

AN EVALUATION OF THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM AND PERSONALITY GROWTH AMONG UNIVERSITY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

The study was on assessment of hidden curriculum and personality development among university teacher education students. Two research questions were answered. The study adopted descriptive survey design with a population of 106 lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba. A sample size of 80 lecturers was drawn using the disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a 15- item questionnaire validated by three experts and it gave a reliability coefficient of 0.77 obtained using Cronbach Alpha Method. The data collected were analyzed with mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that the knowledge of hidden curriculum was vital for the students to fit into the society upon graduation and that it was important for teacher educators to determine and maximize the most suitable learning style for their students. It was then recommended that for teacher educators to get the desired results, they should first of all determine the most suitable learning style amenable for their students to learn and apply same in class, the teacher educators should guide the learners on how to incorporate theoretical learning to real life situation in order to find relevance in real life situations, teacher educators should learn to train their students with the idea of sustainability in mind since those being prepared are for the world of work in the future etc.

Keywords: Hidden curriculum, personality development, teacher education

Introduction

Curriculum is a guideline that is used in directing teaching and learning process. It can be viewed as a standard sequence of experiences made available to the students to make them proficient in the content delivered and to apply such learning to solving life problems. Amadioha and Akor (2019) say that the curriculum is a tool used in bringing about the relative permanent change in the behavior of the learner for the betterment of the learners and the society. Akor and Akajiri (2022) see curriculum as an instrument used in helping people to discover themselves for the advancement and usefulness to themselves and to the society. FAO (n.d.) defined the curriculum as a logical sequence of experiences meant for developing definite competencies in the learner. So, the curriculum could then be perceived as a contract document between the learner and an institution which determines what each partner should do to ensure the stakeholders are satisfied in the end. Thus, it presents the curriculum as an object of production in the society for helping the society achieve its goals or desires.

Some of the purposes that the curriculum serves include:

1. To conduct and coordinate teachers work; to harmonize the teaching done by the teacher.

2. To provide teachers with a shared language; a toolkit for planning, ensuring communication between teachers to increase their collaboration on contents and methods of delivery.
 3. To promote the development of continuous and multidimensional educational programmes.
 4. It promotes documentation and practical discussion of teaching experiences as well as the systematic evaluation of the teaching and learning process.
 5. It prepares students for instruction, facilitating revision of studies and participation in the process and its evaluation.
 6. It enhances complete instructional delivery and integral learning.
 7. It increases a teacher's sensitivity, accuracy and flexibility to improvise as required within the lesson plan.
- These are a few of the very many importance of the curriculum particularly to the teacher may be to the other education stakeholders especially, as it serves as a tool for consistency, it supports teacher preparation, sets clear goals expectation, adaptable to different needs, promote students engagement, facilitate assessment, prepares students for the future etc. Also, a curriculum has definite in terms of what the teacher needs and what the learner needs from it. They are:
- a. **Goals and Objectives:** This is what the teacher helps the learners to achieve after experiencing the curriculum and the process has ended; it is what the students should hold as their achievement from participating a curriculum content delivery.
 - b. **Content:** This is the specific ideas and knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to be taught to the learner.
 - c. **Instruction:** It is the manner or how the teacher is able to mix experiences, knowledge and skills to deliver it in an acceptable and learnable way to the students.
 - d. **Assessment:** It is the instrument and method adopted for the evaluation of the learning given or the content made available to the students during instructional delivery.
 - e. **Resources:** These are human and non-human tools and materials used to facilitate and support the teaching and learning process (SURASA, 2024).

According to William and Mary School of Education (WMSE, 2024; SURASA, 2024) different types of curriculum exist among which are written curriculum, taught curriculum, supported curriculum, assessed curriculum, recommended curriculum, hidden curriculum, excluded curriculum, learned curriculum etc.

Hidden curriculum is an informal, unplanned significant learning opportunity that students get because of the privilege of being in the school environment. They remain implied regulations, values and attitudes, expectations resulting from being part of a school's culture. SURASA (2024) defined hidden curriculum as such lessons, values, and sharing of perspective which were learnt indirectly because of proximity to school culture, environment and social interactions which greatly impact the development and behavior of the students. Wilson (n.d.) says that hidden curriculum is an implied curriculum by structure and nature; as it only concerns itself with

what revolves around the school and society's daily life. It is a type of tool from which learning is gleaned based on the design of the school as an institution. Here, the nature and social environment is responsible for the tutorship of the learner. Meanwhile (Gulzar, 2021) had viewed hidden curriculum as unplanned and unwritten curriculum that is vital in the learning of a learner. It is that cultural value and attitude which is transmitted based on the teaching of the school but inherent in its organizational structure.

Therefore, hidden curriculum could be construed as that unplanned, unintended means by which individuals exposed to learning opportunities glean knowledge, value, attitudes and skills from the environment they are in leading to betterment of self and the advancement of the society. Nonetheless, it is vital to note the following features of the hidden curriculum.

1. It is unplanned.
2. It is unintended.
3. It is usually presented in a social environment.
4. It is different with different organizational structures.
5. Learning by the learner must be deliberate and by volition.
6. The process of learning and rehearsing has the capacity to change the culture of the environment.
7. Sifting of learning opportunities is required to enable the separation of learning negative things and the positive ones as such tilting it towards growth and development.

Considering these features above, one could tell that what the personality of the learner becomes to an extent would be the offshoot of the person being able to determine require learning and those unrequired. Required learning in this case, could represent the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that bring about progress and advancement while the unrequired ones represent those that retard growth and development of a person and the society. Caceres (2024) says that hidden curriculum is made up of the following: learning how to satisfy teachers, how to get along with peers, knowledge of when to talk and when not to during class, how to speak in class, when to submit assignment etc.

Thus, hidden curriculum is a basket of unspoken and unwritten norms and value that strengthens the formal content delivered to students. This means that hidden curriculum is an enhancer of the formal curriculum and it does influence not only the students but the teacher also as well as others who may be found in the teaching and learning environment since it affects their time knowing when to tasks and assignments, how to manage the class, determine class culture and the environmental outlook of the entire space for teaching and learning process.

So, based on the ground above, Kundu (2023) believes hidden curriculum holds inherent strategies for helping learners get ahead in life as it gives them the opportunity to be aware and to use social, cultural and environmental resources available in the environment. Therefore, it enhances students thought, spoken ability and behavior towards achieving success in academics and life. The reason being that hidden curriculum teaches by implying

instead of the explicit nature associated with the written curriculum. Hence, it is easily accessible to some persons and more pronounced in certain fields of study than others. So, the personality of people in the society will continue to show inequality in the ability to learn and utilize hidden curriculum traits as a result of this. This means that teachers need to work harder to bridge the gap perceived.

Personality development deals with those factors that determine how personalities are developed and change from time to time. It is an effort made towards becoming a positively oriented person.

It is the process of developing a person's character over a given period of time (Robert (2023)). Personality development could be perceived as the process of modifying the traits possessed by an individual through exposure to tools that has the capacity for the modification process. It begins with reshaping of thoughts, beliefs and expectations. This may make one to see personality development as an act towards recognizing the need to be a better version of yourself and working to achieve that. This makes personality development a combination of traits and behaviour formed in response to what a person is being influenced by. Some of the possible factors responsible for this may include nature, genetic disposition, upbringing, experiences and perhaps environment in specific terms. These factors now lead to the unlocking of self awareness and fulfillment, professional advancement and leadership, better communication and relationship building, interest building, self-management, stress management, development of inner self, flexible attitude development (SMC, 2024). Furthermore, there are ways to bring personality development to include: exposure to learning opportunities, exposure to guidance and mentoring opportunities, application of learned ideas deliberately, learning from experience, constant opportunity for reflective practices. From the foregoing, it is clear that this is only achievable through exposure to intentional self-development processes. Therefore, the students in teacher education training have this to enjoy if such could apply themselves to obtaining features of hidden curriculum through the pursuit of personality development in the teacher education process.

Teacher education is the act of preparing teachers to take up the role of teaching in the future. Nwadiokwu (2021) says it is aimed at preparing people for the world of work in the teaching profession. Akor and Okonny (2024) say it is a process of preparing teachers for the job they will be doing in the future. While Akor and Offor (2024) perceive it as an embodiment of pedagogical skills, psychological skills and professional skills required to carry out the duties of a teacher. Therefore, Akor, Ojonugwa and Echeonwu (2024) describe teacher education as a professional development process for teachers in training in order to be relevant both for the now and in the future. So, teacher education is expected to use all the paraphernalia of knowledge, skills, values needed to package the teacher trainees based on the needs and aspiration of the society in anticipation for the responsibilities which they would be saddled with. This is in line with one of the goals of teacher education which says that it is meant to 'provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations' (FRN, 2016). This then means that in training teachers, every means possible

should be adopted especially when it would not undermine the future of the practice, hence, the idea of hidden curriculum and personality development seem to find relevance with this goal of teacher education, particularly, because of the nature of teacher education graduates the higher institutions now churn out.

In a recent dialogue with colleagues all seem to be lamenting on how poorly their undergraduate students in teacher education process perform both in written and oral assessments except for few of them who are performing well. This is not only common in state universities but also in federal universities were one of them recounted how a friend and colleague from a federal university shared how during a board meeting was need to lower pass mark to allow a good number scale through to pass mark and be able to graduate. So this issue is now a major concern on where the missing gap lies, why the performance standard in teacher education practices across the nation seem to be in a limbo. The questions that come to mind are, does the teaching received by the students satisfy their needs? Are the students ready and willing for the lectures delivered to them? Do the lecturers package adequate level of hidden curriculum in the course of lesson delivery to boost students' competence level and prepare them for the life ahead? Thus, the study assessment of hidden curriculum and personality development among university teacher education students: Lecturers perspective. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Assess the extent of hidden curriculum packaged for personality development among university teacher education students.
2. Assess the extent of strategies adopted for transferring hidden curriculum and personality development among university teacher education students.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent of hidden curriculum packaged for personality development among university teacher education students?
2. What is the extent of strategies adopted for transferring hidden curriculum and personality development among university teacher education students?

Research Method

The study was carried out in Nigeria, (Prince Abubakar Audu University). The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population for the study was 106 lecturers in the faculty of education while the sample size for the study was made up of 80 lecturers who were drawn using the disproportionate stratified random sampling technique from different departments of the faculty of education in the institutions. The instrument used by the researchers for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Questionnaire on Assessment of Hidden Curriculum and Personality Development Among University Teacher Education Students (QAHCPDAUTES) which was constructed by the researchers. It consists of 15-items which were arranged in two sections A and B. Section A contains the biodata, while section B consists of two subgroups: extent of hidden curriculum packaged in

instructional delivery and strategies adopted for transferring hidden curriculum for personality development. The questionnaire was built on a modified four-point Likert Scale, namely: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) and the levels of responses are weighted as 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively.

The instrument was face validated by three experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation Unit, one from Curriculum and Instruction unit and another one from Educational Psychology unit, all from of the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, Kogi State. The suggestions given were used in producing the final copy of the instrument. Cronbach alpha was used in calculating the reliability to determine the internal consistency which gave an alpha value of 0.77 which was considered high after 10 copies of the questionnaire was administered on lecturers Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Port Harcourt. The instrument was thereafter administered to the respondents and collected by the researchers. The data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. Hence, $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$. Therefore, items whose mean were less than 2.5 were seen as low extent (LE) responses while those whose mean were 2.5 and above were seen as high level (HE) responses. **Results**

Research Question 1: What is the extent of hidden curriculum packaged for personality development among university teacher education students?

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation on Extent of Hidden Curriculum Packaged for Personality Development Among University Teacher Education Students

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	N	Remark
1.	Knowledge of point of view in instructional delivery	2.7	2.02	HE	80
2.	Knowledge of rules in the learning environment	3.2	1.9	HE	80
3.	Knowledge of nature of rules enforcement pattern	3.2	2.37	HE	80
4.	Understanding of teaching method	3.6	1.55	HE	80

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5.	Knowledge of learning style to adopt	2.5	1.58	HE	80
6.	Knowledge of state of the school environment	2.6	1.44	HE	80
7.	Knowledge of relationship in school	2.8	1.26	HE	80
Grand Mean		2.94	1.73		

and S D

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The results on table 1 above showed that the assessors perceived that university teacher education students' knowledge of hidden curriculum for personality development is above average with grand mean and standard deviation (2.94 and 1.73). It could be observed from the result that their knowledge on the understanding of teaching method stands highest while the lowest was for learning style which is at the average level with both mean (3.6 and 2.5). The implication is that knowledge of extent of hidden curriculum for personality development is not enough but the application of knowledge to produce positive impact on the behaviour and attitude of the students for the betterment of themselves and that of the society at large.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of strategies adopted for transferring hidden curriculum and personality development among university teacher education students?

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation on Extent of Strategies Adopted for Transferring Hidden Curriculum and Personality Development Among University Teacher Education Students

social skills development

	Items	Mean	SD	N	REMARK
1	Strategies for	2.6	1.55	80	HE
2	Strategies for demonstration skills development	2.8	0.8	80	HE
3	Strategies for cultural literacy development	2.4	1.55	80	LE
4	Strategies for critical skills development	2.6	1.55	80	HE
5	Strategies for roles development for survival in the society	2.5	1.58	80	HE

Grand Mean 2.58 1.40
and S D

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The result on table 2 indicates that there is high extent of assessment of the strategies used for transferring hidden curriculum for personality development with grand mean and standard deviation (2.58 and 1.40). All the items on the questionnaire had positive responses except for strategies for cultural literacy skills development with mean (2.4) that was at low extent. This is a critical situation in that no matter what a person knows and such a person is not able to fit adequately into the society because of lack of cultural literacy that individual would not be useful to himself and the society as such. Therefore, teacher trainers should work assiduously to help the teacher trainees attain the desired extent of cultural literacy. However, the implication of these is that teacher educators should always do well to encourage instructional delivery that has bearing with social reality.

Discussion of the Findings

The result on table 1 above revealed the extent of knowledge of hidden curriculum for personality development that university teacher education student have. It was discovered from the result that the university teacher education students have understanding of the teaching method adopted by the teacher trainers the most followed by knowledge of rules in the learning environment and the nature of its enforcement. Though, they have an average knowledge of learning style, however, improvement is required such that the university teacher education students would be able to transfer that to their work life in the future. This is in line with the findings of Cubukcu (2012) who found that hidden curriculum knowledge help students to gain and internalize value for great personality and character development. Also, Andervzh, Afshar & Yazdani (2017) found that the knowledge of hidden curriculum help students to be familiar with learning for transmission in the future and learning for joining the profession seamlessly. But the findings of Campbell and ElGalad (2023) is in disagreement as it was discovered that hidden curriculum is quit a problem for the student who find it difficult to merge the information obtained in the classroom with social reality. So, it becomes imperative that teacher educators should be creative enough to marry theoretical information with its practical relevance to the society.

Again, the result on table 2 showed high extent of assessment of the strategies used for transferring hidden curriculum for personality development. The whole items on the questionnaire but cultural literacy with low extent result were adjudged to have positive responses in terms of strategies. It means that the teacher educators are doing their best to ensure that their students get the best from the curriculum in practice. This presents a critical

situation because cultural literacy that is below average is part of the responsibilities the teacher educators must carry out in order to ensure that the students they churn out are those that have the skills required to function fully in the society. This finding corroborates the findings of (Rossouw & Frick, 2024; Campbell & El-Galad, 2023) who found that the strategies adopted for transferring hidden curriculum by lecturers was limited and that the strategies influence the teachers ability to deliver the content of their lessons thereby leading to misalignment, therefore, creativity on the part of the teacher educators would be required as the solution to overcoming any challenge that may arise due to the strategy adopted in lesson delivery.

Conclusion

The conclusion that could be drawn based on the findings of this study is that knowledge of hidden curriculum makes the application of its content easier and for the students to fit into the society in the future but that it is as important as that the teacher trainers identify the most appropriate strategy that would bring about learning in a greater percentage of the learners while delivering lesson. Also, lecturers should learn to adopt strategies that have been tested and are suitable enough to producing the desired result for adequate learning impact to be observable in the learner in order to make them useful to themselves and the society.

Recommendation

The following are the recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

1. For teacher educators to get the desired results, they should first of all determine the most suitable learning style amenable for their students to learn and apply same in class.
2. The teacher educators should guide the learners on how to incorporate theoretical learning to real life situation in order to find relevance in real life situation.
3. Teacher educators should learn to train their students with the idea of sustainability in mind since those being prepared are for the world of work in the future.
4. Teacher educators should play their part in helping their students acculturate for cultural literacy.
5. The students should do well to expose themselves to the opportunities for cultural literacy wherever they may find themselves.

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