ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCE, 
AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMICS CURRICULUM IN 
SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ONUEKE EDUCATION ZONE 
OF EBONYI STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the teachers instructional competence and implementation of Economics curriculum in senior secondary school, with emphasis on methodology contents/subject matter and instructional materials used. Three purposes guided the study of which the aim was to investigate and established the relationship that exists between them. The research adopted context Input Process and Product (CIPP) model which link on the implementation of Economic Curriculum, and 3 related empirical studied reviewed. The study was carried out in 2016; in Ishielu, Ikwo, Ezza North and Ezza South Local Government areas in Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State. An area with the target population of thirty-one (31) public secondary schools and 59 Economics teacher were used. The choice of the area was due to the presence of learning institutions, as it is fondly called an academic environment: the study employed descriptive research design. Questionnaire was used ass an instrument for data collection. A reliability of 0.614 was established. Data collected was analyzed, using version 20 of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) and employed descriptive and frequency statistical tools. Hence, mean, standard deviation and frequency were used to test the results. The study found that all the variables investigated on teacher competencies in content matter, methodology and instructional materials have great influence on the implementation of economics curriculum. Conclusion and recommendations were made that through education board that there will be provision of seminars and workshops to help teachers to be committed to the teaching of Economics. Economics curriculum planner should liaise with the management of Onueke Education Zone to ensure that content matter, instructional material usage, and methodology competency are improved.

Keywords: Teacher Instructional Competency, Curriculum in Economics.

INTRODUCTION
Background of the Study
Education can be considered as a major tool for systematic sustainable human and material development of nations. It is a priority sector in every well-meaning society. Education can be described as the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, interests, abilities, competencies and the cultural norms of a society by transmitting it to the coming generations so as to enhance perpetual development of the society.

To actualize the above mentioned educational benefits, curriculum is developed for every school subject in the various educational levels. Ogunyemi (2009) defined curriculum as the planned and unplanned experiences, which learners receive in the process of their formal or semi-formal education for the purpose of becoming rounded persons who can make meaningful contribution to the betterment of their society and the world.
The quality of education is directly related to educational curriculum, its implementation and the quality of instruction in the classroom. Nevertheless, the effectiveness or success of any education system depends mainly on the quantity and quality of teachers, the training, preparation and ability to discharge in their classroom (Lovat, 2005; Bello, 2007). The teacher is the executioner of education curriculum. The teacher breaks the curriculum into contents teachable units and delivers the same in a comprehensible manner to students. The teacher breaks down the syllabus to get the scheme of work, and the unit of plan, and the lesson plan that is being used daily for teaching. Any teacher who discharges these responsibilities effectively is said to be competent. That is why; Obilo (2010) defined a competent teacher as one who is skillful, innovative or nature, resourceful, and who knows the right approach technique and method for the dissemination of knowledge (learning) in the class.

Teachers are the major implementers of the curriculum at the classroom level, including the new Senior Secondary School curriculum. Recognizing the role of teachers in the implantation of any educational policy document, Ukeje in Ebiringa (2012) observed that “Education may unlock the door to modernization but it is the teacher who holds the key”. It is the teacher who determines what happens in the classroom. The successful implementation of any educational programme can only be assured through teachers who have acquired necessary competencies in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. No nation can rise above the quality of its teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria, (FRN), 2014). This implies that there is need for competent teachers at all levels of education system, especially at the secondary schools to guarantee the achievement of vision 2020.

Competency, in the opinion of Kymet (2010) is the knowledge and skills required of a teacher in order to teach in school, which include: high level of knowledge, values, skills and personal dispositions, sensitivities and capabilities and the ability to put those combinations into practice in an appropriate way. These contributions imply to put into use what one knows in an appropriate way. In this study, competence refers to the knowledge, skills, judgement and strengths, possessed by teachers for effective implementation of Economics curriculum in secondary schools. Teacher’s competence can be judged by the qualification, knowledge of the subject matter, methodology, appropriate use of instructional material good classroom management skills and evaluation techniques.

Qualification is that which accords one the academic or educational ability needed to embark on a task or job. Teacher qualification is the certification an individual or person obtained after passing through a prescribed curricular of instruction form an institution of learning. Consequently, such certificates can be obtained through the Nigeria Teachers Institute (NTI), Colleges of Education, institutes and faculties of education in Nigeria universities. A qualified teacher is one, who is formally trained and certified in the field of education teaching. Darling – Hammond. In Anita et al 2013), described a qualified teacher as one who was fully certified and held the equivalent of a major in the field of being taught. Although, the formal qualification of teachers is an important indicator for knowledge and competence in teaching; it has only limit utility in analyzing how well-prepared teachers are for what they have to teach in schools. In Nigeria, the minimum requirement for teaching is the Nigeria certificate on Education (NCE) as stipulated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014). But currently, the minimum qualification of teachers of economics in secondary schools is bachelor’s degree in Economics.

Mastery of the subject matter is one of the most important aspects of teachers competence (Ebiringa, 2012). Similarly, Onuoha (2015) defined subject matter competence as the ample up-to-date knowledge of the teacher’s subject area, therefore, a teacher should be knowledgeable in his subject area, and knows the beliefs and principles underlying the subject matter. Geo (2008) suggests that the teacher should have a mastery of the subject matter he/she is teaching and should keep abreast of important development in the field. Content knowledge is necessary but not sufficient for good and qualitative teaching without the use of appropriate methodology.

Besides, the teacher knowledge of the subject matter, the methods they apply in teaching is equally of immense importance in determining their competencies. Methodology competence in the view of Oluube (2006) is the procedure of doing something and having enough skill, knowledge and ability to find out the function. It is a way of doing the teaching business, the procedure, orderliness in planning and execution of the curriculum. Some of the method outlined in Nigerian Education Research Development Council (NERDC, 2008) include the concept mapping, field, trips, observation, assignment collaborative learning, interactive processes, cooperative learning and learner oriented instructional method. These methods requires instructional materials for effective teaching.

Instructional materials are those things that promote the effectiveness of instruction during teaching-learning process. According to Ofoegbu (2009), instructional materials are the equipment and materials that are used in the process of teaching and learning to bring about effectiveness and efficiency in the teaching-
learning process which promote and enhance the achievement of instructional objectives. According to Okeke in Okwo and Ike (2008) it can be referred to as the wide variety of equipment and materials used for teaching and learning. The authors further explained that instructional material includes: chalkboard, real objects, models, mock-ups, pictures, charts, television, radio, filmstring, slide projectors, non-projected and projected devices or tools which bring about effectiveness and efficiency in the teaching-learning process and invariably promote and enhance the achievement of instructional objectives.

Economics on the other hand, is one of the social science subjects that studies the behaviour of human being as a relationship with his wants and scarce resources, that has alternative applications. Although, there are as many definition of Economics as there are Economists, but the most widely acceptable definition was given by Lord Lonel Robbins. He defined it as a science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. Economics is also one of the subjects in humanities that have its root in philosophy, psychology, sociology and so on. It has its basis in the trio and extents, its relationship to political science, social studies among other course of study (Onuoha, 2014). Economics is one of those elective (non-vocational subjects in senior secondary schools in Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Education, FME, 2004). Similarly, it is among the twelve subjects listed under humanities to be studied at the senior secondary school level. That is, to be offered at the post Basic Education Curriculum (FME, 2008, 2013). According to the FRN (2014) Economics is one of the elective subjects to be studied at the Senior Secondary School level as presented by the National Policy on Education, developed by the CESAC and now reviewed by the NERDC. The Economics curriculum is based on the principle of equipping our Senior Secondary school graduates with the basic knowledge and requisite skills to appreciate the nature of economic problems in any society and adequately prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century and the Nigeria economy. Accordingly, it arose not just as a result of the increasing demand for education, but for the attainment of national objectives and quest for entrepreneurial and managerial skills development (Ugwuanyi, Ochiaja & Anisiudo, 2014).

According to the NERDC (2008), the objectives of the post-basic Economics curriculum include to enable students:

- Understand basic economic principles and concepts as well as the tools for sound economic analysis.
- Contribute intelligently to discourse on economic reforms and development as they effect or would affect the generally of Nigerians.
- Understand the structure and functioning of economic institutions.
- Appreciate the role of public policies on national economy.
- Develop the skills and also appreciate the basis for rational economics decisions.
- Become sensitized to participate actively in national economic advancement through entrepreneurship, capital market and so on.
- Understand the role and status of Nigeria and other African countries in international economic relationship.
- Appreciate the problems encountered by developing countries in their effort towards economic advancement.

So, the attainment of the above stated objectives is very crucial for effective growth and development of the recipient – the learner and the country at large. Hence, it requires a great deal of the teacher, who employs innovative pedagogical strategies, since, it is believed that learners interest can be aroused through such, and will be ready to participate actively in the learning process and the implementation of economics curriculum will be effectively and efficiently utilized.

This study therefore assesses the teachers instructional competences and implementation of Economics curriculum with specific reference to knowledge of subject matter, sue of appropriate instructional pedagogical, and qualification of the teacher in the implementation of Economics curriculum in senior secondary schools.

**Statement of the Problem**

Economics reflects the problem, yearnings and aspirations of a given society. The nature of the problems and aspiration of the society have always determined the nature of Economics curriculum and as well determines the purpose which the curriculum is out to serve.

In Onueke educational zone, the problem could be associated to the inadequate knowledge of the subject matter, inadequate classroom management and competencies. In the same vein, some of the teachers teaching Economics in the study area are not specialists in the field of Economics. They never had training and education centered on Economics which could have helped them use the right terminologies when teaching and relate what is being taught to real life situation as well. This means that they are not specialized
in the field of Economics. The failure of most of the Economics teachers may be due to lack of or absence of the relevant competencies. This shows that the instructional competencies of teachers in implementing Economic curriculum in Onueke education zone have not been properly assessed. Without any doubt there is need to ascertain the competency possessed by Economics teachers and the competency needed by them for effective implementation of Economics curriculum in secondary school. It is however, not known the extent to which all these constraints jeopardize effective implementation of Economics curriculum in the study area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess teachers’ instructional competencies and the implementation of Economics curriculum for Senior Secondary Schools. Specifically, the study intends to:
1. Ascertain the methodology competence in the implementation of Senior secondary School Economics curriculum.
2. Determine the content matter competence of teachers for effective implementation of Senior Secondary School economics curriculum.
3. Ascertain the teacher competence in the use of instructional materials for effective implementation of Senior Secondary School Economics Curriculum.

Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the study adopted Context Input Process and Product (CIPP) model of education by Stufflebeam (1966). This is because curriculum is for a programme of study, and the teacher is one of the major inputs in the implementation process. Therefore, an assessment of this nature will help bring about a clearer understanding of the extent to which teachers possess the needed instructional competencies for effective implementation of the curriculum.

Practically, the findings of the study will be beneficial to the following: government, teachers, students, researchers, various councils and commissions that regulate teacher education in Nigeria and curriculum planners and developers.

Well diagnosed instructional competencies of economics teacher will be of immense benefit to the learner in the teaching process. Students’ performance in Economics will improve.

The study will provide information to the curriculum planners and institutions that develop and train teachers, the finding help them in identifying areas of weakness in the curriculum content as well as methods of delivering lessons; thereby helping them to repackage the curriculum for greater efficiency in the production of professional teachers of Economic in the system.

The finding of the study will equally provide guide to government and school administrators, to emphatically consider the right competencies of teachers of Economics during recruitment exercises as well as the needed for regular supervision and assessment of teachers for effective Economics curriculum implementation. The findings of the study will help the various councils and commissions to appreciate the need for continuous updating of the knowledge base of teachers of economics through frequent attendance of workshops, seminars, conferences and in-service training, so as to expose them to new method and current development in teaching of Economics curriculum.

Furthermore, researchers will find information from this study very useful because it will provide the needed foundation upon which subsequent studies on teachers competencies in Economics and other related areas will stand.

Research Questions

These questions guided the study thus:
(1) What are the methodology competences possessed by the teacher for effective implementation of Economics Curriculum?
(2) What are the content/subject matter competences possessed by teachers for the implementation of the Economics Curriculum?
(3) What are the competencies of teachers in the use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching Economics in Secondary School?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design because it seeks to document and describe what exist or the present status to existence or absence of what is being investigated. This study was conducted in 2017 at Onueke Education Zone of Ebonyi State. Four (4) local government areas where selected namely:
Ikwo, Ezza North, Ezza South and Ishielu. In this study, economic curriculum is taken as dependent variable, while teachers instructional competences is taken as independent variable. The study area is considered appropriate because most of the schools do not have Economics teachers who specialized in the field of Economics but they are teaching the student. These teachers who are not specialist in Economics lack the knowledge, methodology and ability to use instructional materials, appropriate teaching methods to enhance students understanding. Based on this, the researcher decided to research on teachers instructional competences for the effective implementation of Economics Secondary School Curriculum in Onueke Education Zone in Ebonyi State. The population of this study involved the entire fifty-nine (59) Economics teachers.

A questionnaire was designed and validated by experts in Economics education. To measure its consistency and veracity, data obtained was subjected to Cronbach Alpha procedure. A reliability of 0.614 was obtained. Data collected was analyzed through SPSS version 20, using mean scores and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The benchmark set for this study is that a mean of 2.5 and above was accepted while a mean less than 2.5 was not accepted.

**PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** What are the methodology competences possessed by teacher for effective implementation of Economics curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Economics teachers teach with desirable teaching method that enhance learning.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Economics teachers demonstrates the ability to project voice and use verbal instructions effectively.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Economics teacher utilize a variety of teaching strategies and methods rather than one method in the school.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Economic teachers display interest in self-improvement in quality of teaching through observation, question and maximum effort.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Economics teachers consistently and regularly checks on students perception using various methods.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.887</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows the methodology competency for effective implementation of economics curriculum. All the items in this table were accepted by Economics teachers. The result shows that methodology competence of teachers is adequate.

**Research Question 2:** What is the content matter competence of teachers for effective implementation of Senior Secondary School Economics Curriculum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>There are too many difficult topics in Economics</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.261</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The contents in Economics is too broad</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.108</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Economics require teachers from different fields</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.131</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of teachers on content matter for effective implementation of Economics Curriculum.
Table 2 shows the content matter of teachers for the implementation of Economics curriculum. It shows that all the respondent indicated possession of adequate content matter in the implementation of Economic Curriculum but 3 out of 5 items were rejected.

**Research Question 3:** What are the competencies of teachers in the use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching Economics in secondary schools?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of teachers in the use of appropriate instructions materials in teaching Economics in Secondary School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Economics teachers use instructional material to students based on each content.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Economics teachers design effective course material in teaching Economics content.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.591</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Economics teacher uses appropriate inquire tools according to the students prior knowledge.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.718</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Economics teachers demonstrate the availability appropriateness and effective use of instructional materials.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.540</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Economics teachers prepare lesson notes that will enhance interest of the students.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.172</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the teacher in the use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching Economics in Secondary Schools. All the items in this table were accepted by Economics teacher.

**Summary of Findings**

From the tables above table 1 shows there is significance difference in the mean ratings of the methodology competences possessed by the teacher for effective implementation of Economics Curriculum.

Table 2 above shows there is no significance difference in the subject matter competences possessed by teachers for the implementation of the Economics Curriculum.

Table 3 above shows there is significance difference in the mean ratings of the competencies of teachers in the use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching Economics in Secondary Schools.

**Conclusion**

This research examined the teachers’ instructional competences in the effective implementation of Economic Curriculum in Senior Secondary School Onueke education zone, but with emphasis on methodology, content/subject matter and instructional materials. The result revealed that Economic teachers possess adequate competent in methodology for the effective implementation of Economics curriculum.
There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of content matter competences possessed by teachers for the implementation of the Economic curriculum. There is competencies of teachers in the use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching economics in secondary school.

Recommendations

With reference to the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made to help correct the problems affecting the implementation of Economics curriculum.

(a) The ministry of education through its education board should ensure full implementation of Economic curriculum in Onueke Education Zone through job training, promotion and provision of seminars and workshops to help teachers to be committed to the teaching of Economics.

(b) Professional bodies like Nigeria Educational Research and development Council should initiate researchers in funding ways of developing instructional materials that will suit the various topics in Economics.

(c) Economics curriculum planner should liaise with the management of Onueke Education zone to ensure that content matter, instructional material usage and methodology competency is improved.

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