

Curriculum Review Resolution of 2018

Being the resolution outcome of the meeting convened by Michael Jules on the 3rd day of February, 2018 on the relevance of curriculum in modern day Nigeria which held at 38B Sadiemo-Ama, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

January, 2018

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Abstract

The meeting to review the extent of relevance of our curriculum titled “Curriculum Review Resolution (CRR) (2018) was held at 38B Sadiemo-Ama, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. The meeting had in attendance the convener, Michael O. Jules, post graduate student, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University, the president, Faculty of Education and presidents of the five Departments in Education. Total attendants amounted to seven (7) persons. The meeting was part of series of event planned by the convener to elicit public support for the review/movement. The primary aim of the meeting was to access the firsthand views/opinions of students through their representatives on the relevance of our curriculum with special focus on Typewriting and Shorthand. An extensive review was carried out where the convener briefed attendants the aims of the meeting. Each attendant was given the time to express their unbiased and uninfluenced views on the issue at hand. After the presentation of opinions, all thoughts were integrated which consequently resulted to the Resolution. Amongst other things, it was unanimously resolved that since the use of Typewriter and Shorthand is no more in vogue, it should be scrapped and possibly replaced with computers or at least, improved typewriters that have similar functions with computers be produced and introduced.

Dedication

This movement is dedicated to future students of Faculty of Education and Management Science who in the future will no longer have to carry Typewriter everywhere they go. They will rather be carrying computers which will be more useful to them in society.

Attendants:

Michael O. Jules	Convener	Post Graduate Student (Department of Vocational and Technology Education, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University).
Comr. Lakemfa Franklin C.	Participant	Undergraduate Student, Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University. (Faculty President)
Comr. Osuiwu Ernest Obinna	Participant	Undergraduate Student, Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University. (Department President)
Comr. King Kubu-Emi Kingsley	Participant	Undergraduate Student, Department of Science Education, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University. (Department President)
Comr. Uloma Godgift	Participant	Undergraduate Student, Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University. (Department President Rep.)
Comr. Matthew Azubuike S.	Participant	Undergraduate Student, Department of Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University. (Department President Rep.)
Comr. Sewell Benjamin	Participant	Undergraduate Student, Department of Vocational and Technology Education, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University (Department President)

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Executive Summary

The need for a curriculum review in the current economic system has been long overdue. Currently, educators are now producing graduates who cannot fit into the current working environment due to the adoption of a curriculum which agitators sees as outdated and phased out. The primary purpose of education according to the National Policy of Education is to equip students with relevant skills that will make them relevant, useful and become gainfully employed due to the skills they have. It should also be noted however, that the Phelps-Stoke Commission on Education Development in Nigeria was primarily set up, amongst other things, to investigate the educational needs of the people with special reference to the religious, social, hygienic and economic conditions (Fafunwa, 1974:129). On inference, the Phelps-Stoke Commission sought to bring down the curriculum to reflect ordinary daily practices of the people. That is, the people's way of life determined the nature of the curriculum.

Then, career was based on needs. When teaching was the main thing then, people started training as teachers; when it was driving, people will start learning driving. That is, learning was based on relevance and demands and not what educators thought was good for students who neither knows their left nor their right.

Based on the above, one would argue, that if educators and curriculum planners of time ago were reasonable enough to attempt to tie the curriculum to the immediate environment as seen in the objectives of the Phelps-Stoke Commission, why then would supposed hi-tech educators, operating in the technology age not improve more than that or at least, behave the same.

It now seems to be a fact that most educators and curriculum planners are seemingly *visionless*. Why this accusation you may ask? A vision-driven curriculum expert sees the future prospects of a curriculum and not how relevant the current one is. Such an educator is not limited to the current situation that is almost being phased-out.

Take a look at the automobile industry, while we are talking of 2018, some car models of 2019 and above are already released. What the automobile industries are doing is building more cars for the comfort of

their customers. The more the improvements, the more user friendly they become. Quality in their activity does not derail the initial purpose of production – user-friendly.

At this juncture, educators should ask themselves – Who uses Typewriters in the current economic system? In which offices are Typewriters used? Can you teach your child to become a graduate who studied typewriting skills? Even if typewriters are still found, in those offices where they are found, do such office befit the position of a B.Sc. OIM graduate? There is little left to be desired.

A vision-driven curriculum expert sees the future prospects of a curriculum and not how relevant the current one is. Such educator is not limited to the current order that is almost being phased-out.

In line with the above, we are now poised to carry out radical means to enforce a review of some aspects of our curriculum. In this meeting, all relevant stakeholders to be met have been outlined. In fact, as at the time of printing this material, we have contacted the national president of Education Students Association of Nigeria (ESAN) previously known as NUESA who have demanded for a printed brief of the issue at hand.

It is our hope that this movement will yield fruit in due course. We look forward to a time when our young ones will be carrying laptop to school instead of typewriter.

The convener of the meeting is Michael O. Jules, (M.Ed., In V.).

Lead Researcher,
MJE Resources

Introduction

The meeting which took place at 38B Sadiemo-Ama, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State commenced at 12:50pm. All expected participants were present as at the time of commencement. The meeting had in attendance, the Convener, Michael Jules; the Faculty of Education president, Comrade Lakemfa Franklin C.; president of Department of Educational Foundations, Comr. Osuiwu Ernest Obinna; President of Department of Science Education, Comr. King Kubu-Emi Kingsley; president rep. of Department of Arts Education, Comr. Uloma Godgift; president of Department of Science Education, Comr. Matthew Azubuike S.; and president elect of Department of Vocational and Technology Education, Comr. Sewell Benjamin.

The convener, Michael Jules, introduced the issue at hand by briefing attendants on the extent of relevance of our curriculum with special focus on Typewriter and Shorthand. A call was also made to presidents of other Departments to crosscheck their curriculum and see if there were areas of needs so that the movement will incorporate those areas. The convener decried educators still teaching typewriter in this modern age where its usage has almost been phased out but only relevant in local government councils and asked the audience if such offices was good enough for B.Sc. OIM graduates. The convener went further to relate how graduates of business education would go to the café to learn computer after graduation. This trend is directly opposite of what was expected of an educational system. The graduates are supposed to look down on the so-call roadside computers operators. Now, it is pitifully opposite that the roadside computer operator are now the persons looking down on the graduates of business education because without added knowledge, graduates of business education cannot do meaningful office work.

The convener also decried excuses by scholars that Typewriter serves as a stepping ground to learning computer. That Typewriter knowledge helps students to understand computer more. The convener strongly opposed such queer thinking. He noted that because our parents trekked long distances spanning between states for economic purposes, we too should do same before we can then master the routes? Why not do it initially faster and more efficiently? Do we forbid efficiency? At this juncture, the convener gave an open floor for participants to make their contributions. Their contributions were to be uninfluenced and based on personal experiences in the system so far. The contributions were as follows:

Contributions

1. Lakemfa Franklin C. (President, Faculty of Education)

Comrade Lakemfa gave his experience when he gained admission into Delta State University, Abraka. Then, he wanted to know the importance of education, what will he do when he finally graduates. How will the skill achieved put food on the table for him. He wondered about Shorthand; how can shorthand really help me? He maintained the view that although Typewriter and Shorthand may not be relevant today in Nigeria, it is still much very relevant in other countries like America and Britain, and express the fear that if it was to be scrapped, what if there is a later need for it? What happens then? However, he advised that such power to remove or add to the curriculum rest with Ministry of Education. That the relevance of Typewriter and Shorthand again can be seen during accreditation that without such courses, accreditation may be difficult. He therefore, opined that as a way forward, Typewriter and Shorthand should be introduced in year one but its advanced equivalent be taught in upper levels. He also said that we should contact the National body for Education students who will up-shoot the complaints to the Ministry of Education to make the matter more grounded. He also informed the house that the previous name for Education students – Nigerian University Education Students’ Association (NUESA) has been changed to Education Students Association of Nigeria (Esan). In his further submission, he suggested that we should write to Niger Delta University management, and Faculty of Education for a conference where we would hold a conference on the matter at hand.

2. Comr. Osuiwu Ernest Obinna (President, Department of Educational Foundations)

Contrasting and alluding to Lakemfa in his submission of comparing Nigeria with other developed countries who still use typewriters, Obinna lamented that because other countries are using bicycles to formal functions that we now should start purchasing bicycles? The truth is that typewriter is obsolete and should be upgraded or done away with. He reasoned that what are graduates to do with it? How can they measure up outside where they are to compete with those taught with computers? He stated clearly however, that now is the time to meet all relevant curriculum stakeholders to do away with typewriter. In his perception, maybe there was no agitation for this issue hence, curriculum experts have not thought of

removing this aspect of the curriculum that is obsolete. Obinna concluded by saying the house should send a letter of invitation to the Commissioner of Education who will in turn send a letter to the Minister of Education.

3. Comr. King Kubu-Emi Kingsley (President, Department of Social Science Education)

Comparing African countries with developed nations, King stated that American and European nations have all outgrown African nations because of consistent adaptation to change. That based on irrelevance of certain parts of their curriculum, there have been consistent changes time and time again. That even if typewriter is at all relevant somewhere in the world, it is not relevant to our immediate environment. That even the little computers taught in the universities, students cannot really operate computers because of theories. The comrade however, stated that instead of typewriter, why not computers? Corroborated the Faculty president on meeting with higher authorities and also go on air to discuss the issue.

4. Comr. Uloma Godgift (President Rep., Department of Arts Education)

The comrade believed in the dynamic nature of society and transmission of culture. Nevertheless, to what extent is the intending culture to be transmitted relevant? Typewriter was not our culture, so, there was no need to hold on to it with the intention of retaining it. Instead, it should be replaced with a more advanced borrowed culture like the computer. The comrade added that learning typewriter can make a student destroy the computer keyboard. That currently, you hardly find typewriter in any office. If true, where then can our graduates work with typewriter knowledge. Although, the comrade supported Shorthand, that Shorthand may not be entirely irrelevant but should not be made compulsory for everyone but can be an elective course. He reasoned that due to the nature of the field, Shorthand should be spared and where possible, upgraded.

The comrade concluded that teaching typewriter takes us backward and not frontward. That if the typewriter is so useful, then, it will be justified that everyone go back in time and start tying wrapper with leaves since moving forward is not desired anymore.

5. Comr. Matthew Azubuikwe Success (President, Department of Science Education)

The comrade maintained that he is of two opinions in favour and against. That 1). There is need for typewriter. He maintained that society is dynamic. If we go against Typewriter and Shorthand, and graduate as computer students, how “practical in practice?” that is, the theories used in the universities will not allow us to perform well. He stated that typewriter develop the three domains of the learner, especially the cognitive and psychomotor skills. He stated that instead of making Typewriter compulsory, a different Department should be created for typewriter students only and should not be made a general course for Business Education students. He concluded that as a child, he used to carry radio around in his ears, but as the world has moved on, he no longer engaged in that. That it is time to move on from Typewriter.

6. Comr. Sewell Benjamin (President Elect, Department of Vocational and Technology Education)

The comrade opined that if Shorthand is to be removed from the curriculum, it may not be applicable on pure Management students even if it is removed from education courses. That in business education, it is just a requirements else, nobody really likes it. He also maintained that before now, most students have not really done Shorthand and Typewriter at their secondary school level, hence the mass failure witnessed in the universities in Shorthand and Typewriter. The comrade concluded that if there should be a debate on the relevance of typewriter, Business Education students will support even more. Stood for total removal or at least for Business Education students.

There was however, continuous contributions from the house while entertainment was ongoing on how the world has move forward. Corroborating this, Kingsley brought out his phone, said, “PLAY MUSIC”, and within second, the phone started playing music. He lamented that while other countries are leaning towards voice recognition and other hi-tech devices in education, here in Nigeria, we tie ourselves to devices that even the ordinary offices would not use again.

Resolution

After a lengthy deliberation and contributions from all members present in the house, the following resolutions were advanced:

1. Typewriter and Shorthand should be removed with immediate effect from both the secondary and primary school level and replaced with computers or at least a modern or advanced form of it.

2. That we should collaborate with National bodies like ESAN, Ministry of Education, NUC, Commissioner of Education, Civil Society, employers of labour, TUC, etc. to get the needed support.
3. In the process of this movement of removing irrelevant aspects of the curriculum, students should be involved to lend their voices.
4. Call for a debate within universities where students will debate on the relevance of Typewriter and Shorthand, while employers of labour and graduates in the relevant fields are invited to make their inputs.
5. A public pool should be carried out to access the opinion of the public on the matter at hand.
6. Go on air to reach the wider society as it is a national affair.
7. Go on street tours specifically to reach individuals to hear from them firsthand on how useful they see typewriter and shorthand in the area.
8. Engage educational planners to make them see reasons for the removal or replacement of Typewriter and Shorthand.
9. To collaborate with ESAN on a state-to-state tour enlightening students on the issue.
10. Collaborate with employers and invite them to a debate where they will state their opinions on the matter.
11. Collaborate with graduates who offered Typewriter and Shorthand and know from them how has the knowledge in Typewriter and Shorthand helped them or has been useful thus far.

Conclusion

The convener expresses sincere gratitude to all attendants some of whom came back from Yenagoa who were already on weekend travel. I also sincerely thank the Faculty president, Comrade Lakemfa Franklin C. who made several calls to gather everyone together overnight. Each of the attendants honoured an over-night invitation and this is very commendable. It is my sincere hope that this too, shall pass.

Appreciation

Prof. A. C. Egumu for the inspiration to embark on this movement

Dr. F. C. Akpotohwo who is highly ICT compliant and has engaged in many student friendly policies in the Department of Vocational and Technology Education.

Dr. Paul B. Igbongidi whom I see as highly ICT compliant and has mentored us since our first degree

Comr. Osioma Simeon for his pledged support

Comr. Lakemfa Franklin C. who coordinated the Department presidents to the meeting.

Comr. Osuiwu Ernest Obinna for participation and contributions

Comr. King Kubu-Emi Kingsley for participation and contributions

Comr. Uloma Godgift for participation and contributions

Comr. Matthew Azubuike S. for participation and contributions

Comr. Sewell Benjamin for participation and contributions

The end