



## THE ROLE OF NIGERIAN MASS MEDIA IN CURRICULUM CHANGE AND IMPLEMENTATION AT BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract:

This study investigated the role of Nigerian mass media in curriculum change and implementation at the Basic Education level in Nigeria. The study was aimed at assessing the following objectives: to find out the changes in the basic education curriculum influenced by Nigerian mass media and to determine the role being played by the mass media in curriculum implementation at the Basic Education level in Nigeria. Two corresponding research questions were answered while two null hypotheses were tested. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A total of 200 media practitioners from print, electronic, new media and news agencies were used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was pilot tested and a reliability index of 0.84 was obtained. Out of a total of 200 respondents used for the study, only 198 respondents correctly filled and returned their questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using frequency counts and mean, while the non-parametric statistics of chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was used to test all the hypotheses at alpha 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the Mass Media has influence in the existing changes of the basic education curriculum. Also, the Nigerian mass media played a significant role in curriculum implementation at the Basic Education level in Nigeria. Recommendations were made such as, to influence changes in the basic education curriculum, the mass media should serve as watchdogs of the society, they should analyze, appraise or criticize as the case may be, the activities of the Nigeria Basic Education. Also, in a diverse society such as Nigeria, there is need

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for the media to play an active role in enlightening and sensitizing all stakeholders and the general public on the basic education curriculum.

**Keywords:** basic education, mass media, role, curriculum change and implementation

### **Introduction / Background to the study**

Education is to a nation as what the mind is to the body. In a broad sense, an individual acquires the many physical and social capabilities demanded by the society in which he/she is born to function by a process. The dynamic and ever increasing needs of a society are responsible for change in its educational system. Universal Basic Education (UBE) came into being as a change of curriculum which many stakeholders contributed and continue to contribute for the actualization of its success through proper implementation. Universal Basic Education commission metamorphosed from National Primary Education Commission in September, 1999 at Sokoto, Northern Nigeria. The country has experienced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the year 1976. The components of the Basic education scheme are; free, compulsory universal education encompassing the first nine years of schooling (Primary & Junior Secondary education) for all school age children irrespective of their socio-economic circumstance (National Policy on Education – FRN, 2013; Oguiche, 2005).

Curriculum change and its implementation is never a work of single organization. Many people are involved, the cross sections of Nigerians who attended the curriculum conference of 1969 was a clear example. Governmental and non-governmental organizations, Religious bodies, textbook publishers, the public professional from universities and mass media practitioners have a role to play. Education for all is the responsibility of all as the saying goes. Considering the fact that, mass media is an agent of education, and its practitioners are gatekeepers, agenda setters whose industry is often described as “*Public University*”, they could influence the change of curriculum and its implementation. The implementation of school curriculum is the duty of government agencies (Federal Ministry of Education, State Ministry of Education and Local Education Authorities), Teachers, students and the public. Mass media practitioners are as middle men between government and the public holding the former accountable, as enshrined in section 22 of the Nigerian constitution.

Mass media (print or electronic) are used as instructional media, children and adult as the targets of Universal Basic Education programme are effectively taught using mass media. Besides, both pupils and teachers, within and outside the school environment rely on mass media for the information and entertainment needs.

Malumfashi (2002) argued that, many educators are of the opinion that what goes on outside the classroom contributes more to the total education of mankind than schools. Most of what experts in curriculum termed as "*Hidden curriculum*" has direct or indirect linkage with the mass media. Hence, the number one function of mass media is the "*Teacher function*" that is, to inform, that is what led to the existence of educational programmes on most of Radio/Television stations, Newspapers and Magazines. The responsibility of educating and informing the public in a society rely on its mass media. Apparently, the service of mass media is needed by the generality of Nigeria's educational organs. The creation of public debate on topical issues like sexuality education, civic education, Almajiri system of education, girl-child education, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), entrepreneurship and other components of basic education curriculum were made by Nigerian mass media. Although, the role they play may be desirable or otherwise. Everyday issues on education are published on Nigerian dailies and aired on Radio and Television; some are even posted on internet. Looking at the mass media functions of educating, enlightening, informing and entertaining the public have contributed greatly towards mobilizing and sensitizing the public on government policies in all sectors, particularly in education sector. They initiate and organize debates and publicize issues of national interest which mostly lead to government actions or inactions. In the light of this background therefore, this study assessed the role of Nigerian mass media in curriculum change and implementation at basic education level in Nigeria.

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

The Basic Education programme no doubt is hinged on a sound philosophy; has enriched curricular with laudable implementation strategies. Curriculum is the heart of any educational programme without which such programme will be in jeopardy. Curriculum is a course of study offered in school, college and other institutions (Yusuf, 2012). In this definition, the focus is on subjects to be taught. Curriculum may be viewed as a set of learning experiences planned to influence learners to bring about the objectives of education. Curriculum is also a structured plan of action that guides the process of education. The UBE has necessitated curriculum change and innovation as a result of the desire for the improvement and transformation of the educational system. The degree of success in any curriculum innovation depends on the proper implementation. A curriculum is meaningless and has no value if not implemented (Danmole, 2011). The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, an educational reform programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria was introduced to serve as a

catalyst for achieving free, compulsory and universal 9 year education for all school age children irrespective of their socio-economic circumstance (FRN, 2013). The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was launched on 29th September 1999 by former president Olusegun Obasanjo in Sokoto, Sokoto state. UBE Act (2004) which was signed into Law in May, 2004 provided the legal framework for the programme and an indication of its effective take off.

The philosophy of the 9 year Basic Education Curriculum as stipulated by the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2013) is that every learner who has gone through the 9 years of basic education should have acquired appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life-skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values required for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning as a basis for scientific and reflective thinking. The 9 years Basic Education Curriculum (Basic 1-9) has three components namely: Lower Basic Education Curriculum for primary 1-3 (age 6-8 years) Basic 1-3; Middle Basic Education Curriculum for primary 4-6 (age 9-11) that is, Basic 4-6; and Upper Basic Education Curriculum of Junior Secondary (JS) 1-3 (age 12-14) Basic 7-9.

In this study, the authors assessed the role of Nigerian mass media in curriculum change and implementation at basic education level in Nigeria. The media has been variously defined by scholars of mass communication among which media is referred to as a collective means of communication by which general public or populace is kept informed about the day to day happenings in the society (Isa, 2007). Mass media are either electronic or print, they include: Broadcasting in the narrow sense for radio and television; various types of discs or tapes; Film, most often used for entertainment; Internet; Mobile phones, often called the 7<sup>th</sup> mass media; Publishing, including electronic; and Video games. Mass media role as an agent of education has long been known. Malumfashi (2002) argued that many educators are of the opinion that what goes on outside the classroom contributes more to the total education of mankind than schools. Alhasan (2009) asserts that, all print and electronic media own by federal, state governments or private have educational programmes. The programmes on radio and television stations are produced using feature, documentary drama, discussions and interview formats.

The media render to the public the conventional social functions, but which is equally applicable in broader sense in curriculum change and implementation at the basic education level. It could be said that through educating, informing and entertaining, the media thereby make the pupils/students, society members or the nation as well as the society's leadership aware of the latest development in the education sector. Attached to these three basic roles of media is another role of

persuasion, where media are seen as virile tools of applying persuasive efforts to influence people's actions towards a particular direction. The mass media are therefore seen for their role in furnishing the public with necessary information to achieve the desired curriculum change at the basic education level. This study therefore assessed the role of Nigerian mass media in curriculum change and implementation at the basic education level in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was carried out with the following objectives:

1. To find out the changes in the basic education curriculum that are influenced by Nigerian mass media.
2. To determine the role played by the mass media in curriculum implementation at Basic Education level in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the changes in the basic education curriculum influenced by Nigerian mass media?
2. What role does the mass media play in curriculum implementation at Basic Education level in Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following formulated hypotheses were tested for this study.

1. The Nigerian mass media has no significant influence in the existing curriculum change at the basic education level.
2. The Nigerian mass media does not play any significant role in the implementation of Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria.

## **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study according to the Director-General of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) (2012) is made up of four hundred and two (402) broadcasting and newspapers organizations in Nigeria. This population spreads across the media practitioners from all angles that is, print (Newspapers, Magazines), New media (online publications and broadcast), Electronic (Radio and Television stations) and News agencies (e.g. News agency of Nigeria and Reuters). A sample size of two hundred (200) media practitioners was sampled for the study using proportionate sampling technique based on their population strength. This sample size represented fifty percent (50%) of the entire population. The modified 4-point Likert scale instrument titled "*Media Practitioners and Basic Education Curriculum Change and Implementation*" was used for data collection. The instrument was rated thus: 4 for Strongly Agree (SA), 3 for Agree (A), 2 for Strongly Disagree (SD), and 1 for Disagree (D). This instrument which was pilot tested showed the reliability value of 0.84. The respondents' opinion was analyzed using frequency count and mean. Based on the 4-point rating scale, the mean of the scale is 2.5. The decision is that means scores equal to or above 2.5 are considered "agreed" whereas those below 2.5 are regarded as "disagreed". The null hypotheses formulated for the study was tested using chi-square at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

## **Results**

Opinions of the respondents collected through the questionnaires administered were analyzed using frequency count and mean. The summary of data analysis is presented on tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1:** Changes in the basic education curriculum influenced by Nigerian mass media

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	SD	D	Mean
1.	The mass media influenced the appropriate levels of literacy and communicative skill required for life-long learning.	88	55	27	28	2.86
2.	As the media clamors for unity and a sense of nationality rather than ethnic and regional identity, a subject like civic education was introduced into the basic education curriculum to inculcate the spirit of oneness and national interest in students.	63	68	17	50	2.88
3.	Climate change was infused into the basic Education Curriculum as a result of the climate news and programmes in the media.	72	18	63	45	2.87
4.	The mass media aided the manipulative, numeracy and life-skills in Basic Education Curriculum through documentary, drama and interview.	29	52	58	59	2.40
5.	The Nigerian mass media initiate and organize debates and publicize educational issues of interest which mostly lead to government actions or inactions.	91	66	11	30	2.89
6.	The media promotes the holistic view of science at the Basic Education level for better understanding of contemporary and changing world.	46	67	44	41	2.85
7.	Through drama and discussions on radio and television, the media brings innovations into the Basic Education Curriculum.	80	26	59	33	2.74
8.	Through constant coverage of NERDC events the media has able to influenced the Basic Education Curriculum.	55	61	32	50	2.79
9.	Peace and Conflict Resolution Education are infused into the Basic Education Curriculum as a result of the peace programmes aired on radio and television.	91	54	12	41	2.59
10.	The media influenced the infusion of emergent issues that are of national and global concern such as gender sensitivity, disaster risk reduction, entrepreneurship and so forth into the basic education curriculum.	99	58	14	27	2.96

Table 1 revealed the changes in the basic education curriculum influenced by Nigerian mass media. The result from this table clearly shows that the media influenced the infusion of emergent issues that are of national and global concern such as gender sensitivity, disaster risk reduction, entrepreneurship and so forth into the basic education curriculum, judging from the frequency counts and response mean of respondents that agreed to the aforementioned subject. The result also shows that all the mean fall within the acceptance range that is, 2.5 and above, with the exception of question 4 that says “*the mass media aided the manipulative, numeracy and life-skills in Basic Education Curriculum through documentary, drama and interview*”. Hence, the need for the mass media to do something in this regard.

**Table 2:** The role played by the Nigerian mass media in curriculum implementation at the Basic Education level in Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	SD	D	Mean
1.	The mass media is one of the stakeholders that contributed to the success of Basic Education Curriculum through proper implementation.	100	07	65	26	2.94
2.	The media organized contest and competitions for children in basic education level based on the approved standard curriculum.	89	76	11	22	2.86
3.	The programmes on radio and television stations are produced using feature, documentary drama, discussions and interview formats.	73	90	02	33	2.96
4.	What goes on outside the classroom contributes more to the total education of pupils/students than schools.	58	69	40	31	2.91
5.	Everyday issues on education are published in the Nigerian dailies and aired on Radio and Television some are even posted on the internet.	104	11	26	57	3.05
6.	The media update educational programmes on television and radio in conformity with the way students are tutored in their various schools.	95	77	20	06	2.61
7.	The media organized seminar and workshop to report and analyze the curriculum implementation level.	36	69	40	53	2.95
8.	Educational broadcasting aside from implementing the curriculum, also entertain pupils watching from home on a varied content that might not be well expressed in the classroom.	99	05	32	62	2.67
9.	Nigerian mass media provide a network of proven feedback mechanism between stakeholders in education sector on curriculum implementation.	68	83	15	32	2.97
10.	The media organizations have programmes that enlighten parents and guardians with regards to basic education activities.	80	55	29	34	2.99

Table 2 revealed the role played by the mass media in curriculum implementation at the Basic Education level in Nigeria. The result from this table revealed that item 5 which says that “everyday issues on education are published in the Nigerian dailies and aired on Radio and Television some are even posted on the internet” recorded the highest response mean, judging from the frequency count and response mean of respondents that agreed to this item. Likewise, all the mean on the table fall within the acceptance range that is, 2.5 and above. Hence, this result depicted that the mass media played a significant role in curriculum implementation at Basic Education level in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis One:** The Nigerian mass media has no significant influence in the existing curriculum change at the basic education level.



**Table 3:** Summary of Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistics on the influence of Nigerian mass media in curriculum change at the basic education level

N	Cal $X^2$	df	$\alpha$	Critical $X^2$	Sig.	Decision
198	46.902	4	0.05	38.34	.002	Rejected

*Source: Field Study, 2016.*

Table 3 revealed the result of non-parametric statistics with the calculated p-value of 0.002 which was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance and the calculated  $X^2$  value of 46.902 was found to be higher than the  $X^2$  critical value of 38.34 at 4 degrees of freedom. This means that the Nigerian mass media has significant influence (such as influencing the infusion of emergent issues that are of national and global concern such as gender sensitivity, disaster risk reduction, entrepreneurship and so forth) in the existing curriculum change at the basic education level. The implication of this result was to reject the null hypothesis which states that the Nigerian mass media has no significant influence in the existing curriculum change at the basic education level.

**Hypothesis Two:** The Nigerian mass media does not play any significant role in the implementation of Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria.

**Table 4:** Summary of Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistics on the role played by the Nigerian mass media in the implementation of Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria

N	Cal $X^2$	Df	$\alpha$	Critical $X^2$	Sig.	Decision
198	23.574	4	0.05	20.12	.004	Rejected

Table 4 revealed the result of non-parametric statistics with the calculated p-value of 0.004 which was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance and the calculated  $X^2$  value of 23.574 was found to be higher than the  $X^2$  critical value of 20.12 at 4 degrees of freedom. This means that the Nigerian mass media played a significant role in the implementation of Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria (such as everyday issues on education are published in the Nigerian dailies and aired on Radio and Television some are even posted on the internet). The implication of this result was to reject the null hypothesis which states that the Nigerian mass media does not play any significant role in the implementation of Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The result of non-parametric statistics on hypothesis one revealed the calculated p-value of 0.002 which was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance and the calculated  $X^2$  value of 46.902 was found to be higher than the  $X^2$  critical value of 38.34 at 4 degrees of freedom. This means that the Nigerian mass media has significant influence in the existing curriculum change at the basic education level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis which states that the Nigerian mass media has no significant influence in the existing curriculum change at the basic education level was rejected. This result corroborate the finding of Alhasan (2009) that the mass media influenced the appropriate levels of literacy and communicative skill required for life-long learning in the basic education curriculum.

The result of non-parametric statistics on hypothesis two shows the calculated p-value of 0.004 which was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance and the calculated  $X^2$  value of 23.574 was found to be higher than the  $X^2$  critical value of 20.12 at 4 degrees of freedom. Considering this fact, the Nigerian mass media played a significant role in the implementation of the Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the Nigerian mass media does not play any significant role in the implementation of Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria was rejected. This result upholds the finding of Danmole (2011) whose study on the ability of mass media intervention to enhance the efficacy and proper implementation of school programme, proves to be effective. In like manner Susanne (2001) opined that the media offered critical insights and guide pupils/students to media activities that are both conscious and participatory to the extent possible within the relevant life situation.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of the findings from this study, it was concluded that the Nigerian mass media influenced changes and innovation in the basic education curriculum such as influencing the infusion of emergent issues that are of national and global concern like gender sensitivity, disaster risk reduction, entrepreneurship and so forth, that have resulted in the improvement and transformation of the educational system. The degree of success in any curriculum innovation depends on the proper implementation. A curriculum is meaningless and has no value if not implemented. Hence, the respondents were of the opinion that what goes on outside the classroom contributes more to the total education of mankind than schools. Conclusively, the mass media could be said to have played a significant role in curriculum implementation at the

Basic Education level in Nigeria as everyday issues on education are published in the Nigerian dailies and aired on Radio and Television some are even posted on the internet.

## Recommendations

In the light of the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made that:

1. The mass media should serve as watchdogs of the society; they should analyze, appraise or criticize as the case may be the activities of the Universal Basic Education Commission at the National, State and Local Government Levels.
2. In a diverse society such as Nigeria, there is need for the media to be fervent towards enlightening and sensitizing the stakeholders and the general public on the basic education curriculum.

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