

Over Schooling and the Curriculum in Nigeria

Ekechukwu Leona Eucharía, David Onyemaechi Eke and Chioma Cecilia Onuu

Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike,
Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Abstract: This paper provides a brief study of the concept of over-schooling and its relationship with curriculum development within the Nigerian education system. The sample for this study comprised 627 participants from seven (7) establishments selected from the study population of 1256 through a systematic random sampling technique that selected 50% of workers in each organisation. The literature review explored arguments based on indirect evidence from the industrial-psychology literature which shows that workers with more education than their jobs require often exhibit counterproductive behaviour in the workplace. The analysis of the results obtained from the study goes further to show that the impacts of over-schooling are non-trivial and that the phenomenon may potentially be costly to individuals and firms, as well as the economy more generally. The study further reveal that over-schooling phenomenon emerged from the labour market friction preventing efficient matches between educated workers and employers that need skills. Evidences from this study give support to the view that over-schooling is merely a signalling mechanism rather than enhancing the productivity of employees. The study also revealed that there are too many people going to the university who could be better off going straight into the labour market or into another form of training. The paper therefore suggests that policy makers should review the national education policy to develop a curriculum plan that would improve the outcome of graduates both past and future who will perform less well in the labour market. The paper also suggests for the development of a curriculum plan that would provide productive and functional trainings that would prepare and inspire the students to move into the labour market earlier in their lives and not necessary after obtaining university education.

Key words: Schooling • Curriculum • Education • Organisation and policy

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the vital instruments in development. According to the National Policy on Education (1999) "Education in Nigeria is an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development. Certainly, what Nigeria needs in this 21st century to turn her economy around are fundamental or basic education programmes that will ensure that every Nigerian youth on graduation from the basic or post basic levels is sufficiently equipped with knowledge, skills and experiences required for initial entry into one occupation in the world of work, whether college bound or not [1]. However, studies have revealed that many Nigerian youths are jobless, not because they are uneducated but as a result of over schooling or over education without possessing some technical or vocational skills that could give them immediate employment. Numerous studies have

already provided interesting evidence that many recent graduates are overeducated or over schooled at the start of their careers [2, 3].

Overschooling, defined as the condition of having a level of education higher than that required to adequately perform a specific job [4], is associated with a wage penalty for the worker [5], as well as with lower productivity, lower job satisfaction and increased psychological stress [6]. However, despite these potential negative consequences, young graduates still accept jobs for which they are overeducated. Several explanations have been provided in the literature to justify their decision, including the scarring effects of being unemployed just after graduation and the stepping-stone hypothesis, whereby young job-seekers actually accept jobs as the shortest pathway to eventually finding a better match between a position and their skills [7].

As individuals, overschooled workers, by virtue of the fact that a proportion of their educational investment is unproductive, are likely to earn a lower return on their investment relative to similarly educated individuals whose jobs match their education. Overschooled workers may also incur non-transitory costs associated with lower levels of job satisfaction [2]. It is also possible that previously well-matched workers in the economy will be 'bumped down' in the labour market and, perhaps out of it entirely, as overeducated workers move into lower level occupations thus raising the mean educational level within these occupations rendering some previously adequately educated individuals undereducated.

It is therefore pertinent that emphasis should be centred on curriculum planning and development that would offer students a more comprehensive knowledge and skills that would prepare them for life in the 21st century and the emphasis should not necessarily be hinged on the of the level of education attained or certificate acquired but on students' ability to possess the requisite skills and knowledge that will meet the demands of the present economy.

An insightful examination of the Nigerian school curricula vis-a-vis the approved schooling years of the 9-3-4 system of education in Nigeria has revealed that there is a contention among scholars on the content of an ideal curriculum in Nigeria. An educational curriculum development scholar and critic, Oraifor, towing this line of argument stated that the Nigeria's school curriculum is overloaded with too many courses some of which are irrelevant and redundant and need to be reviewed to enable schools produce excellent school leavers [8]. He further stated that some of the educational policies at the secondary school and tertiary levels need to be seriously revisited to make room for inclusion of vital subjects or courses that are relevant to the present economic needs of a modern society. Similarly, [9] avers that the present curriculum of secondary education in Nigeria is overloaded with subjects and courses that are redundant which could be integrated into a single course to make room for vocationally and technically oriented ones. In the same vein, other scholars and researchers have continued to ask whether the variations in school curricula and period of schooling as seen in our present society contribute to the low achievement levels and large student achievement gaps that we observe in many countries today. There is a wide debate among researchers regarding the answer to this question. And while there is a large literature that provides evidence about the effect of school inputs in the education production function, there is only limited evidence on the

relationship between curriculum and over schooling in Nigeria.

Advocates of extended years of formal education years argue that over schooling could benefit students in three ways: First, by spending more years in school, students will likely devote more time to learning. Second, they will spend less time alone at home or outside their home doing other activities that are not necessarily related to or beneficial for learning. And third, they will have opportunity to acquire more basic and life empowerment skills within the extended period of study [5, 10]. Therefore, having full school years might have a positive impact on student achievement because students might be able to learn more things and improve their skills, while being less exposed to risky behaviours.

On the other hand, critics of extending the length of the school years argue that over schooling could have a negative impact on student achievement if instructions during those extra years are of poor quality and not meeting the demands of the society [1]. For example, if the students are not impacted with some essential skills and knowledge that would prepare them for an independent life after schooling if not, then the additional time spent in school will not necessarily translate into more learning for the students attending full school years. Additionally, some critics argue that extending the length of the school years could have no impact on student achievement if the content of the curriculum in the extended school years is irrelevant for a comprehensive learning [11]. For example, additional time devoted to sports, or more playing time may have desirable effects on other skills, such as discipline, team work, persistence, etc., which are valued in the labour market.

Policies aimed at developing the school curriculum to ensure that students obtain some life empowerment skills from early education have been implemented in several countries and also in Nigeria. Some scholars in curriculum planning and development argue that extending the length of the school years might increase the time students devote to learning and in that way could have a positive impact on student outcomes [12]. Research on the impact of curriculum reforms generally supports the idea that adequate schooling has a positive impact on student achievement [9]. These experts in curriculum planning and development have suggested that there is need for expansion and diversification of curriculum for the Nigerian secondary schools, encouragement of self reliance and training to think independently. This may not necessarily lead to an over extended years of study but a more comprehensive, integrated, functional and productive curriculum. However, there are methodological

difficulties in isolating the impact of curriculum plan on overschooling that raise questions about the strength of much of this evidence. This study contributes to the literature by analyzing the causal link between overschooling and the curriculum in Nigeria.

Statement of Problem: The higher education sector in Nigeria has experienced virtually continuous growth in student numbers over the past 50 years [8]. Between 1989 and 2010 alone there was a massive 61 per cent increase in university enrolments [13]. The result of this trend is that there is a significant rise in the number of overschooled workforce in Nigeria. This development, however, may not be palatable as there are few graduate level jobs available in Nigeria. This implies that so many graduates are likely to take up job for which they are over qualified and may also lack some skills to operate at that level.

The critical questions that this study addresses are as follows: Do most graduates get graduate level jobs? What is a graduate job? Can we measure the extent of any "over-education" problem? What have been the effects of ineffective curriculum plans on overschooling syndrome? Specifically, do we have a situation of excess supply of graduates, caused in part by subsidising higher education to the extent that we do?

The need for an optimized schooling system as well as an effective and comprehensive curriculum planning and development in Nigeria created the need for more research to be carried out on the subject matter. It is from this projection that this study takes its bearing. This study, therefore, seeks to address this disparity by having a holistic study of the relationship between overschooling and curriculum in Nigeria.

Objective of Study: The study aims at achieving the following objectives:

- To examine the relationship between over-schooling and curriculum.
- To examine whether effective curriculum plan could lessen the desire for over schooling for technically or vocationally oriented students.
- To determine how effective and comprehensive curriculum can mitigate the challenges faced by over-schooled workforce by giving the ability for a second choice of career in event of graduate unemployment.

Research Questions: The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- What is the relationship between over-schooling and the scope of curriculum?

- How does effective curriculum planning and development affect the desire for over schooling among technically or vocationally oriented students?
- How can effective and comprehensive curriculum planning mitigate the challenges of over-schooling?

Significance of the Study: The findings from the study will inform educational planners on the best approaches to curriculum development in Nigeria. In addition, the finding from this study will be a panacea to the lingering dilemma on the optimum schooling system in Nigeria, putting to an end various dissensions and conflicts that surround curriculum planning in Nigeria. Furthermore, the findings of the study will help to promote functional education and vocational education or technical education thereby making the people to accept educational systems that would effectively address the prevalent challenges of the 21st century.

Literature Review

Concept of Over-Schooling: Over-schooling describes the extent to which an individual possesses a level of education in excess of that which is required for their particular job [2]. The phenomenon was first brought to the attention of researchers by Richard Freeman in his 1976 study of the US graduate labour market [4]. However, interest has mushroomed since the late 1980s as economists attempt to assess the implications of the continued rapid expansion in educational participation rates that has become a key feature of labour market policy in most developed and developing economies [5]. When the demand for less educated workforce especially the demand for worker with vocational skills rises above that of graduate level workforce then workers may be forced to take jobs for which they are overeducated.

Over-schooling is potentially costly to the economy, the firm and the individual. At a macroeconomic level, national welfare is potentially lower than would be the case if the skills of all overeducated workers were fully utilized within the economy; in addition, it may be that tax revenues are also being wasted on equipping individuals with non-productive education [11]. At a firm level, there is some evidence to suggest that over schooling is associated with lower productivity [3].

Studies have shown that the higher education sector in Nigeria has experienced virtually continuous growth in student numbers over the past 50 years; between 1989 and 2010 alone there was a massive 61 per cent increase in university enrolments [1]. In response to similar concerns elsewhere in the world about a potential over supply of graduates, there is now a growing academic literature from

the United States and Europe on the issue of over-education. US evidence suggests that "over-education" among the workforce as a whole may be as high as 40 per cent [14]. UK research into the issue is more limited and more recent but evidence confirms similar findings for this country [5]. Analysis of how long graduates remained in jobs for which they were "over-educated" is equally gloomy. According to [10], the majority of graduates who did not make it into a sought after "graduate" job appeared destined to remain under-utilised permanently. All this might indicate that indeed we have too many graduates. Unfortunately, however, there are some fundamental difficulties in interpreting the evidence on this issue. Most of the literature on "over-education" has used self-surveys to determine whether graduates are indeed "over-educated". Graduates are simply asked whether or not they needed a degree to do or get their job. Clearly this is not an objective measure of whether or not the person is "over-educated". The Nigerian president might argue that he only needed O' levels to do his job, Goodluck Jonathan, on the other hand, is likely to claim that a degree is essential. So some researchers have tried to construct more "objective" measures of "over-education", generally relying on job analysts to tell them what the average educational requirements of a particular job title are. Even this approach has problems. Not all office managers do the same job or need the same qualifications. It is also possible that graduates "grow" jobs, bringing extra skills and knowledge to the job and so transforming it into a graduate-level job. Recent National Institute for Educational Research findings suggest that employers who recruit graduates to non-graduate jobs do not generally upgrade the job content anyway (NIER, 2000). But none of the data is sufficiently sophisticated to analyse this problem clearly.

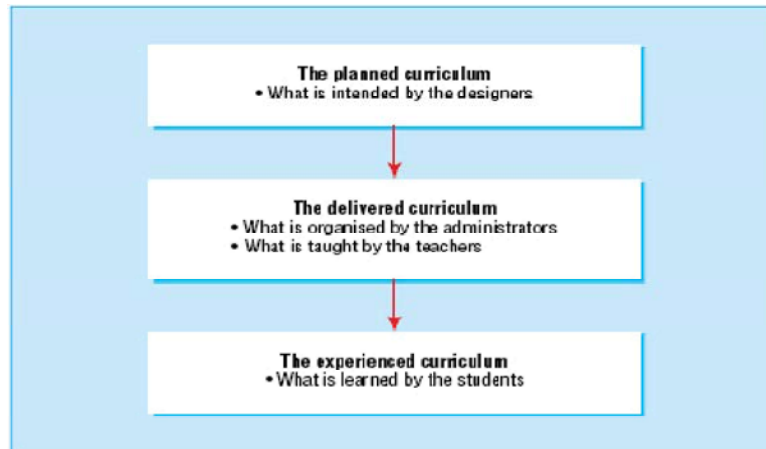
There is an even more fundamental issue. Do graduates bring skills and attributes to a job which enable them to do a non-graduate job more effectively? If graduate secretaries or graduate sales staff are better at their jobs because of their higher education, clearly "over-education" may be less of a problem than first thought. Until we can identify the skills and qualities that higher education develops in individuals and relate these attributes to activity at work, it is premature to claim that we have too many graduates. If there is indeed widespread graduate "over-education", it would not be optimal for the universities to continue to produce a growing number of graduates. This is not to say that greater numbers of people should not experience higher education, merely that they might pay for more or all of it themselves.

Perhaps most importantly, education generates externalities, benefits to the individual and society that are not taken into account by looking at job title and earnings. There is almost overwhelming evidence that education improves parenting skills, makes a person less likely to divorce and commit crimes and improves health, to name but a few benefits. When the cultural benefits of having a more educated population are weighed, worries about "over-educating" people seem less relevant.

According to [9], the evidence on "over-education" is sufficient to suggest that this should be an issue of great importance for research. However, we are not yet in a position to categorically say we have too many graduates. More research is needed to give a clearer answer to some of our questions.

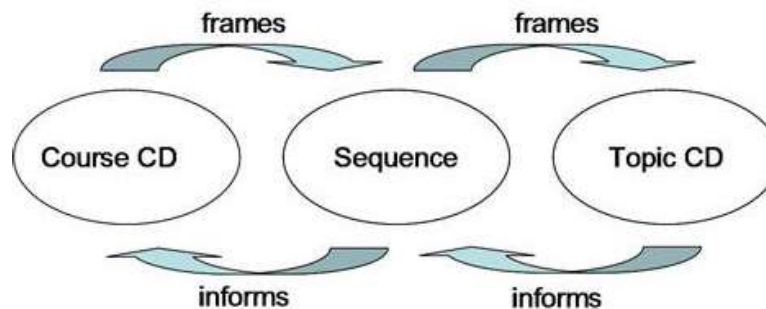
Concept of Curriculum: Curriculum development is defined as planned, a purposeful, progressive and systematic process to create positive improvements in the educational system. Every time there are changes or developments happening around the world, the school curricula are affected. There is a need to update them to address the society's needs. To illustrate this contention, let's trace back history. During the ancient times, people taught their children knowledge and skills to survive by catching fish or hunting animals for food. They had no formal education during that time, but their children learned and acquired the knowledge and skills for survival. So, during that time, they already had a curriculum that other educators call as, the *saber-tooth* curriculum. This type of curriculum refers to a kind of curriculum that existed during the ancient times in which the purpose of teaching was for survival. However, when the effects of discoveries and inventions became inevitable, ancient people's way of life had changed for the better. As a result, education became formal and curriculum development evolved as systematic, planned, purposeful and progressive, even today.

A Curriculum Development Process: The Curriculum Development process encompasses the design and development of integrated plans for learning, the design of implementation of the plans and of the evaluation of the plans, their implementation and the outcomes of the learning experience [12]. Curriculum design is a process of critical questioning to frame learning and teaching [15]. The main purpose of the process according to [16] is to translate broad statements of intent into specific plans and actions. The intention is to ensure, as far as possible, alignment between the three states of curriculum: the planned curriculum, the delivered curriculum and the experienced curriculum.



The three states of the curriculum Source: [15]

The curriculum design process at course level sets the context for topic design and topic design sets the context for each learning experience. Topics need to be designed to come together in structured combinations to form coherent major and minor sequences and courses [12]. Parts of the process especially at the course and topic levels overlap and ideally should occur interactively with course design informing and influencing topic design and topic design informing and influencing course design [9].



Interactions of levels of Curriculum Development (CD)
Source: [16]

The fundamental purpose of curriculum development is to ensure that students receive integrated, coherent learning experiences that contribute towards their personal, academic and professional learning and development.

Curriculum Development in the Post Colonial Nigeria: After independence in 1960, the agitation of Nigerians regarding the inadequacy of the colonial curriculum to prepare learners for effective life in Nigerian society and for contribution to the development of the new nation was intensified [17]. This culminated in the first national curriculum conference in 1969 which was aimed at taking a sector-wide review of the education system, identifying new national goals of education and proposing strategies to make the curriculum at all levels of

the education system relevant to the Nigerian society [17]. A review of the recommendations of the conference at the 1973 national seminar resulted in the publication of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1977 with 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions published in 1981, 1998 and 2004 respectively. The NPE is the pivot of curriculum development in the country. It specifies the type and quality of instruction that should be provided so as to help learners at all levels of education to achieve the aims of permanent literacy, numeracy and effective citizenship. In this regard, curriculum development “has to be geared towards self realization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity, as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress” (Federal Republic of Nigeria – [18].

The NPE provided the needed guidelines and boost for curriculum development in the country. The Nigerian Educational Research Council (NERC) and later Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) used these NPE guidelines to develop curricula for primary, secondary and teacher education. Professional associations also started contributing to curriculum development. Some of these are the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), National Teacher's Institute (NTI), Science Teachers Association of Nigeria (STAN) and the Curriculum Organization of Nigeria (CON). The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) which was established in 1974 with the job specification of supervising technical education in Nigeria restructured the technical education curriculum offered in polytechnics, colleges of education and technical colleges. The NBTE curriculum was presented in modules of employable skills with content for specific job requirements [13]. In 1986, the National Teacher's Institute (NTI), reviewed and delivered teacher education syllabuses as well as instructional guides for the implementation of the self-instructional modules. The Science Teachers Association of Nigeria (STAN) and the Curriculum Organization of Nigeria (CON) contribute to curriculum development through the organization of conferences, workshops, seminars as well as the production of journals; textbooks and instructional materials.

A close look at these efforts in curriculum development and the global educational trends indicate the emerging or new issues that are still unfolding in curriculum development in Nigeria. The global trends in curriculum development are tilting to the direction of using the curriculum as an instrument for achieving total development of every citizen so as to prepare the nation not only for local and national development but also for international competitiveness. In this regard, the emerging trends in curriculum development in Nigeria or curriculum directions that are new and still developing are x-rayed in the next section of this communication and these are discernible in the areas of educational objectives, content and methodology.

Emerging Trends in Curriculum Development: The breath-taking developments in information and communication technologies with the resulting digital revolution have launched the world into the knowledge economy in which ideas and technology are used to promote socio-economic development through the generation and exploitation of knowledge. Consequently, educationists all over the world are making frantic efforts

to realign educational endeavors to equipping learners with the necessary skills and competencies for effective life in a knowledge dominated society. Since Nigeria's philosophy of education presents education as "an instrument for national development" [18], curriculum development in Nigeria should be aimed at transporting the country from the old, industrial economy to the new knowledge-based economy.

To achieve this goal of scholars like [9] education requires a paradigm shift from the present time bound model of education to a lifelong model of education. This according to him, is the model of education that is aimed at developing in the learner the ability to effectively create, acquire, use and transmit knowledge for the promotion of human activities in a knowledge dominated society. In this regard, emphasis in instructional aims is shifting from the acquisition of factual knowledge to the acquisition of tacit knowledge and generic skills while that of the instructional process is shifting from teaching for examinations to teaching how to learn, how to communicate and how to perform effectively in a team work. By implication, curriculum development for a knowledge economy is based on the development of basic skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), thinking skills, interpersonal management and communication skills, social competencies and other personal qualities such as "responsibility, self-esteem, self-management and integrity" [12]. [8] expressed a similar view when he summarized the core generic skills curriculum requirements for the knowledge economy as knowledge, communication skills, adaptability, creativity, team spirit, literacy, ICT-fluency and life-long as well as life-wide learning.

In the words of [13], the development of the 21st century required skills and competencies that would constitute a driving force for the emergent trend in the aim of education which is the preparation of learners for effective life in a knowledge economy that is known for its networked and volatile characteristics. The quest for the achievement of this aim of education in different learning contexts in Nigeria is resulting in the emerging issues in curriculum development in the country.

These issues among others are curriculum development in Education for peace, education for global citizenship, electronic learning, teacher education, gender studies as well as diversification and enrichment of learning content. Only two of these issues are discussed in full in this study and these are: education for global citizenship and diversification and enrichment of learning content.

Education for Global Citizenship: One of the ways that developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs) are reshaping human activities is in the area of availability and accessibility of information anytime, anywhere and in different modes. With ICTs, a person in one corner of the globe communicates with another person at the other corner of the globe simply at the press of a button. In the same vein, a person stays in the comfort of her/his room and follows world events through the internet. People stay in their houses in different countries and participate in teleconferences and electronic discussions. [13] summarizes, these technology based developments by stating that “the world is changing and there is evidence that we are entering a post-international environment: borders are weakening, multiple citizenships are more common place, migration has reached record level and we have encountered the death of distance”.

The use of ICTs has removed the problem of distance in information exchange and everybody appears to be close to everybody else regardless of location. Consequently, the world at the present time is often referred to as a global village. There is a growing need for people to understand different cultures as well as the what, how and why of global events. Every society hopes to satisfy this need through education. [11] opine that “by learning how global issues affect individual and community lives, how and why decisions are made which affect the planet and life on it and, most importantly, means by which the future can be influenced, education can prepare students to become socially responsible global citizens”.

Since one of the goals of education is to prepare the learner for effective life in the society and the present 21st century society is a globalized one, education for global citizenship is an emergent issue in curriculum development. The overall philosophy of Nigeria is to live in unity and harmony and “promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding” [18] and the national educational goal that is derived from this philosophy is “the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around” [18]. However, global events indicate that the citizenship education offered to learners at the universal basic education (UBE) level is inadequate for achieving this goal of education. For learners in Nigeria to be prepared for international competitiveness, curriculum development efforts that cover both national and international affairs is the ideal. This is the type of curriculum that can prepare the learner for effective local citizenship and responsible global citizenship.

Many countries all over the world are already implementing education for global citizenship. The United Kingdom (UK) developed a curriculum for Global citizenship in 1997 and since then, learners are acquiring education for global citizenship in schools and in global citizenship projects funded by such bodies as Department for International Development (DFID) and International Development Education Association of Scotland (IDEAS) (McGuinness, 2006). Education for global citizenship (EGC) gives learners “the knowledge, understanding, skills and values that they need if they are to participate fully in ensuring their own and others’ well-being and to make a positive contribution, both locally and globally” [3]. The aim is for the learner to become a responsible global citizen. [2], itemized the three key elements of responsible Global citizenship as knowledge and understanding, skills as well as values and attitudes. The element of knowledge and understanding covers social justice and equity, diversity, globalization and interdependence, sustainable development, as well as peace and conflict. Items in the skills element are critical thinking, ability to argue effectively, ability to challenge injustice and inequalities, respect for people and things as well as co-operation and conflict resolution. Items in the values and attitudes element are sense of identity and self-esteem, empathy, commitment to social justice and equity, value and respect for diversity; concern for the environment and commitment to sustainable development as well as belief that people can make a difference. These skills, knowledge and values should guide the development of curriculum for global citizenship.

It is necessary to point out that this presentation is not proposing education for global citizenship (EGS) to be implemented as a separate subject on the school timetable. EGC is a global ideology that covers all areas of the curriculum. It is made manifest not only in what is taught and learnt but also in the schools decision making process, the entire school ethos and the relationship among learners, teachers, parents, members of the community and other stakeholders in the school. In fact the curriculum for EGC encompasses the whole school from the learning content to presentation strategies as well as the people and the culture of the school.

Summary of Literature: Our discussion so far has shown that the purpose of education is shifting from imparting knowledge to learners to building the learners’ knowledge, capacity and skills for successful real-world living. This shift of emphasis in educational endeavours has given rise to transformations in the teachers’ roles in education delivery; from knowledge dispenser to

facilitator of learning; from all-knowing teacher to lifelong learner; from knowledge deity to knowledge professional and from education bureaucrat to learning technocrat. For teachers to play these roles and transform the learners into knowledge workers, these teachers must possess and effectively manifest the desired 21st century knowledge, skills, attitude and values and also be capable of infusing these values into the school system. This implies that teacher education programmes need to be overhauled to ensure that apart from knowledge of content and traditional methodologies, that the pre-service teachers have the awareness of and commitment to the promotion of relevant knowledge and skills in the learners. [9], shares this view and warns that:

If teachers are to develop in their students these abilities, the instructional strategy adopted for them should overcome the present bias for lecture and include projects and field based work using ICT to encourage collaborative knowledge application and creation by learners.

Focusing on interactive and participatory teaching method as well as content areas in pre-service teacher education programmes, can prepare these teachers to adopt teaching methods that can motivate and engage learners and thereby promote in them the abilities for interaction, participation, cooperation, critical thinking, problem solving, self-direction, responsibility and learning to learn, along with the other 21st century skills.

This discussion has presented the realignment of educational objectives and the implementation of peace education and global citizenship education as emergent issues in curriculum development that are capable of fast tracking the nation on the route to knowledge emancipation and peaceful coexistence. This is necessary in a nation that is struggling to survive the insurgence of ethnic and religious rivalry, different forms of security challenges and high illiteracy rate in a knowledge economy. Curriculum development in these emergent areas will help the nation to “live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice” [18].

Research Methodology

Research Design: The design chosen for the study is descriptive survey design. The reason for preferring the design method was because the study is carried out on a group of people and it demands for the description the characteristics of the people under study. Again, the

Table 3.1: Population of Study

S/N	Names of Establishments	Population
1	Astrum Energy Company Limited	196
2	Hians Technology Limited	200
3	Southern Aluminium Limited	144
4	Jukok International Limited	192
5	Hardis and Dromedas Limited	204
6	Homan Construction Company Limited	176
7	Dezern Contructions Nigeria limited	141
	Total	1253

Table 2:

S/N	Names of Establishments	Samples
1	Astrum Energy Company Limited	98
2	Hians Technology Limited	100
3	Southern Aluminium Limited	72
4	Jukok International Limited	96
5	Hardis and Dromedas Limited	102
6	Homan Construction Company Limited	88
7	Dezern Contructions Nigeria limited	71
	Total	627

design allows for the collection and analysis of data from few people considered to be a representative sample who will express their view through the use of questionnaire on the relationship between over schooling and curriculum planning. The design is more appropriate because it has build-in reliability and dependency without the testing of hypothesis, hence, laid a solid foundation for the adoption of table of frequencies and mean for data analysis. The design is needed for the description of features and consequence of over schooling.

Population of the Study: The study population consist of 1253 participants from the seven private sector establishments in Enugu Metropolis. The participants made up of male and female graduate employees. Table 3.1 shows the various establishments and number of participants that consists of the population.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: Sample for this study comprised 627 participants from seven (7) establishments selected from the study population of 1256 through a systematic random sampling technique. To do this effectively participants from the seven selected establishments were divided into strata according to their job positions and 50% of each establishment was selected to form the sample. It is shown on Table 3.2.

Instrumentation: The instrument used for data collection was a researcher – designed questionnaire modified on a four (4) point Likert scale of strongly Agree (SA) 4 point, Agree (A) 3 point, Disagree (D) 2 points and Strongly

Disagree (SD) 1 point. The research instrument which was titled “Participants Responses on the relationship between over-schooling and the school curriculum”, formed the basis for the primary data and was used to elicit information from the participants based on the three research questions. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (A – C):

Section A: The socio - demographic data. It consists of information on personal data of the subjects which include age, sex, religion, level of education and so on.

Section B: Information on employment role, position, wage level and job satisfaction.

Section C: Information on skills and knowledge already acquired; how and where they were acquired and relationships between job training experiences and academic training experiences.

Reliability of the Instrument: For the reliability of the research instrument (questionnaire), a pilot-testing was conducted using 25 participants from five establishments and the data collected was tested the split-half test which yielded a coefficient value of 0.83 using Pearson Product Moment correlation co-efficient formula to determine the trustworthiness dependability of research instrument. This affirms that the instrument was reliable for the study.

Procedure of Data Collection: Data was collected with the face to face administration of research questionnaire, direct observation and point interview of the participants. Questionnaire was structured to seek opinion of the respondents based on Linkert structured questions with three research questions and sub questions.

Method of Data Analysis: The data for this research were analysed using weighted mean (\square) as the statistical tool. The criterion mean value of 2.5 was used to determine acceptance while values below 2.5 showed rejection. The mean (\bar{x}) was obtained using the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} SA &= 4 \\ A &= 3 \\ D &= 2 \\ SD &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5$$

RESULT AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results and data analysis for the study based on the research questions which guide the study.

Analysis of Responses for Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the relationship between over-schooling and the scope of curriculum?

$$\text{Means score} = \frac{2.32 + 3.19 + 2.59}{3} = 2.70$$

From the value of means generated, the statement affirming that employees were given extra training outside they received through formal education to enable you perform your job roles effectively has the highest means score of 3.19. This is followed by the statement that affirms that if some employees had acquired their current job skills and competence from your basic and post basic classes in school they could not have sought for higher education which has a means score of 2.59 and on the other hand, the statement that employees had already acquired the skills needed for performing their current job from academic training in school was rejected as the statement had a mean score of 2.32.

From the results obtained in Table 4.2 above, it revealed that the schools do not effectively prepare the students for employment as most students after graduation would have to undergo specialised training to make them employable. On the other hand it is revealed from this study that some technically inclined students would not have sought for higher education if their basic and post basic school curricula were designed to effectively impact on them some basic technical or vocational skills and knowledge.

Research Question 2: How does effective curriculum planning and development affect over schooling among technically or vocationally oriented workforce?

$$\text{Mean score} = \frac{2.8 + 2.85 + 2.98}{3} = 2.88$$

From the value of means generated, the statement claiming that a curriculum that is designed to equip learners with necessary technical and vocational skills and competencies if well administered at the basic post basic level will reduce the quest for higher education among student that are technically or vocationally

Table 4.1: Distribution of relevant variables according to first job status

Names of Establishments	Skillmatch	Incident of over-schooling	Total sample surveyed
Astrum Energy Company Limited	71%	29%	98
Hians Technology Limited	79%	21%	100
Southern Aluminium Limited	60%	40%	72
Jukok International Limited	77.85%	22.15%	96
Hardis and Dromedas Limited	62.35%	37.65%	102
Homan Construction Company Limited	67%	33%	88
Dezern Contructions Nigeria limited	83%	17%	71

Source: Researcher's Field work data

Table 4.2: Perception of employees on the relationship between over-schooling and the Nigerian school curricula

S/N	Statement	N $\bar{0}$	SA	A	D	SD	Score	X	Decision
1.	You already acquired skills needed for this job from academic training in school.	627	135 (540)	109 (327)	206 (412)	177 (177)	1456	2.32	Disagree
2.	You were given a special training to enable you perform your job roles effectively besides the training you acquired from formal education.	627	279 (1116)	234 (702)	70 (140)	44 (44)	2002	3.19	Agree
3.	If you had acquired your current job skills and competence from your basic and post basic classes in school you could not have sought for higher education	627	161 (644)	157 (471)	204 (408)	105 (105)	1628	2.59	Agree

Table 4.3: Perception of employees on how effective curriculum development affects over-schooling among technically or vocationally oriented employees

S/N	Statement	N $\bar{0}$	SA	A	D	SD	Score	X	Decision
1.	A curriculum that equips learners with the necessary technical and vocational skills and competencies if well administered at the basic post basic level will reduce the quest for higher education among student that are technically or vocationally inclined.	627	207 (828)	156 (468)	201 (402)	63 (63)	1761	2.80	Agree
2.	Equipping individuals with productive education at the basic and post basic levels will reduce the quest for higher education	627	224 (896)	139 (417)	211 (422)	53 (53)	1788	2.85	Agree
3.	People engage in higher education to acquire skills for effective life in the knowledge dominated society	627	212 (848)	255 (765)	97 (194)	63 (63)	1870	2.98	Agree

inclined has a mean score of 2.8. This is followed by the statement that affirms that equipping individuals with productive education at the basic and post basic levels will reduce the quest for higher education which was accepted and has a mean score of 2.85 and also, the statement that people engage in higher education to acquire skills for effective life in the knowledge dominated society was accepted and has a mean score of 2.98.

From the result obtained in Table 4.3 above, it was discovered that mean score of 2.88 gotten from three (3) items in the research question was greater than the cut off point of 2.5, hence it is agreed that effective curricula that equip learners with the necessary technical and vocational skills and competencies if well administered at the basic post basic level will reduce the quest for higher education among student that are technically or vocationally inclined.

Research Question 3: How can effective and comprehensive curriculum planning mitigate the challenges of over-schooling?

$$\text{Means score} = \frac{2.64 + 3.19}{2} = 2.92$$

From the above result obtained in Table 4.3 above, it was discovered that then two (2) items in the research question three had a mean value of 2.92 greater than the cut-off point of 2.5, hence, it is agreed that an effective curricula mitigate the effects of over-schooling because An effective curriculum that is broad and embodies technical education would help to reduce skills mismatch among graduate and non graduate employees. Also, an effective curriculum that is broad and embodies technical and vocational education would help to give over-schooled and unemployed graduates a second career option.

Table 4.4: Per caption of employees on how effective and comprehensive curriculum planning mitigate the challenges of over-schooling

S/N	Statement	N ₀	SA	A	D	SD	Score	X	Decision
1.	An effective curriculum that is broad and embodies technical education would help to reduce skills mismatch among graduate and non graduate employees	627	235 (940)	109 (327)	106 (212)	177 (177)	1656	2.64	Agree
2.	An effective curriculum that is broad and embodies technical and vocational education would help to give over-schooled and unemployed graduates a second career option.	627	279 (1116)	234 (702)	70 (140)	44 (44)	2002	3.19	Agree

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study reveal that a larger chunk of the employees in the private sector especial those that perform technical task not minding the long period it took them to acquire formal education were given specialized training before they resumed duty formally. That is to say that these employees were found deficient in knowledge hence could probably not function effectively if directly taken to job. In other words, the earlier training they had acquired from formal education was insufficient or not completely functional.

On the other hand there seem to be no clear agreement that a more comprehensive and functional curriculum planning would make potential employees shorten their educational height before entering the labour market as many still want to attain enviable educational heights. However, for students that are technically or vocationally inclined spending more years in school to attain higher educational height is considered a waste of time. Hence, they see the need for a more functional curriculum that would prepare them for the labour market as early as possible.

Summary: The study explains the relationship between over-schooling and curriculum by revealing that:

- Despite the long period of formal education and passing through the school curricula, majority of employees were still given extra training for effective performance in their chosen careers.
- People engage in higher education to acquire skills for effective and more productive life in the knowledge dominated society. However, despite these potential negative consequences, young graduates still accept jobs for which they are overeducated. Several explanations have been provided in the literature to justify their decision, including the scarring effects of being unemployed just after graduation and the stepping-stone hypothesis, whereby young job-seekers actually

accept jobs as the shortest pathway to eventually finding a better match between a position and their skills.

- A curriculum that equips learners with the productive education that involves necessary technical and vocational skills and competencies if well administered at the basic and post basic levels will reduce the quest for higher education among student that are technically or vocationally inclined.
- An effective curriculum that is broad and embodies technical education would help to reduce skills mismatch among graduate and non graduate employees.
- An effective curriculum that is broad and embodies technical and vocational education would help to give over-schooled and unemployed graduates a second career options or make them self employed.

CONCLUSION

This paper provides some empirical evidence on the relationship between overschooling among the Nigerian workforce and educational curriculum. The study reveals that Nigeria has a significant number of over-schooled workforce especially in the private sector. Over-schooling which is the condition of having a level of education higher than that required to adequately perform specific job is associated with a wage penalty for the worker as well results to lower productivity, lower job satisfaction and increased psychological stress. As individuals, over-schooled workers, by virtue of the fact that a proportion of their educational investment is unproductive, are likely to earn a lower return on their investment relative to similarly educated individuals whose jobs match their education. Overschooled workers may also incur non-transitory costs associated with lower levels of job satisfaction. Also, as the rate of over-schooled workforce increases, it is also possible that previously well-matched workers in the economy will be 'bumped down' in the labour market and, perhaps out of it entirely, as

overeducated workers move into lower level occupations thus raising the mean educational level within these occupations rendering some previously adequately educated individuals undereducated. The incident of high level of over-schooled workforce has shown that the Nigerian educational curriculum has not been optimized to meet the realities of the present society. The curriculum perhaps does not offer functional education that is geared toward a productive living making people that have attained high level of education in various disciplines without employment to be seen as social misfits. This has a lot of implication on the national education policy.

Having studied the relationship between over-schooling and curriculum within the Nigeria education system, this study suggests that the Nigerian educational curriculum should be planned and developed in such a way that it would be comprehensive enough to offer the requisite knowledge and skills that would enable and prepare students fit competently into the 21st century labour market as well as embody other trainings in diverse endeavours of life that would ensure a balanced and more productive life among the students. The reason, being that when students are empowered with functional education, the urge to apply what they have acquired would stimulate the zeal to start an economically productive life as early as possible instead of spending longer period in school to acquire more training.

Recommendations: The results from this study lead us to make a number of policy suggestions. First, the quality of the education systems is crucial for ensuring good matching of workers to jobs; it is important to ensure good, homogeneous quality outcomes at all levels of the education system, while further supporting it with good and functional professional, technical or vocational contents.

Second, the national employment agencies should ensure that quality vocational trainings are provided at the basic and post basic levels as well as tertiary level to ensure that at level of education one can conveniently fit into a productive career with every competence.

Thirdly, upgrading skills or acquiring of technical skills could help unemployed overschooled youths gain employment in other areas. Also, support for on-the-job training could certainly further contribute to the resolution of skill mismatches among over-schooled job seekers.

Finally, given the trap effects that we have identified, effective policies aimed at keeping these young unemployed in touch with the labour market and

necessary functional skills needed for a more productive life would also be beneficial. Any efforts in these directions are likely to affect not only the individual but society overall.

More research is needed to further disentangle these countries' heterogeneity. However, policymakers should be aware of this persistent phenomenon when they adopt policies to encourage young workers acquire the type of education that matches their goal and to take up jobs in which they may become permanently stuck, a fate that is likely to affect not only the individuals concerned but society in general.

REFERENCES

1. Anyabolu, C.L., 2000. Basic Education for Productivity and Enhanced National Economy. *Journal of Vocational and Adult Education*. Vol. 2(1) UNIZI K Awka.
2. Battu, H. and C.R. Belfield, 1999. Overeducation among graduates: a cohort view. *Educ. Econ.*, 7(1): 21-38.
3. Dolton, P. and A. Vignoles, 2000. The incidence and effects of overeducation in the UK graduate labour market. *Econ. Educ. Rev.*, 19(2): 179-198.
4. McGuinness, S., 2006. Overeducation in the labour market. *Journal of Economic Survey*, 20(3): 387-418.
5. Brynin, M., 2002. Overqualification in employment. *Work, Employ. Soc.*, 16(4): 637-654.
6. Montt, G., 2017. Field-of-study mismatch and overqualification. *Labour Market*, 20(4).
7. Verdugo, R. and N. Verdugo, 1996. The impact of surplus schooling on earnings. *Journal of Human Resources*, 24(4): 629-643.
8. Obayan, P., 2000. Education and the Nigeria society: revisit the UBE as a people's oriented programme. Being the 2000 Prof. J. A. Majasan first anniversary memorial lecture, Ibadan.
9. Oriaifo, S.O., 2005. Curriculum Issues in Contemporary Education. Benin City: Da - Sylva Influence.
10. Okoh, B., 2000. An Appraisal of Vocational and Technical Education Programme at the Primary School Level in Nigeria. *African Journal of Education* 5(2).
11. Clark, B. and A. Maurel, 2017. The career prospects of overeducated Americans. *IZA J. Labour Econ.*, 6(1): 3.
12. Ezeocha, P.A., 1990. Education Administration and Planning. Nsukka: Optional Computer Solutions.

13. Adeife, T.O., 2011. Developing Curriculum in Technical Education. In U.M.O. Ivowi (Ed.). Curriculum Development in Nigeria. pp: 239 to 247. Ibadan, Sam Bookman.
14. Green, F., S. McIntosh and A. Vignoles, 2002. The utilization of education and skills: evidence from Great Britain. *The Manchester School*, 70(6): 792-811.
15. Obiefuna, Carol, 2009. Models of Curriculum Development. In U.M.O. IVowi, K. Nwosu, C. Nwagbara, J. Ukwungwu, I.E. Emah and G.C. Offorma (Eds). Curriculum Theory and Practice. Abuja: Curriculum Development of Nigeria.
16. Onyike, I.O., 1984. Steps in Curriculum Development. In U. Onwuka (Ed.). Curriculum Development for Africa. Onitsha: Africana - FEP Publishers Limited.
17. Fafunwa, A.B., 1976. History of Education in Nigeria. London: George Allen and Unwin.
18. Federal Republic of Nigeria. 1999. National Policy on Education. Lagos: NERDC Press.