
Administrative and Academic Challenges in the Implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum in the 21st Century in Secondary Schools in Owerri Education Zone of Imo State, Nigeria

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Date of publication (dd/mm/yyyy): 09/10/2020

Abstract – This research was carried out to assess the Administrative and Academic Challenges in the Implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum in the 21st Century in Secondary Schools in Owerri Education Zone of Imo State. The purpose and objectives of the study was to assess the administrative challenges faced by principals and academic challenges faced by teachers and students in the implementation of Accounting Curriculum and in learning the subject. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. Target population comprised of 120 Principals, 150 Financial Accounting teachers and 8003 SSS II students. The total population for the study was 8273. The sample comprised of 10% representatives each. 10% of 120 Principals is 12, 10% of 150 teachers is 15 while 10% of 8,003 students is 803. To ensure uniformity, purposive sampling technique was used. Instrument for data collection was questionnaires developed by the researcher. Findings revealed that the time allocated for teaching Financial Accounting is inadequate, there is inadequate teaching aids like computers and textbooks, shortage of teachers and physical facilities, Abstractness and broad content among others. In view of the finding, it is recommended among others that government should employ more qualified Accounting teachers, allocation of more time and fund, etc.

Keywords – Administrative and Academic Challenges, Curriculum Implementation, Financial Accounting, 21st Century.

I. INTRODUCTION

The *Nigeria's National Policy on Education*, 6th edition, declares categorically that education is, among other things, a right of every Nigerian and is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013, p.2). One of the aspects of the Nigerian Objectives of Education is that 'education is meant for the acquisition of appropriate skills and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society'. This means that education is an important aspect of economic development. When citizens of a country are educated that is a key to social, economic and political stability (Ojiambo, 2009).

Accounting as one of the subjects in business education, has functions of developing in individuals, skills, knowledge, attitudes and values towards solving problems and towards satisfaction of real needs in life. Accounting is a very important branch of business education in which much of our daily life is governed and attached, by the results and application of business. The use of accounting information is a day to day activity which directly or indirectly affects every individual no matter where he/she is found, the career being pursued, the organization involved, etc. Every human activity is involved with one form of accounting practice or the other, this makes accounting very importance in human activities because it revolved around life.

Financial accounting is one of the vocational subjects offered at the senior secondary level of education in Ni-

-geria. The vocational subjects such as technical drawing, typewriting, and shorthand form part of the curriculum of the senior secondary education. Financial accounting is tremendously important to the economy of Nigeria, as it provides a solid foundation for the training of future accountants, managers and entrepreneurs (Aluwong, 2002). Every individual, irrespective of his/her class, requires the knowledge of accounting to meet his/her day to day activities. Noran as cited by Atetayo and Kiadese (2011) buttresses this point when he says accounting is “the language of business” and everyday activities.

Accounting is not one of the subjects that can be mastered by mere memorization of the basic rules. It requires total determination, sound theoretical knowledge and intensive practice in application, Francis (2015). Accounting is better learnt, understood and mastered by actually working exercises, exercise given should be adequately evaluated, marked and appropriate feedback given to the students. These objectives are geared towards making the students to appreciate the rules and functions of accounting, lay a sound foundation for further study of accounting at higher level and also assess candidates’ knowledge of basic accounting principles and their application to modern business activities. In view of the numerous importance of financial accounting, like being very much connected with personal lives in so far as it is in respect of every business, there arises increasing needs for the teachers to use appropriate teaching methods in delivering their lessons. The students on the other hand should adapt to learning styles that will suit or match their learning abilities.

Secondary schools occupy a strategic place in the educational system in Nigeria, it is the bridge or link between the primary and tertiary levels (Ekundayo, 2010). The importance of secondary school education made the federal government to state the broad aims of secondary school education (FRN, 2004), to include the preparation for useful living within the society and for higher education. The underlying principle here is that the secondary schools should be able to provide quality secondary education to all those who can benefit from it.

The 21st Century teaching and Learning is a technology/practical-based system. To effectively communicate, collaborate and create with 21st Century students, teachers should work in accordance with the goals of Financial Accounting. The general objectives of financial accounting as stated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) for senior secondary schools are to provide:

- a. Specialized instruction to prepare students for career in accounting field;
- b. Fundamental instruction to help students assume their economic roles as consumers, workers and citizens;
- c. Background instruction to assist students in preparing for other professional careers requiring advanced studies in accounting; and
- d. Accounting skills for personal use in future.

The importance Financial Accounting as enunciated by Albrecht, James, Stice and Monte (2005) include:

1. It enables financial position of a business to be ascertained at a glance.
2. It makes it possible for the owners of business to know how much capital the proprietor has invested on the business.
3. It helps the organization to know its debtors and creditors and when payment is due.
4. It helps the organization to keep track of their rise or fall (profit or loss).

5. It helps an organization to receive financial aid when needed as properly kept financial records tells any investor that the organization is worth doing business with.
6. It helps to curtail sudden break in business as it helps you to know what you have and what you don't have.

Challenges Faced in the implementation of any curriculum in the secondary school is shared between the Principals and the teachers including the students who are the main beneficiaries of such curriculum. These challenges are in different categories which include administrative and academic. Administrative challenges refers to the challenges experienced by the people in administrative positions. According to Raju (1973), the administrative role of a principal entails controlling, directing and coordinating all activities concerning education in any secondary institution. From his duties, the principal is said to be the pillar of secondary schools.

Principals experience administrative challenges as they carry out their duties towards the attainment of institutional goals and objectives. Olembo, Wanga and Karagu (1992), says that Principals face challenges resulting from factors such as inadequate physical facilities in the school, poor communication patterns in the school, inadequate time to perform his/her tasks and political constraints in the form of government policies. Other challenges include: inadequate financial resources, personnel management, curriculum implementation and instruction, financial management, provision and maintenance of physical facilities and even in school community relations. In the area of inadequate finance, inadequate recruitment of qualified teachers, inadequate provision of textbooks and other resource materials.

These challenges undermined the effectiveness of school administration in ensuring there is smooth teaching and learning process in schools, particularly in financial accounting which eventually translated to poor academic performance among students in the subject. From the foregoing discussion it is evident that the principals cannot effectively implement the financial accounting curriculum, with the challenges they face.

Effective Implementation of any curriculum is dependent on the quality and quantity of teachers involved in such programme. The teacher is considered a very important personality in the implementation of any curriculum because he is at the centre point being the one who implement the curriculum in the classroom. The teachers therefore need to be adequately prepared for the implementation and success of any curriculum innovation otherwise it will not be properly implemented which may lead to the failure of such curriculum. According to Kisirikoi, Wachira and Malusu (2008) who asserts that teachers need to be prepared or oriented to enable them interpret the curriculum accurately and implement it effectively. This can be done by reeducating the teachers through seminars, workshops and conferences where they are presented with new equipment and methods of teaching financial accounting the 21st century.

In the twenty-first century, significant changes are occurring related to new scientific discoveries, information, globalization, the development of astronautics, robotics and artificial intelligence. This century is called the age of digital technology and knowledge.

The new century introduced significant changes in didactics and teaching methods. Pedagogy of the twentieth differs from the pedagogy of the twenty-first century. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, there have been many changes in the development of the national and world education. The observable phenomenon is not the internetization of society and the penetration of digital technology into the learning of financial accounting.

Digital technologies change our way of life, communication, thinking, feeling, channel of influence on other people, social skills and social behaviour. As Myamesheva cited by Mynbayeva, Sadvakassova and Asshalova (2018) states, ‘the high-tech environment – computers, smart phones, video games, internet search engines – reshape the human brain’. This high-tech environment is where the accounting profession is performed with the high-tech equipment like computers, smart phones, internet search engines, etc. Therefore, to achieve the purpose of the new accounting profession in the 21st century, there is the need to introduce the use of the high-tech equipment into the teaching and learning of financial accounting in our secondary schools.

Despite the fact, that teachers play a very vital role in the implementation of curriculum especially in financial accounting in the 21st century, they face challenges which include: understaffing which is worsened by over enrollment in the classes especially with the declaration of UBE, unfavorable working conditions, inadequate salary increases leading to prolonged strikes, inadequate provision of accounting textbook and other teaching and learning materials, inadequate time allocated to the teaching of the subject, among others. Okwara, O.M, Shiundu, J.O. & Indoshi, F.C. (2009) noted that teachers face challenges especially when implementing the curriculum, also the lack of adequate teaching and learning resources is a hindrance to proper implementation of the curriculum.

The curriculum is prepared for the students or learners. One cannot talk about the curriculum without first considering the learners who are the consumers of the curriculum. Therefore if adequate preparation is not made for the delivery of the curriculum, students will suffer certain setbacks during its implementation. The challenges the students encounter in the implementation of financial accounting curriculum ranges from inadequate learning resources as libraries, lack relevant textbooks, lack of motivation from teachers, peer pressure, lack of new equipment meant for the teaching and learning financial accounting like computers, internet search engine, among others. All these challenges lead to students performing poorly in such subjects.

Despite all the contributions of financial accounting towards the growth of our economy, the performance of secondary school students in the subject especially in public examinations, is far from impressive (Adeleke, Binuomote and Adenyinka, 2013). However, Francis and Oguguo (2015) observed that the major factor contributing to students’ failure in financial accounting especially during external examinations can be traceable to poor curriculum implementation arising from the predominant use of conventional teaching approach where the teacher dominated the class and does not encourage students’ participation in the teaching and learning process. Another challenge is then one observed by Nkantana (2013) who established that the major challenges of student is failure to do assignments, which has led to students’ failure in examinations thus negatively influencing school academic performance. Their claim on the students’ poor performance in the subject especially in national examinations is been buttress by the discouraging results being released annually by WAEC and NECO.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The importance of Financial Accounting as a subject as far as national development is concerned cannot be overemphasized, through the study and practice of accounting, therefore, has a very important role to play in the economic development of any nation. As a measurement and reporting information system, accounting covers both micro-economic activities and it consists of various subsystems which relate to economic events and decisions (Ajayi, 1997). However since the introduction of Accounting in Nigerian, the curriculum faced

challenges in its implementation due to the large number of human resources required in its implementation, there was also inadequate teaching and learning resources, as a result a lot of challenges had been experienced in its implementation and therefore it has not been effectively implemented particularly in the 21st century.

Lack of in-service training of the teachers and provision of adequate Financial Accounting teaching and learning resources had hampered the implementation of the curriculum effectively. The researcher also realized through interaction with the principals, the teachers and the students that the teaching of accounting has not recorded a remarkable success due to poor implementation. Research has shown that teachers encounter problems in implementing a new curriculum innovation. Hawes (1972) in Iribie (2014) says that one of the main reasons for the failure of so many curriculum innovations is that teachers have been unable to implement the new syllabuses and materials either by reason of their insufficient basic education, or because their training had not fitted them for the new approaches and because no significant retraining had taken place. Since the teachers were not retrained and the resources provided may not have been sufficient, the curriculum has been facing challenges in its implementation, the study was therefore carried out to assess the challenges facing the implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum in the 21st Century in Secondary Schools in Owerri Education Zone of Imo State, Nigeria. It is because of the poor performance of students writing financial accounting in WAEC by almost 60% of the students that sat for the examination between 2014 and 2015 failing that prompted this study. This poor performance was not only disturbing but a slap on the face of financial accounting teachers. Therefore the researcher decided to conduct this study with the view of ascertaining challenges facing the implementation of financial accounting curriculum in secondary schools.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to assess the Challenges Facing the Implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum in the 21st Century in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study tends to:

1. Assess the administrative challenges faced by Principals in the implementation Financial Accounting curriculum.
2. Assess academic challenges faced by teachers during implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum.
3. Assess academic challenges faced by students in the learning of Financial Accounting.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the administrative challenges faced by Principals in the implementation Financial Accounting curriculum?
2. What are the academic challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum?
3. What are the academic challenges faced by students in the learning of Financial Accounting?

V. THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Humanist Theory of Facilitative Learning

This research is supported by the learning theory developed by the American psychologist Carl Rogers in the 1980s, facilitative learning is a humanistic approach to learning. Rogers views the teacher as a facilitator to learning rather than just a conveyor of knowledge. The success of the teacher is in their ability to build positive relationships with students.

Roger's proposed three attitudinal core characteristics that a teacher should possess for facilitative learning to be successful:

Realness. The teacher should be themselves and use their own personality when teaching. Being "real" with students breeds an ethos of trust between students and a teacher. The teacher should be able to convey their feelings rather than just being a monotonal, monochromatic robot.

Prizing, Accepting and Trusting. A teacher should care about their students and accept their feelings, regardless of whether they assist or detract from learning. Through these characteristics, deeper trust and respect is built.

Empathy. Understanding the student's perception of learning and their feelings.

The effectiveness of facilitative learning also requires certain traits to be present in the student. They should be motivated, aware of the facilitative conditions they have been provided with and aware that the task they have been given is useful, realistic and relevant.

If all these characteristics are present then, in the words of Rogers himself: "*learning becomes life, and a very vital life at that. The student is on his way, sometimes excitedly, sometimes reluctantly, to becoming a learning, changing being*".

VI. METHODOLOGY

The research design for the study was descriptive survey. The design was considered suitable for the study because according to Ahanna (2008), the descriptive survey is meant to obtain, analyze and report the investigated phenomena without manipulating or altering any of the variables. This research work was carried out in Owerri Education Zone of Imo State. There are ten (10) Local Government Areas in Owerri Education Zone and one hundred and twenty (120) public secondary schools according to the records from the Statistical Department of the Zonal Secondary Education Management Board (2019), Owerri. The state is found in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. Generally the area is rated as educationally advantaged.

All SSSII Financial Accounting teachers in all the one hundred and twenty (120) public secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone offering Financial Accounting totaling 150 and their students totaling 8003 and their 120 Principals each representing one school made up the population of the study. The sample that was used in this study comprised of 10% representatives each, made up of the Principals, the teachers and the students. 10% of 120 Principals is 12, 10% of 150 teachers is 15 while 10% of 8,003 students is 803. The sampling technique that was used is purposive. This is to ensure uniformity.

A 22 items structured questionnaires was developed by the researcher for the Principals, Teachers and the stu-

-dents using a four point linkert scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). The instrument was validated by three experts from Measurement and Evaluation and Curriculum Studies. The internal consistency for the Instruments using Cronbach Alpha statistics was 0.85 while its external consistency using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Statistics for test-retest technique was 0.82. The researcher and her trained assistants visited the selected respondents in their respective schools and administered the questionnaire to them. The respondents were entreated to complete the questionnaires and return them immediately. The obtained responses were converted to numerical scored to enable statistical analysis. The findings were analyzed using frequency tables, simple percentage counts and mean. A hypothetical mean of 2.5 was used as the acceptance level. Any mean from 2.5 and above is adjudged to be agreement and subsequent acceptance, conversely, those below 2.5 indicate disagreement and rejection.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presented below are the results and analysis of the data gathered for the study.

Research Question 1

What are the administrative challenges facing Principals in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum?

Table 1. Response of Principals on the Administrative Challenges Facing Principals in the Implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum.

S/No	Administrative challenges facing Principals in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1.	Time allocated for teaching of Financial Accounting is inadequate	3	4	3	2	2.65	Agree
2.	There is inadequate provision of teaching aids	4	2	1	5	2.75	Agree
3.	The textbooks provided are not enough.	4	4	2	2	2.72	Agree
4.	Inadequate funding	6	4	2	0	2.80	Agree
5.	Shortage Financial Accounting Teachers is a great challenge	4	4	3	1	2.72	Agree
6.	Teachers do not meet deadlines in submitting schemes of work and records	2	3	3	4	2.32	Disagree
7.	The provision of physical facilities like classrooms, desks and chairs are not adequate	6	3	2	1	2.75	Agree
8.	Teacher absenteeism is common both from the school and attendance to lessons	1	2	4	5	2.11	Disagree

In research question one, Table 1, roles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 with mean scores of above 2.5 agreed that the Principals face a lot of administrative challenges in the implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum while role 6 and 8 disagreed because they fell below the reference mean of acceptance which is 2.5.

Research Question 2

What are the academic challenges facing teachers in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum?

Table 2. Response of the Teachers on the academic challenges facing Teachers in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum.

S/No	Academic challenges facing the Teachers in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
9.	Time allocated for teaching Financial Accounting is not enough	5	3	2	2	2.72	Agree
10.	Inadequate teaching and learning resources	4	4	3	1	2.72	Agree
11.	Preparing Schemes of work and lesson plans is tedious and time consuming	4	3	3	2	2.65	Agree
12.	The class sizes for Financial Accounting is Big	2	3	3	4	2.32	Disagree
13.	The teachers have not received adequate training on computer usage	5	5	1	1	2.80	Agree
14.	The students do not complete their assignments on the stipulated time	4	5	2	1	2.75	Agree
15.	Financial Accounting students have poor class discipline	2	3	3	4	2.32	Disagree

In research question two, table 2, roles 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14 with mean scores above 2.5 agreed that the academic challenges the teachers face in the implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum are enormous. On the other, roles 12 and 15 disagreed by falling below the acceptance mean of 2.5.

Research Question 3

What are the academic challenges facing the students in the learning of Financial Accounting?

Table 3. Response of the Students on the academic challenges facing them in the learning of Financial Accounting.

S/No	Academic challenges facing the students in the learning of Financial Accounting	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
16.	Financial Accounting is abstract and not easily understood	4	4	3	1	2.72	Agree
17.	The subject is broad to be covered within the time allocated	5	3	2	2	2.72	Agree
18.	Teachers being absent or late for lessons	2	3	3	4	2.32	Disagree
19.	The students are taught with computers	5	5	1	1	2.80	Agree
20.	Students not doing personal studies in the subject	5	4	2	1	2.75	Agree
21.	Supplementary books are not adequate for the subject	4	3	3	2	2.65	Agree
22.	Financial Accounting syllabus is not completed on time	3	4	2	3	2.65	Disagree

In research question 3, table 3, roles 16, 17, 19, 20, 21 and 22 with mean scores of above 2.5 agreed that the students face a lot of academic challenges in the learning of financial accounting accepted with the exception of role 18 which disagreed and therefore was rejected because it fell below the reference mean of acceptance is 2.5.

VIII. DISCUSSION

Response from the study on table 1 on the administrative challenges facing Principals in the implementation of Financial Accounting curriculum revealed that the time allocated for teaching Financial Accounting is not enough, there is inadequate teaching aids and textbooks that can be used in teaching the students. There is a shortage of Financial Accounting teachers in the Zone. On physical facilities, there is no specific classrooms

designated for Financial Accounting and therefore students keep shifting from one class to the other with seats, this wastes time and thus it is a challenge in the implementation of the subject. This findings collaborate with the findings of Olembo *et al* (1992), which indicates that Principals face challenges resulting from factors such as inadequate physical facilities in the school, poor communication patterns in the school, inadequate time to perform his/her tasks and political constraints in the form of government policies.

Findings on research question 2 on the academic challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of Financial Accounting Curriculum, shows that the time allocated for teaching of Financial Accounting is not enough, teaching and learning resources are inadequate, schemes of work and lesson plans are said to be tedious and time consuming and the students not completing their assignments on the stipulated time are some of the challenges faces by the teachers when implementing the Financial Accounting Curriculum. This finding is in line with the findings of Kisirikoi *et al* (2008) who asserts that teachers need to be prepared or oriented to enable them interpret the curriculum accurately and implement it effectively.

Regarding academic challenges faced by the students in the learning of Financial Accounting, table 3 above revealed that Abstractness and broad content of the Financial Accounting Curriculum is the main challenge to the students. Personal studies is also a challenge due to lack of adequate textbooks, hard topics and inadequate supplementary materials for the students and Financial Accounting syllabus is not completed on time. Giving support to this finding, Nkantana (2013) established that the major challenges of student is failure to do assignments, which has led to students' failure in examinations thus negatively influencing school academic performance.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusively, the administrative and academic challenges facing the implementation of financial accounting curriculum are enormous. These challenges are the major factors leading to poor performances of students in financial accounting especially in public examinations which can be traceable to poor curriculum implementation arising from the predominant use of conventional teaching approach where the teacher dominates the class and does not encourage students' participation in the teaching and learning process. In the light of this research, the researcher recommends among others:

1. Time allocated for teaching Financial Accounting should be increased to enable the completion of the syllabus on time because of its broad.
2. Financial Accounting should be allocated more funds to enable the purchase of more textbooks and teaching aids.
3. The government should employ more Financial Accounting teachers in Owerri Zone and as well make sure that the teachers are taken for in service trainings to improve on curriculum delivery and update them on emerging issues. .
4. Financial Accounting Curriculum should be reviewed because it is wide and abstract to the learners especially the accounting part.

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