. In higher institutions, it is mostly known as political science. The study of Government embraces international relations, administration and the like. Government is also related to other subjects or disciplines such as History, Sociology, Economics, Philosophy, and Mathematics. The study of Government helps acquaint citizens with the good knowledge of their rights and responsibility to government and also the rights and responsibility of Government to the citizens. Other importance of studying Government include: to widen people's knowledge about administration and other institutions in Government; and provides opportunity for people to become future political leaders among others. Government textbooks should therefore contain those topics related to the rights and responsibility of citizens to the Government and vice-versa. It also must contain what must be done by the citizens when such rights and responsibilities are violated by the Government or any of her representatives; and other topics that centres on nationalism and patriotism.

Braslavsky (2005) wrote that the achievement and progress of a nation depends on the progress of education, while the curriculum on the other hand determines the characteristics and image of the country's educational system. According to them, to meet ever-changing needs, curriculum development is a continuous and cyclical process. It is being updated, and revised from time to time in accordance with the needs for changes in the

country's standards, as well as in the world of dynamics. Researchers, however, believed that textbooks are the main and visible tools for realizing inner thoughts and hidden tones of the curriculum. According to Boissiere (2004), the importance of adequate textbooks to improve the quality of education cannot be overestimated. Boissiere believes that textbooks in appropriate languages and appropriate levels of difficulty are shown to be relatively cost – inputs with high returns in terms of students' achievement.

A significant number of surveys have been conducted on the importance of recommended books in relation to student performance. For example, SACMEQ (2011) reported that “recommended books influenced educational policies because of their significant contribution to student performance, which led Switzerland to start providing free books to all students in primary school in 2003. A study by Porta and Laguna (2007) found that some countries, including Guatemala and Nicaragua, also introduced free textbooks into their educational system, targeting the most disadvantaged. The results of Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan, Prinsloo, Arends and Rogers, (2015) showed that the successes in studying Mathematics and English from 1988 to 2003 in Ghana were due to the increased availability of textbooks, while their study in South Africa showed that students have better reading time in the presence of their own copies of textbooks.

A study in California by Fehrler, Michaelowa and Wechtler (2009) found that elementary school students who used the specific Math textbook received more test results than students using other books. Fehrler et al (2009), a subsequent analysis in twenty-two (22) sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria, showed that learning resources, especially textbooks on basic reading and math subjects are effective in improving learning, providing a textbook to each student in class increased literacy rate by 5–20%.

Curriculum acts as a pivot on which any textbook should be anchored. It is to guide the students with the right concepts even when the teachers are not available in the classrooms, so as to broaden the knowledge of students on good governance and economic development. Despite the relevance of curriculum to the teaching of any

subject, the researcher noticed a systemic collapse on the part of Government teachers' inability to produce the government curriculum across many schools recently when he needed it as a sample for a mini project. This may be as a result of the inefficiency of the teachers teaching the subject. In a situation where the teachers who implement the curriculum were not familiar with the curriculum, how would they know its contents? Only when they know the contents of the curriculum do they evaluate the content of textbooks recommended by the government based on the content of the approved curriculum. It is expected that Government like other subjects should not generate any sort of challenge or difficulty in its implementation since the teachers and the students supposed to be familiar with the Government curriculum.

However, there is dearth of literature on Government textbook evaluation and this could be the reason for poor performance of students in Government. Hence, the assessment of recommended textbooks for senior secondary school Government curriculum implementation in Osun State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess recommended textbooks for Government curriculum implementation in Osun State Secondary Schools. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- a. assess relevance of the contents of recommended Government textbooks as specified in the Government curriculum;
- b. examine appropriateness of learning activities provided in the recommended Government textbooks used in Osun State Secondary Schools; and
- c. examine the readability of the recommended Government textbooks used for teaching in Osun State secondary schools.

Research Questions

As a follow up to the objectives, the following research questions were answered in the study.

1. Are contents of recommended Government textbooks in tandem to those specified in the Government curriculum for teaching in Osun State secondary schools?

2. To what extent are learning activities provided in the recommended textbooks appropriate?
3. To what extent are the recommended Government textbooks readable for students?

Methods

The research design for the study was descriptive survey design. It was adopted because it enables the researcher to obtain information from a representative sample of the population and describe the existing situation as it is. The study population comprised teachers of both private and public secondary schools as well as government textbooks used in senior secondary school in Osun State, Nigeria. The sample for the study consisted of 120 government teachers selected using multistage sampling procedure and six recommended Government textbooks used in Osun State Secondary Schools. Thirteen Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected from the three Senatorial District in the state using simple random sampling technique. Five private and five public secondary schools were selected from each LGA using simple random sampling technique. From the selected schools, one Government teacher was then selected purposively. Six recommended Government textbooks were purposively selected based on their popularity with teachers and students.

The instrument used in this study was Adapted Textbook Evaluation Model of Richard (ATEMR, 2002), which emphasizes Pre-evaluation Analysis (PeA), Pre-evaluation Evaluation (PeE) and Evaluation During and After Use (EDAU) respectively. This instrument consisted of five sections. The “first section ‘A’ elicited information on” the bio-data of the respondents; “Section ‘B’ elicited information on” the sources of material used for teaching Government. “Section ‘C’ elicited information on” the contents relevance of recommended Government textbooks. “Section ‘D’ elicited information on” the appropriateness of learning activities, and “section ‘E’ elicited information

on the” readability of the recommended Government textbooks.

The instrument consisted of statements on four-point-Likert-type scale: VR – Very Relevant; R- Relevant; SR- Slightly Relevant; NR- Not Relevant. Also, VA- Very Appropriate; A-Appropriate; SA- Slightly Appropriate; NA- Not Appropriate; and finally, SA – Strongly Agree; A- Agree; SD- Strongly Disagree; D- Disagree. Respondents were made to respond to the items based on the degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by ticking (✓) the column that best described their responses.

The instrument was trial tested by administering it on respondents outside the study group in another Local Government Area. The data obtained from the trial testing were subjected to reliability test using Cronbach’s alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78 indicating that the instrument was reliable. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts, percentages and means statistical method of data analysis.

Results

The results and interpretation of the findings of the study are presented as follows:

Research Question One: Are the contents of recommended Government textbooks relevant to those specified in the Government curriculum for secondary schools in Osun State?

To answer this question, the selected textbooks were made available to the respondents to assess the relevance of their contents to those specified in the Government curriculum. Their responses to the Section C of the questionnaire on content relevance of recommended Government textbooks as specified in the curriculum were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The responses to items were coded as Very Relevant (4), Relevant (3), Slightly Relevant (2), Not Relevant (1) for positively worded items, while items that were negatively worded were reversed. The results of the analysis are presented in Table one.

Table 1: Content Relevance of Government Textbooks.

Items	VR	R	SR	NR	Remarks
Government textbooks used for teaching in secondary schools were published in accordance with NERDC new guidelines.	83 (63.8)	43(33.1)	4(3.1)	0 (0.0)	Relevant.
Changes have been so rapid in recent years that lead to the alteration of some of the contents of Government textbooks in such a way that they do not reflect the curriculum.	4(3.1)	7(5.4)	61(46.9)	58(44.6)	Not relevant
The textbooks have been prepared according to Government curriculum	71 (54.6)	44(33.8)	10(7.7)	5(3.8)	Relevant.
The textbooks are relevant to the need of the students as specified in the curriculum	71(54.6)	47(36.2)	8(6.2)	4(3.1)	Relevant.
The textbook instructional design supports the attainment of specified learning goals.	72(55.4)	45(34.6)	9(6.1)	4(3.1)	Relevant.
The content of recommended government textbooks are similar to those specified in the curriculum	83(63.8)	43 (33.1)	4 (3.1)	0 (0.0)	Relevant.
Government textbooks not recommended by the authority are being used in schools.	4(3.1)	7(5.4)	61(46.9)	58(44.6)	Not relevant

(Percentage)

The Table 1 showed the content relevance of the recommended Government textbooks to the Government curriculum. It was revealed that 83(63.8%) of the teachers indicated that Government textbooks used for teaching in secondary schools were published in accordance with NERDC new guidelines and are very relevant. 43(33.1%) of them rated this as relevant while 4(3.1%) of the teachers believed that the contents are slightly relevant and none of them believed that the contents are not relevant. In terms of recent changes that have led to the alteration of some of the contents of Government textbooks such that they do not reflect the curriculum, only 4 (3.1%) of the teachers indicated that they are very relevant, 7(5.4%) of them believed that they are relevant, while 61(46.9%) of the teachers indicated that they are slightly relevant and 58(44.6%) of them said they are not relevant. The textbooks have been

prepared according to Government curriculum was rated very relevant 71(54.6%), relevant 44(33.8%), slightly relevant 10(7.7%) and 5(3.8%) of the teachers indicated that they are not relevant. Concerning the relevance of the textbooks to the need of the students as specified in the curriculum, 71(54.6%) of the teachers indicated very relevant, 47(36.2%) of them indicated relevant, 8(6.2%) slightly relevant and 5(3.1%) of the teachers indicated not relevant. “On whether the textbook instructional design supports the attainment of specified learning goals”, 72(55.4%) of the teachers indicated very relevant, 45(34.6%) indicated re relevant, 9(6.1%) slightly relevant and only 4(3.1%) of the teachers believed that they were not relevant. Also, 83(63.8%) of the teachers indicated that the contents of recommended Government textbooks are similar to those specified in the curriculum very relevant, whereas 43(33.1%) of them rated

this as relevant, while 4(3.1%) of the teachers believed that the contents are slightly relevant and none of them believed that the contents are not relevant. Finally, on the Government textbooks not recommended by the authority been used in schools; only 4 (3.1%) of the teachers indicated that they are very relevant, 7(5.4%) of them believed that they are relevant, while 61(46.9%) of the teachers indicated that they are slightly relevant and 58(44.6%) of them said they are not relevant. The finding showed that the contents of the recommended Government textbooks reflect those specified in the Government curriculum and were relevant as well. The research question assessed the relevance of the contents of the recommended

textbooks indicated in the Government curriculum for secondary schools in Osun State.

Research Question Two: To what extent are the learning activities provided in the Government recommended textbook appropriate?

To answer this question, responses to the Section D of the questionnaire on learning activities provided in the Government recommended textbooks were analyzed. The responses to the items were coded as Very Appropriate (4), Appropriate (3), Slightly Appropriate (2), Not Appropriate (1) for positively worded items, while items that were negatively worded were reversed. The results are presented in table two below.

Table 2: Appropriateness of Learning Activities.

Items	VA	A	SA	NA	Remarks
The learning activities provided in the textbooks reflect the level of sophistication of the learning goals.	85(65.4)	33(25.4)	10(7.7)	2(1.5)	Appropriate
The learning activities provided in the textbooks are developmentally appropriate	75(57.7)	51(39.2)	2(1.5)	2(1.5)	Appropriate
The learning activities address the specific substance of a learning goal	65(50)	56(43.4)	8(6.2)	1(0.8)	Appropriate
The learning activities provided in the textbooks prepare the students to be politically and economically conscious / minded	65(50)	56(43.4)	8(6.2)	1(0.8)	Appropriate
The learning activities provided in the textbooks prepare the students to assume leadership positions.	52(40)	57(43.8)	14(10.8)	7(5.4)	Appropriate
The learning activities provided in the textbooks increase students' awareness to the importance of good governance and the danger of a bad one.	64(49.2)	58(44.6)	6(2)	2(1.5)	Appropriate.
The learning activities provided in the textbooks establish a challenging classroom, enable students practice in role playing and support every student.	61(46.9)	57(43.8)	10(7.7)	2(1.5)	Appropriate

(Percentage)

Table 2 showed respondents' responses on the appropriateness of the learning activities provided in the recommended Government textbooks in Osun State secondary schools. It revealed that 85(65.4%) of the teachers indicated

that the learning activities provided in the textbooks reflect the level of sophistication of the learning goals are very appropriate, 33(25.4%) as appropriate, 10(7.7%) as slightly appropriate while 2(1.5%) of the teachers believed that the

learning activities are not appropriate. Concerning whether the learning activities provided in the textbooks are developmentally appropriate, 75(57.7%) of the teachers indicated very appropriate, 51(39.2%) of them said appropriate while 2(1.5%) were of the opinion that they were slightly relevant and the same number of teachers indicated that they were not relevant. The learning activities address the specific substance of a learning goal was rated 65(50%) (very appropriate), 56(43.4%) (Appropriate), 8(6.2%) slightly appropriate and 1(0.8%) not appropriate. The learning activities provided in the textbooks prepare the students to be politically and economically minded, the teachers indicated as follows: very appropriate 65(50%), appropriate 56(43.4%), slightly appropriate 8(6.2%) and not appropriate 1(0.8%). On whether the learning activities provided in the textbooks prepare the students to assume leadership positions in the future; 52(40%) of the teachers indicated very appropriate, 57(43.8%) of them indicated appropriate, 14(10.8%) believed the activities were slightly relevant and 5.4% indicated not relevant. The teachers indicated that the learning activities provided in the textbooks increase students' awareness to the importance of

good governance and the dangers of a bad one with 64(49.2%) as very appropriate, 58(44.6%) as appropriate, 6(4.7%) as slightly appropriate and 2(1.5%) not appropriate. Finally, on whether the learning activities provided in the textbooks establish a challenging classroom, enable students practice in role playing and supports every student, 61(46.9%) of the teachers indicated very appropriate, 57(43.8%) said appropriate, 10(7.7%) slightly appropriate and 2(1.5%) of the teachers indicated not appropriate. The findings showed that the learning activities provided in the recommended Government textbooks were appropriate.

Research Question Three: To what extent are the recommended Government textbooks readable for the students?

To answer this question, responses to the Section E of the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The items were coded as Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1) for positively worded items, while items that were negatively worded were reversed.

Table 3: Readability of Government Textbooks.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Remarks
The texts in the textbooks are easy to read	91(70)	38(29)	1(0.8)	0(0)	Agree
The texts are easy to comprehend.	85(65.4)	43(33.1)	1(0.8)	1(0.8)	Agree
The paper and ink used are of great quality.	72(55.4)	44(33.8)	9(6.9)	5(3.8)	Agree
The font size and line spacing used in the textbooks followed an approved standard.	70(53.8)	48(36.9)	10(7.7)	2(1.5)	Agree
The language used is simple and clear	70(53.8)	48(36.9)	10(7.7)	2(1.5)	Agree
The illustrations used in the textbooks are adequate and appeal to students.	64(49)	55(42.5)	8(6.2)	3(2.3)	Agree
Individual and group readings become easier (Percentage)	37(28.5)	72(55.4)	18(13.8)	3(2.3)	Agree

Table 3 showed respondents' responses on the readability of recommended Government textbooks by Osun State secondary school students. Result revealed that 91 (70%) of the teachers strongly agree that the texts in the textbooks are easy to read, 38 (29%) of the teachers agree, 1 (0.8%) of them disagree and 0% of the teachers strongly disagree respectively. On the comprehension of the texts in the textbooks, 85 (65.4%) of the teachers strongly agree, 43 (33.1%) of them agree, while 9 (6.9%) of the teachers "disagree and 1 (0.8%) of them strongly disagree". About print quality of paper used in the textbooks, 72 (55.4%) of the teachers strongly agree, 44 (33.8%) of them agree while 9 (6.9%) of the teachers disagree even as partly 5 (3.8%) of them strongly disagree. Concerning whether the font size and the line spacing used in the textbooks followed an approved standard, "70 (53.8%) of the respondents" strongly "agree" with this, "48 (36.9) of them agree", while 10 (7.7%) disagree and very few of them: 2 (1.5%) of the teachers strongly disagree. On whether the linguistic used in the textbook is of highly competent, 70 (53.8%) of the teachers strongly agree with this, 48 (36.9%) agree, and 10 (7.7%) of them disagree while only 2 (1.5%) of the teachers strongly disagree. About the illustrations used in the textbooks, 64 (49.5%) of the teachers strongly agree that they are adequate and appeal to students, 55 (42.5%) of them equally agree with this, while partly 8 (6.2%) of them disagree and 3 (2.3%) of the teachers strongly disagree with the item. Finally, on the individual and group reading being done by the students in the classroom, 37 (28.5%) of the teachers strongly agree with this, just as 72 (55.4%) of them equally agree with it, it shows that 18 (13.8%) of the teachers disagree with this item of the questionnaire while 3 (2.3%) of them strongly disagree. The findings showed that the recommended Government textbooks used in Osun State secondary schools were readable for the students.

Discussion

The study assessed the relevance of the contents of recommended Government textbooks as specified in the secondary school Government curriculum in Osun State. Result showed that the contents of recommended Government textbooks

were relevant to those specified in the Government curriculum. The results corroborated the report of Adebayo (2018) "that curriculum development in Nigeria is facilitated by some relevant agencies among which include the Nigerian Educational Research Development Council (NERDC), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (ETF), and Universal Basic Education (UBE)"; and that the textbooks are provided based on the guidelines they issued-out. The results also aligned with the study of Trisha (2016) who revealed that textbooks recommended to be used in schools are usually written in line with the prescribed curriculum contents. The study answered the first research question on the relevance of the contents of recommended Government textbooks to the contents specified in the Government curriculum. The study also examined appropriateness of learning activities provided in the recommended Government textbooks used in Osun State secondary schools. The result showed that the learning activities provided in the recommended Government textbooks were appropriate. The results corroborate the studies of Graves (2000), and Basturkmen (2010) that textbooks provide security for the students because they have a kind of road map of the course. They provided a set of visuals, activities, readings, etc., and so saves the teacher's time in finding or developing such materials; and the work of Dole (2000) showed that a textbook suggest practical observations, survey, measurement and information research activities that engage students' mind for better comprehension of ideas.

The study further assessed the extent of the readability of the recommended Government textbooks used for teaching in Osun State secondary schools. The results showed that the recommended Government textbooks used in Osun State secondary schools were readable. The result is in line with the submission of Fatoba (2015) that readability of textbooks has impact on academic performance; and the work of Ojedokun (2000) who revealed that any book targeted at any particular level of education must possess an attractive quality. The result also gives credence to Khan (2005) "that comprehension of a textbook depends on readability: which is the ease with which a text can be read and comprehended; the quality of paper and ink used,

font size and line spacing are fundamental factors which enhance textbooks readability, readability also depends on the linguistic competencies used in the textbook and those possessed by the students". This study answered the third research question on the readability of recommended Government text books used in Osun State secondary schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that the content of recommended Government textbooks were relevant and reflect those specified in the Government curriculum; contained appropriate learning activities and that the recommended Government textbooks used in teaching Government in Osun State secondary school were readable. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that textbooks be made available to all students at reduced prices or free-of-charge. More qualified teachers should be employed to transmit the curriculum contents to students through textbooks. Such agency as NERDC and others continue to monitor the publishers in order to ensure conformity with the required standard for textbooks publications.

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