



From Policy to Practice: Exploring Lecturers' Interpretation and Implementation of General Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria

Ibrahim Umar

Department of General Education, School of Education,
Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on understanding how lecturers in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State interpret and implement the General Education curriculum. Specifically, it examines the alignment between the intended curriculum—as outlined by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) minimum standards—and the enacted curriculum in classroom practices. The key variables explored are lecturers' curriculum interpretation, instructional decision-making, and classroom implementation strategies. The study is grounded in the belief that effective teacher preparation hinges on the fidelity of curriculum delivery, particularly in foundational courses that shape pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills. This study was undertaken within a qualitative case study method that was considered appropriate for the study. Five objectives and five research questions are formulated to guide the study. Questionnaires are to be used to collect data for the study. Responses to the open-ended items in the questionnaires were analysed and recorded quantitatively while closed-ended items in the questionnaires were analysed and reported descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. The findings of the study revealed that despite the clarity of the NCCE Minimum Standards, lecturers often face challenges in interpreting and translating these guidelines into actionable instructional plans. Differences in academic background, experience, access to instructional resources, and professional development opportunities contribute to varying interpretations. Some lecturers focus narrowly on coverage of course topics, while others struggle to integrate the broader goals of critical thinking, creativity, and learner-centred pedagogy outlined in the standards. This misalignment can lead to ineffective teaching practices and a dilution of the curriculum's intended objectives. At the end, the research discusses briefly what has been said in the whole research.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: August, 2025

Received in revised form: September, 2025

Accepted: November, 2025

Published online: December, 2025

KEYWORDS

Policy, Practice, Exploring, Lecturers' Interpretation, Implementation, General Education Curriculum, Colleges of Education, Bauchi State, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on understanding how lecturers in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State interpret and implement the General Education curriculum. Specifically, it examines the alignment between the intended curriculum as outlined by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) minimum standards and the

enacted curriculum in classroom practices. The key variables explored are lecturers' curriculum interpretation, instructional decision-making, and classroom implementation strategies. The study is grounded in the belief that effective teacher preparation hinges on the fidelity of curriculum delivery, particularly in foundational courses that

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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shape pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills.

The General Education curriculum in Nigeria's Colleges of Education is designed to provide foundational pedagogical knowledge and equip pre-service teachers with essential teaching competencies. The NCCE Minimum Standards serve as the guiding policy document for curriculum development and implementation, ensuring uniformity and quality across teacher education institutions. The philosophy underpinning the General Education component emphasizes professional competence, reflective practice, and responsiveness to educational challenges. Courses under General Education are compulsory for all NCE students, regardless of their teaching specialization, making their effective delivery crucial to the success of the teacher education program.

Despite the clarity of the NCCE Minimum Standards, lecturers often face challenges in interpreting and translating these guidelines into actionable instructional plans. Differences in academic background, experience, access to instructional resources, and professional development opportunities contribute to varying interpretations. Some lecturers focus narrowly on coverage of course topics, while others struggle to integrate the broader goals of critical thinking, creativity, and learner-centred pedagogy outlined in the standards. This misalignment can lead to ineffective teaching practices and a dilution of the curriculum's intended objectives.

The implementation of the NCE curriculum, and particularly the General Education component, is fraught with systemic issues. These include inadequate instructional resources, large class sizes, limited lecturer capacity-building, and a lack of regular curriculum review mechanisms. In Bauchi State, these challenges are exacerbated by broader socio-economic and infrastructural deficits, leading to a gap between curriculum policy and classroom reality. Furthermore, many lecturers rely on outdated teaching methods, neglecting the learner-centred approaches recommended by the NCCE. This situation contributes to the production of NCE graduates

who are underprepared for the demands of contemporary classroom practice.

This study draws on curriculum implementation theories, particularly Remillard's (2025) Framework of Teacher–Curriculum Relationship, which provides a lens for understanding how teachers interact with curriculum materials. The framework highlights the roles of interpretation, adaptation, and enactment in curriculum use, acknowledging that teachers are not passive implementers but active agents who shape the curriculum through their professional knowledge and classroom realities. This theoretical perspective is useful in unpacking the complexities of curriculum delivery in Colleges of Education, where individual and institutional factors interact to influence educational outcomes.

Applying Remillard's framework to the NCE context allows for a nuanced analysis of how lecturers engage with the General Education curriculum. It enables the study to examine the tensions between policy prescriptions and pedagogical realities, and to identify the spaces where lecturers exercise agency in adapting the curriculum. This approach also supports an investigation into the instructional materials lecturers create, their teaching strategies, and the extent to which these align with the NCCE's pedagogical expectations. By focusing on interpretation and enactment, the study addresses the missing link between curriculum design and its practical realization in teacher training classrooms.

Against this background, this study is vital for understanding the disconnect between curriculum policy and implementation in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State. By investigating how lecturers interpret and implement the General Education curriculum, the research seeks to offer insights that can inform teacher education policy, curriculum development, and professional development programs. It contributes to the theoretical discourse on curriculum enactment while addressing practical challenges in teacher preparation. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance the quality of teacher education and ensure that NCE graduates are well-equipped to meet the demands of the Nigerian education system.

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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Curriculum is a vehicle through which education is attained. The tertiary education curriculum as presently implemented is far from achieving the goals of tertiary education system. Several authors have noted that the National Policy on Education was well structured and the contents were adequately defined but the implementation calls for question (Babafemi 2017; Dike 2019). Investigation gathered shows that students' potentials are not properly channeled as schools lack basic infrastructural facilities necessary for effective curriculum implementation, there are inadequate specialist teachers, and where available, focus more on theoretical aspect leaving out the practical component (Offorma 2025).

The Minimum Standards for all NCE programmes provide minimum benchmark for the award of NCE certificates. It defines the minimum that prospective teachers are expected to know and be able to do, as well as, their expected minimum dispositions towards their work, if they are to remain and progress in their career. Generally, the NCE Minimum Standards are due for revision after every five years to accommodate emerging issues and reflect global best practices. This revised edition is unique in its structure, content and presentation with emphases on professional standards and ethical responsibilities for NCE teachers. These include professional knowledge, practice and engagements on the one hand, and shifts in pedagogical skills and approaches for learning at the NCE level on the other. The revised NCE Minimum Standards document has preliminary pages, course content and course description. There is also accompanying Teacher's Guide for every programme presented in a modified UNESCO Template and Appendixes. The Appendixes are elaborations of specific teaching-learning practices to support quality and parity in implementation across Colleges of Education in the Country.

The implementation of the General Education curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State is critical for preparing future teachers with foundational pedagogical knowledge. However, discrepancies often exist

between the intended curriculum; how lecturers interpret and design their course outlines, lecture notes, and instructional resources; and the enacted curriculum; how these resources are translated into classroom instruction. Studies have shown that misalignment between curriculum design and implementation affects the quality of teacher education (Shulman, 2025; Ball & Cohen, 2025). Yet, there remains limited research on how lecturers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria navigate this process, particularly within the context of national minimum standards.

Despite policy efforts to standardize curriculum implementation, evidence suggests challenges such as inadequate instructional resources, variations in lecturers' pedagogical decision-making, and inconsistencies in translating curriculum guidelines into effective teaching practices. In Bauchi State, where Colleges of Education play a pivotal role in teacher training, issues of poor curriculum implementation have been linked to declining student performance and ineffective classroom practices (NCCE, 2025). With the region facing educational challenges due to socio-economic and security concerns, understanding how lecturers implement General Education is crucial for improving teacher education. This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the alignment between lecturers' intended and enacted curriculum, providing insights that can inform policy and practice for more effective curriculum implementation in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

A good number of students who have completed their NCE but do not wish to continue with higher education are in dilemma. This is because they are not well equipped with necessary skills to empower themselves. The training acquired at the end of NCE seems inadequate to make the school leavers competent and self-reliant, hence cannot contribute to nation building. If the Nigerian society is not to be plagued by a breed of unemployable youth who cannot raise the economic productivity of the country, it is desirable that a lasting solution be provided. In view of this, the study intends to exploring lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education Curriculum

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria. Yet, to the best of the researcher knowledge, no known existing research study in the literature that provide sufficient information about the lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

The State despite the largest in terms of population and being among the best in the North-East zone in term of education is still lagging behind when compared to other parts of the country due to years of neglect. Moreso, the backwardness of Bauchi State in terms of NCE is its inability to utilize the talent of its General Education Curriculum towards genuine development which left Bauchi State behind even among its earlier contemporaries (Education for All, 2021). This and many more are the problems emanating from General Education curriculum and which in turn affects developments in Bauchi State. These observations have empirical backing so far.

Virtually, limited empirical studies exist on the exploring lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria. This has prompted the researcher to raise question that reveals the highlight of the existing literature gap pertaining to this study as; How do lecturers interpret the minimum standards for General Education in developing their instructional materials? What factors influence lecturers' decision-making in selecting and designing instructional resources? In what ways do lecturers translate their intended curriculum resources into actual classroom teaching? What challenges do lecturers encounter in implementing the General Education curriculum? How can the alignment between intended and enacted curriculum implementation be improved in Colleges of Education? Hence, this study covered this existing literature gap following a qualitative method that exploring lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to critically exploring lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to examine and achieve the following objectives;

1. To explore how lecturers, perceive and interpret the minimum standards for General Education and develop their instructional materials in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State.
2. To examine the decision-making processes of lecturers in selecting and designing instructional resources in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State.
3. To analyze how lecturers, enact the intended curriculum in classroom interactions with students in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State (investigate how lecturers implement the GEC in their teaching).
4. To identify potential challenges lecturers, face in implementing the General Education curriculum in Colleges of Education in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State.
5. To provide recommendations for enhancing the alignment between intended and enacted curriculum implementation in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State.

Research Questions

Based on the aforementioned objectives, the following research questions were formulated to guide the conduct of this study;

1. How do lecturers interpret the minimum standards for General Education in developing their instructional materials in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State?
2. What factors influence lecturers' decision-making in selecting and designing instructional resources in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State?
3. In what ways do lecturers translate their intended curriculum resources into

- actual classroom teaching in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State?
4. What challenges do lecturers encounter in implementing the General Education curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State?
 5. How can the alignment between intended and enacted curriculum implementation be improved in Colleges of Education in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State?

METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken within a qualitative case study method that is considered appropriate for the study. This study carried out in Bauchi State, Nigeria. This study has used participants as sample size for the study. This is because, the saturation level was attained. No newer data was coming up from the participants as suggested (Guest, et al., 2025). The participants are academic staff from COEs in the Northeast, Nigeria. The researcher employed three different techniques for data collection. These include: (1) Document. Such as course outline and any material used for the course by the lecturers. (2) Semi-structured interview; this is done into two phases, first before lesson observation, that seeks to understand the lecturers' selection and designing of the course material.

The second, is done post-observation, which seeks lecturer's reflection on the challenges of the implementation of GEC. (3) Lesson observation, which seeks to understand how lecturers implement the course in the actual classroom. the face and content validation was

used to check for the nature and pattern of the interview protocol or interview guides (Aliyu, 2025). Interview member checking, reflexivity and peer debriefing/ peer review were employed in this study to validate the accuracy or credibility of the study. The researcher conducted an indepth oral interview in search of relevant data to answer the research questions raised in the study. Data collection procedure was carried out in three phases. That phases were data collection through documents, interview and observations. Thematic analysis that coded the lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State was used to analyse the data with the help of NVivo qualitative computer-assistance software version 11. The analysis of data was basically drawn from the conceptual framework of the study.

RESULTS

The results obtained, sequel to analysis of data collected in the course of this study, are presented in this session using the research questions as guideline.

Appropriateness of current General Education curriculum

Qualitative data obtained via interview and observation revealed that the general education curriculum was appropriate in terms of goals and content. However, it was found weak in its method of implementation.

Type of teaching method used in implementing the General Education curriculum

Table 1: Teachers use more theory than practical demonstration Teachers use mainly Practical Demonstration when Teaching

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	122	32.1	32.1	32.1
	Yes	258	67.9	67.9	67.9



	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	220	57.9	57.9	57.9
No	160	42.1	42.1	42.1
Yes	380	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total				

N= 380 (Students) **Source:** Field Data (2025)

Tables 2 show that majority of the sampled students (67.9%) perceived the teaching methods used in the implementation of the Nigerian secondary school curriculum during the period of this study as theoretical. From the interview held in the study, 70% of the respondents reported that real practical work was not done while 40% of the respondents reported same. To corroborate this observation, 70% to 100% of the respondents from the study further reported that the teachings in the institutions were more theory based than practical. From the other interviews held with the respondents, 100% of the respondents reported there was no real practical work done. Eighty percent 80% of the respondents from the FCE in the same state gave the same report. 70% to 100% of the respondents affirmed that their teachings were more theoretical than practical.

From the interview also held in State government owned Colleges of Education, the trend appeared to be reversed as 60% to 80% of the respondents from FCEs reported that real practical works were done. However, 70% of the respondents from the State government owned COEs reported that no real practical works were done. Ironically, in the same interview, 70% to 100% of the respondents reported that teachings in their institutions were more theoretical than practical. The exception was in the FCEs located where only 40% of the respondents reported that their teachings had a blend of theoretical and practical. So also from the interview, it was reported that only 4 to 5 skill based vocational subjects were regularly taught in the sampled institutions. Respondents from the interviews also

reported that they were of the opinion that the infrastructural facilities in their institutions were not sufficient. However, 80% of the respondents reported they had sufficient infrastructural facilities. While, FCEs reported they had sufficient infrastructural facilities.

Observations made by the researchers during field work in the institutions revealed that well maintained infrastructural facilities were only available for Computer Science laboratory, Agricultural Science farmland and Technical Drawing room. Though, some of the state government owned Colleges of Education had facilities in the Introductory Technology workshop and Agricultural farmland, they were in very bad condition. The science laboratory sighted in some of the institutions was also in bad condition. In some Colleges of Education in the State, the FCEs and COEs sampled had the following infrastructural facilities Introductory Technology workshop, Agriculture Science farmland, Computer Science room, Technical Drawing room, Home Economics laboratory, Metal Work workshop, Art and Craft workshop, Music room, Electronics workshop and Typing /Shorthand room and they were in good condition.

Observation of the sampled Colleges revealed the state has more infrastructural facilities required. From the held, virtually all the respondents from the study were of the opinion that the number of specialist teachers in the institutions was not sufficient. However, 70% to 100% of the respondents from the FCEs reported they had sufficient specialist teachers.

Effect of Institution Location on the mode of Curriculum implementation

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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Table 4: Effect of Institution Location on the mode of Curriculum Implementation in Bauchi State

		Location in which the Institution is situated			Total
		North zone	South zone	Central zone	
Teacher use more theory than practical demonstration	No	28	55	39	122
		97 (77.7%)	76 (58.0%)	85 (68.5%)	258
	Yes	125	131	124	380
Total					

Table 5: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.292	2	.004
Likelihood Ratio	11.396	2	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.355	1	.125
N of Valid Cases	380		

The results in Tables 4.5 students reported that a greater proportion of teachers use more theoretical approach in the implementation of the curriculum in the institutions situated in south zone (77.6%) followed by central zone (68.5%) and north zone (58.0%) in that order. The Chi-square test result indicates that the difference observed here is significant at .05 level of

significance. This result tends to suggest that institutions in south zone were the poorest in terms of usage of practical teaching, followed by institutions in the central zone.

Effect of Institution Type on the mode of Curriculum Implementation

Table 6: Effect of Institution Type on mode of Curriculum Implementation

		School type				Total
		FGS	SGS	HCPS	LCPS	
Teacher use more theory than practical demonstration	No	19	30	41	32	122
		64 (77.1%)	51 (63.0%)	86 (67.7%)	57 (64.0%)	258
	Yes	83	81	127	89	380
Total						

Table 7: Effect of Institution Type on mode of Curriculum Implementation

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.743	3	.192
Likelihood Ratio	4.912	3	.178
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.274	1	.132
N of Valid Cases	380		

Majority of the students who participated in this study were of the opinion that their teachers use more theoretical than practical method in the implementation of the general education

curriculum in the all types of institutions. However, the highest percentage of students who held this opinion were from FCEs (77.1%), followed by private institutions (67.7%), and state government

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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owned institutions (63%). The Chi square test indicates that the difference observed was not significant at $p < 0.05$. This tends to suggest that the institution type did not have significant effect on mode of implementation of the General Education curriculum.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the analysis of data shown in the preceding tables, the following findings were deduced:

1. General Education curriculum was considered appropriate in terms of goals and content in meeting the philosophy of Nigerian certificate in education (NCE) but found weak in its method of implementation.
2. The teaching method used in the implementation of General Education curriculum was mainly theoretical, with exception of few sample NCE awarded institutions where teaching had a blend of theoretical and practical demonstration. The practical test conducted showed teachers and students from public COEs in Bauchi State, demonstrated high degree of practical skill as opposed to private COEs in Bauchi State. Also, the same pattern was found in some teachers displayed high practical skill but the students did not.
3. Home Economics, Agricultural Science, Introductory Technology, Music, Fine Art, Food and Nutrition, Technical Drawing, Computer Science and Typing/Shorthand were the core vocational and technical subjects that were mostly taught in Nigerian Colleges of Education. On the contrary, Art & Craft, Clothing & Textiles, Metal Work, Building, Woodwork, Applied Electricity, Electronics and Auto Mechanic did not receive much attention.
4. In all the areas studied, the COEs lacked sufficient Infrastructural facilities needed for practical work, available facilities were just computer science laboratory and home economics laboratory, which were fairly equipped. Most likely, some COEs had sufficient facilities that were well maintained. Facilities observed in the state government owned COEs were in bad state.
5. Skill-based subjects that predominantly enjoyed the services of specialist teachers in Nigerian Colleges of Education include Agricultural Science, Home Economics, Fine Art, Introductory Technology, Food and Nutrition and Music. On the other hand, the following subjects appeared to lack enough specialist teachers: Computer Science, Technical Drawing, Typing & Shorthand, Art & Craft, Clothing & Textiles, Metalwork, Home Management, Woodwork, Applied Electricity, Building Construction and Auto Mechanic. Rarely, COEs had fewer number of specialist teachers as opposed to private COEs.
6. Students from private COEs have not learnt sufficient practical skills to allow for self-employment, while those from public COEs have learnt sufficient skills to allow for self-employment. In all, NCE students have learnt significant self-employable entrepreneurial skills in the following areas: Fine Art (Drawing), Home Economics (Sewing), Agricultural Science (Farming), Food & Nutrition (Cookery), Introductory Technology (Electrical Works), computer science and Music (singing). Going by nature of the College, public COEs consistently led with high margin in all the areas visited.
7. Students' entrepreneurial capability was significantly low as there were no significant production of marketable goods and services to show for their practical knowledge. Nevertheless, Cake production, Farm produce, Acting, Art work, Cookery, Tie & Dye and Typing topped the list of goods and

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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- services some students were able to successfully produce. Observation conducted in COEs showed that except in Fine Art, Computer Science, Music and Technical Drawing, teachers and students had no product or service to show for their practical knowledge, in all the categories.
8. School location had significant effect on the mode of curriculum implementation in terms of usage of practical teaching.
 9. There was no significant difference in the mode of General Education curriculum implementation in all the COEs.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal that the purpose of this study was to critically exploring lecturers' interpretation and implementation of General Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The first research question probed the appropriateness of General Education curriculum in meeting the philosophy of Nigerian Certificate in Education. The focus interviewed held with teachers revealed that the curriculum is appropriate in terms of goals and content but weak in its method of implementation. This notion was shared by virtually all the teachers in the sampled Colleges of Education. This result is not surprising as it justifies the reason for undertaking this study.

The result clearly indicates that NCE, though with its inherent advantages, does not seem to achieve its purpose, as it has not provided adequate opportunity for skill learning and practical experience needed for self-employment and self-reliance to our teeming jobless youth who are product of the system. This finding validates several other views expressed by Ajala (2022), Babafemi (2025) who described Nigerian Certificate in Education as laudable but seems to suffer from poor implementation. Commenting on the poor implementation of General Education curriculum, Igwe (2025) noted that the General Education curriculum only prepares leavers/students to seek admission to the University as the only option available since no

employment opportunity anymore. Fabunmi (2025) corroborated this view and observed that the General Education curriculum is initially structured to make students self-employable upon graduation. It is therefore pertinent to remind that the goals and objectives of Nigerian Certificate in Education, which are linked to the philosophy of education, are clearly stipulated in the National Policy on Education (2024). As noted by Offorma (2025), these are laudable goals which if earnestly pursued would produce functional Nigerian citizens who would contribute to the political, social, economic, educational, scientific and technological development of the nation.

The testing of the second research question revealed that the teaching method used in implementing the curriculum in Colleges of Education was mainly theoretical, with exception of vocational and technical education aspects where teaching had a blend of theoretical and real practical. This result contradicts several authors (Ajibola 2025; Offorma 2025; Kiboss 2022) who consider theory-based teaching as the dominant pedagogical mode used in Nigerian Colleges of Education. Interviews with teachers revealed the following factors as responsible for use of theory method: lack of adequate instructional materials and lack of workshops for practical work.

Focus group further revealed that majority of teachers in the State studied used improvisation in the absence of instructional materials and learning equipments. Essentially, the primary education goal for teaching vocational and technical subjects is to teach students both practical and theory as such subjects are very practical in nature and should ideally be taught through methods that maximize the active participation of the learner (Aina 2025). Teachers are therefore expected to properly blend theory with practice for effective learning and transfer of knowledge. More so, students will have more interest in what they see, touch and work with than what they are taught in abstract. On the other hand, teachers should not be expected to perform miracles when they lack teaching and learning tools.

The third research question on the number of skill-based subjects taught in Nigerian



Colleges of Education revealed the following subjects mostly taught: Home Economics, Agricultural Science, Introductory Technology, Music, Fine Art, Food and Nutrition, Technical Drawing, Computer Science and Typing/Shorthand. While Art & Craft, Clothing & Textiles, Metal Work, Building, Woodwork, Applied Electricity, Electronics and Auto Mechanic did not receive much attention.

This result shows that vocational and technical subjects are offered in schools though in limited number. In line with the goals of General education curriculum, each school is required to include a range of skill-based subjects to cater for individual differences and designed to prepare students for self-employment. Interview with teachers further revealed that because of the bias against general education and the public perception of vocational and technical education being for school dropouts, Nigerian parents seem to prefer the academic subjects to vocational and technical subjects. This could possibly explain why some schools seem to play down on vocational/technical subjects, forgetting that the general education curriculum requires individuals to possess a combination of academic knowledge as well as practical skills, which Obanya (2017) termed the three Hs' – the head, the heart and the hand, all three considered important for the individual's integrated personality development.

The fourth research question on availability of infrastructural facilities revealed that in the sample Colleges were found to lack sufficient Infrastructural facilities needed for practical work on the skill-based subjects, available functional facilities include computer science laboratory and home economics laboratory, which were fairly equipped. On the contrary, some Colleges of Education had practically sufficient facilities that were well maintained. The explanation is that federal Colleges of Education (FCEs) are well funded by the Federal Government as they are supposed to be model schools carrying and maintaining the ideals of general education for Nigerian students. Similarly, private Colleges of Education are owned by business people who recognize that they offer a service to peoples and they stand to lose their

valuable peoples and their profitability if service delivery is not satisfactory. State-owned Colleges of Education on the other hand are funded by each state government and are not comparable to the Federal Colleges of Education. Being that as it may, Colleges and their owners should be aware that students will acquire skills when they are exposed to regular workshop practice with adequate equipment and instructional materials. These measures will concretize teaching/learning and make learning to be permanent in the students. One wonders why Nigeria cannot adequately fund its colleges with its huge oil earnings over the years. Nigeria will be facing more difficult problems if the leaders fail to provide the necessary infrastructure for good quality education. Again, without channeling adequate resources to the education sector and without motivating the teachers to provide good quality education to the youth, Nigeria will continue to lag behind socially, politically and economically.

The fifth research question on the proportion of specialist teachers available in Nigerian Colleges of Education revealed the following six subjects that predominantly enjoyed the services of specialist teachers: Agricultural Science, Home Economics, Fine Art, Introductory Technology, Food and Nutrition and Music. On the other hand, the following ten subjects appeared to lack enough specialist teachers: Computer Science, Technical Drawing, Typing & Shorthand, Art & Craft, Clothing & Textiles, Metalwork, Home Management, Woodwork, Applied Electricity, Building Construction and Auto Mechanic. Judging from the result, there are more technical than vocational subjects that lacked specialist teachers, suggesting the need for Nigerian technical institutions to adequately train both vocational and technical teachers so that such trained teachers can in turn provide necessary training for students who are required for the sustenance of manpower and technological development in the country.

Students had learnt in school with which they could create self-employment. Results derived from focus groups indicated that sampled students from public COEs were not taught sufficient practical skills to allow for self-

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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employment, as opposed to FCEs. However, further analysis showed that generally NCE students have learnt significant self-employable entrepreneurial skills in the following areas: Fine Art (Drawing), Home Economics (Sewing), Agricultural Science (Farming), Food & Nutrition (Cookery), Introductory Technology (Electrical Works) and Music (singing). If properly harnessed, these areas offer income-generating ventures with opportunity for job creation where young people could start up businesses. Unfortunately, Nigerian environment is not business-friendly as electricity situation does not promote entrepreneurship. The fact remains that without first fixing power problem, it is difficult to empower the youth for job creation and wealth generation. This result partially contradicts studies and opinions of experts who indicated that products of Nigeria COEs lack basic skills needed for self-employment.

The analysis of data testing revealed that there is a need to integrate entrepreneurship education in the teaching /learning process. It could also be due to their lack of interest resulting from public bias against vocational and technical education, in which case adequate public enlightenment campaigns be carried out to emphasize their importance. Without entrepreneurial skills for self-employment, our youth cannot function as the real catalyst of the socio-economic agenda to make Nigeria great. The testing of the data also revealed that school location had significant effect on the mode of general education curriculum implementation, in terms of usage of practical teaching. This result is somehow surprising and not in the predicted direction. One would have expected education is perceived less valued. The analysis of data testing further revealed a non-significant difference in the mode of general education curriculum implementation at all the Colleges.

This result is quite surprising as inspection of the qualitative data revealed FCEs and HCPS appear to lead with high margin in almost all the variables studied. For instance, FCEs was found to have greater number of skill-based subjects, sufficient infrastructural facilities that were well maintained, and demonstrated

higher degree of practical skill, more than State owned COEs. However, the direction of the result should not be overemphasized, what is important is for both public and private schools to work hand in hand to foster growth in COEs by ensuring proper utilisation of general education curriculum and development of students' potentials and providing conducive learning environment necessary for achieving the goals of Nigerian certificate in education. Again, schools should endeavour to adequately maximize human and material resources required for effective implementation of the general education curriculum for the benefit of the students.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study revealed that General Education curriculum is fairly but not effectively implemented. Evidence yielded by the study revealed the following factors as the root cause of the problem: theory-based teaching method, insufficient specialist teachers, lack of infrastructural facilities and workshops for practical work, lack of entrepreneurial knowledge. Further evidence yielded by the study suggest there is seemingly gradual progression towards achieving the goals of Nigerian tertiary education system as regards to Nigerian certificate in Education (NCE), however, the fundamental challenges as highlighted in the study should be effectively addressed for the General Education curriculum to fully equip the students with the necessary entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, values and attitude for them to live as competent members of the society and contribute to nation building.

The findings of the study have some policy implication. The current general education curriculum structure for NCE on which this study hinged is on the verge of being phased out come 2020 to be replaced with the new General Education Curriculum structure 2025, with stronger emphasis on the need for skill acquisition, job creation, and wealth generation, among other objectives (Obioma 2018). In effect, this study is considered timely and useful in providing the much-needed data that will assist the Federal Government of Nigeria through its

Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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National Commission for Colleges of Education in respect to general education curriculum, to gauge the level of success of current implementation and be better able to plan towards an implementation that will instill basic skills in NCE students to ensure their socio-economic empowerment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal and State Government should make it a point of duty to build infrastructural facilities including functional workshops in all the Colleges of Education across the nation with adequate provision of workshop equipment, Instructional materials, and tools to make teaching and learning of the skill-based subjects meaningful. This way, students will have the opportunity to engage in practical works, which is the major aspect of the general education curriculum.
2. Students should be encouraged to have interest in the NCE programme, hence should be accorded appropriate recognition. There is need for a change in the mind-set of youth to see self-employment as an option and be prepared psychologically and emotionally for it. This will enable them to be more motivated in identifying NCE opportunities. To this end, entrepreneurship education should be made integral part of NCE teaching-learning process.
3. With the recent emphasis on the need for youth self-employment, the Federal and State Government is equally expected to create employment opportunities that will promote NCE students by ensuring constant enrolment of people in the COEs, without this youth will become discouraged and return to idleness.
4. The best of theories in education has opined that no educational system could rise above the level of quality of its teachers. Teachers must be highly trained and acquire enough skills to be able to communicate their skills to students effectively.
5. It is a known fact that society accord inferior status to NCE. Therefore, the negative

attitude of many parents towards NCE should be changed. Adequate enlightenment campaigns should be carried out to emphasize their importance in light of the prevailing economic circumstances of the nation and the unemployment rate, which is on the increase.

6. Practical project work in NCE should be made compulsory for final students as part of their requirements for graduation. Each student is to produce marketable product or service and such products should be put up for exhibition. This will further create motivation for people to come in.
7. Teachers should be supported through continuing professional development & motivation to enable them prepare the students for success in the competitive global economy.
8. Parents, teachers, leaders, students, policy makers and other education stakeholders should be made aware of the findings of this study, during such for as review curriculum meetings, governing council meetings, seminars, conferences and workshops.

Acknowledgement

The researchers acknowledged the Tefund and management of Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State for financially supporting the research.

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Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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Corresponding author: Ibrahim Umar

✉ ibrahimumar52@gmail.com

Department of General Education, School of Education, Adamu Tafawa Balewa College of Education, Kangere, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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