Adequacy of Graduation Requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for Adult and Non-Formal Education in Nigeria

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Abstract
The aim of this paper is to evaluate the graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria with a view to finding out whether it is adequate or not. The study was a descriptive survey research design, guided by two research questions and one hypothesis. The population of the study was 220 lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria that offer adult education. The entire population was used for the study; hence, no sapling was done. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The face and content validity of the questionnaire was done by two experts from Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Department of Science Education respectively. Cronbach alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument which stood at 0.97. Data collected were analyzed using mean statistics for research question one, percentage analysis for research question two, t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that all the two items in the instrument were adequate. However, percentage analysis indicated that most respondents suggested the inclusion of teaching options or courses and inculcation of at least a practical skill in the curriculum for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria. Therefore, based on the findings, it was recommended that teaching courses, acquisition of a practical skill and reduction to 80 credits should be included in the graduation requirements of NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education.

Keywords: Adequacy, Graduation, Requirements, NCCE 2012, Minimum standards.

Introduction

The acronym, NCCE, stands for National Commission for Colleges of Education. It is the regulatory body for colleges of education in Nigeria. NCCE2012 minimum standards is a policy document in all the colleges of education in Nigeria that contains all the curriculum for various departments or schools including adult education in the colleges of education in Nigeria. It came into effect in 2012. Hence, its name NCCE2012 minimum standards .On the other hand, graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 Nigeria certificate in Education Minimum Standards for adult and non formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria is a condition students of adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria must fulfill before graduation in any colleges of education in Nigeria. It is the requirements any student of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria must met before leaving school with Nigeria certificate in Education (NCE).

This certificate is the basic requirement or qualification a person must possess, to teach in pre-primary, primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria (NCCE 2012). Adult and non-formal education by definition refers to any form of learning undertaken by or provided for mature men and women outside the formal school system while adequacy is a state of being satisfactory or acceptable in quality or quantity. In this study, adequacy implies determining how adequate or satisfactory the graduation requirements in the NCCE2012 minimum standards are to achieve the objectives of adult and non-formal education in this 21st century.

The minimum credits for graduation in NCCE2012 document are one hundred and seventeen (117) or one hundred and eighteen (118) while the maximum is one hundred and twenty-six (126), covering all the components of the programs as indicated in the course outline. In addition, a student of adult education must possess the minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 1.00 to graduate. A student whose Cumulate Grade Point Average is below 1.00 is given a period of probation for one academic session, failing to make it during the probation period, the student is required to withdraw.

Another requirement before graduation according to NCCE2012 Minimum Standards is that, all registered students must enroll for and pass general studies courses recommended for adult and non-formal education. Any core or compulsory course or courses failed must be taken at the next available opportunity. Equally, all registered students must submit a supervised project before graduation. The project may be written in general education or any of the student's special area. Three copies of such protects typed, double spaced and bound (hard cover) must be submitted by each student before graduation (NCCE 2012).

The researcher observed that the graduation requirements in the colleges of education for adult and non-formal education does not emphasize practical skills learners should possess before graduation. This, to the researcher's view is a big lacuna. Adult education is such a discipline that helps equips its recipients with knowledge and skills that will bring about positive changes in their individual lives and that of the society. This view is in line with Gboku and Lekoko (2007) in chieke (2021) who defined adult education as a discipline that bequeaths its recipients with knowledge attitudes and skills for personal and societal development. Graduation requirements it met, means that a learner has passed through the college and the college passed through him. This means that the learner has imbibed all the necessary skills and now ready for the world of work. To the researcher's mind, the graduation requirements should include credit pass in all the practical skills taught in the college. This view agrees with Hermandez, Renart, and Manzano (2009) in chieke (2021) who emphasized that graduation requirements in the

colleges of education should include practical skills the learner has acquired, not only theories and concepts.

According to Ferdinard (2022), graduation requirements in the colleges of education in Ghana include among other things- students should pass all courses, successful completion of 168 days in school experience (supported teaching in schools), settle all financial and other obligations of the college. Union Bulletin Education Board (2018) believed, that flexibilities in graduation requirements benefit students. It is important that a student graduates from school because graduation provides such a student better career opportunity and help his grab a decent job immediately after school.

The respondents in this study were lecturers with long years of service experience and those with fewer years of service experience in the colleges of education in Nigeria that offer adult education. They were used for the study because they are the real implementers of NCCE 2012 minimum standard for adult and non-formal education. Based on their experiences, they may differ in their views as to the adequacy of the graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards. Lecturers with long years of service experience (10 years above) are seen as experienced lecturers while those with fewer years of service experience (9 years below) are seen as inexperienced lecturers.

Statement of the Problem

The NCCE2012 Minimum Standards has lasted for over ten years without review or revision. It needs to be reviewed to make it responsive to the aspirations and needs of the learners in the 21st century world of work. Secondly, the researcher observed that many graduates of adult and non-formal education in the college of education in Nigeria find it very difficult to have job after schooling. They appeared not to have acquired the necessary skills required in the 21st century world of work. The apparent lack of teaching courses in their curriculum makes it nearly impossible for them to get job as teachers in the primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria. The researcher is of a view that credit passes in one or more teaching courses should be included in the graduation requirements of the colleges of education for adult and non-formal education in Nigeria so as to help the newly graduated students get job as teachers.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided the study

1. How do lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria rate the adequacy of graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards?
2. What suggestions or inputs could be proffered to improve the graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum students for adult and non-formal education.

Hypothesis

A null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance

Ho: There is no significant difference between lecturers who have long years of service experience (10 years above) and those who have fewer years of service experience (9 years below) in their mean ratings on the adequacy of graduation requirements as prescribed in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education.

Methodology

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design in this study. The area of the study was the colleges of education in Nigeria that offer adult education courses. The population of the study was 220 lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria that offer adult education courses. The entire population was used for the study because it was small and manageable. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was titled, adequacy of graduation requirements on the NCCE 2012 minimum standards scale (AGRNMSS). The AGRNMSS has two items structured in a 5-point rating scale of very Adequate (VA) 5 points; Adequate (A) 4 points; Fairly Adequate (EA) 3 points; Inadequate (INAD) 2 points and Very Inadequate (VINAD) 1 point.

The respondents were asked to tick any option of their choice in the instrument. The instrument was validated by two experts from the departments of adult and continuing education and science education, all in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. Cron bach alpha coefficient formula was used to determine the reliability coefficient of AGRNMSS which stood at 0.97 which is a high reliability index. 220 copies of questionnaire were produced and distributed to the respondents through the help of six research assistants drawn from each geopolitical zones of the country. Only 203 copies were filled and returned, representing 92.2%. The data analysis was therefore based on the 203 filled and returned copies of the questionnaire. Mean statistics was used to analyze research question one while frequency table and percentages were used to analyze research question two. t - test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Nworgu (2015) affirmed the use of t test to test hypothesis about the difference between two population means.

Therefore, the use of t-test for the study is deemed appropriate. The decision rule for research questions were determined using true limits of numbers in a five-point rating scale response category. As regard the decision rule, 3.5 mean points and above were regarded as adequate while 3-49 and below were regarded as inadequate. The null hypothesis was accepted at 0.05 level of significant if the calculated value of t is less than the critical or table value, otherwise, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question One:

How do lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria rate the adequacy of graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standard for Adult and Non-formal education?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Lecturers on the Adequacy of Graduation Requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards (N=203)

S/N	ITEMS ON GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	X	SD	REMARK
1	The minimum credit for graduation requirements is 117/118	3.85	1.22	Adequate
2	The maximum credit for graduation requirement is 126	4.09	0.86	Adequate

Table 1: Shows that the lecturers rated the two items in the graduation requirements as adequate.

Research Question Two:
What suggestions could be proffered to improve the graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for Adult and Non-formal education?

Table 2: Percentage Analysis of Suggestions by Lecturers to Improve the Requirements in the Section of the Graduation Requirements (N=19)

S/N	Suggestions by Lecturers on Graduation Requirement	Frequency	Percentage %
1	STUDY on health education	1	5.26%
2	Reduction of credit units, not more than 80 units	1	5.26%
3	Students should have opportunity for teaching options- adult education/sociology; political science, mass communication, economics, French, Igbo, English etc	7	34.84%
4	Compulsory acquisition of at least a skill before graduation	8	44.11%
5	Desire to pursue further studies in adult education	2	10.53%
	Total		100%

Table 2 shows percentage responses of the suggestions by the lecturers on graduation requirements. Out of 203 lecturers, only 19 made suggestions in this section. The most frequent among the respondents is the provision of compulsory acquisition of at least a skill before graduation (44.11%), followed by opportunity to have teaching options (34.84%)

Test of Hypothesis
Ho: There is no significant difference between lecturers who have long years of service experience (10 years above) and those who have fewer years of service (9 years & below) in their means ratings on the adequacy of graduation requirements as prescribed in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education.

Table 3: t-test of Significant Difference between Inexperienced and Experienced Lecturers on the Adequacy of Graduation Requirements

Lecturers	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	LS	Decision
Inexperienced	61	4.12	070	199	1.55	1.96	0.05	Not significant
Experienced	142	3.90	0.83					

Table 3:
Shows that at 0.05 level of significance and 199 degrees of freedom, t-cal (1.55) is less than t-crit (1.96). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers who have long years of service experience (10 years above) and those who have fewer years of service experience (9 years above) on the adequacy of graduation requirements was not rejected. This means that both senior and younger lecturers agreed that

minimum and maximum credits in the graduation requirement of NCCE 2012 minimum standards are adequate

Discussion of Findings

The result of the analysis of data relating to the adequacy of the graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards was rated as adequate by the lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria.

The graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education were considered as satisfactory by the lecturers. However, five other items were suggested by lecturers to improve the section of graduation requirements in the NCEE 2012 minimum standards. The most frequent among the respondents is compulsory acquisition of at least a skill before graduation. This agrees with the idea of Hermandez et al (2009) who stated that graduation requirements should include practical skills the learner has acquired over the years, not just theories and concepts. Practical skill is indispensable in the life of a learner in this 21st century world of work. White collar jobs are no more in Vogue. In contrast, practical skills open endless opportunities to those who acquired it. A graduate with veritable skills becomes the chief executive officer (CEO) who employs others.

The test of the null hypothesis revealed that there was no significant difference between the lecturers which long years of service experience and those with fewer years of service experience on the adequacy of graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards. Graduation requirements are conditio ns a learner must met before graduating from school. This is supposed to mean that before a person graduates from an institution he or she must have been prepared thoroughly by the school to face the world of work. He or she must have been imbibed with both practical and theoretical aspects of his or her studies. Therefore, graduation requirements suppose to include such items which would have helped a learner to withstand the rigors of life after school, to be independent and self sufficient. Adult education is one of such disciplines which should be suffused with skills and knowledge that will enable learners acquire positive changes and development in their lives and that of society at large. Gboku and Lekoko (2007) in Chieke (2021), defined adult education as a discipline that has the conscious intuition of bringing about changes in information, knowledge or skill for the purpose of solving personal or community problems.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that graduation requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria should include teaching options such as adult education/economics; adult education/mass communication, adult education/accounting; adult education/political science, to enable prospective teachers of adult and non-formal education teach in primary and secondary schools, after graduation.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. The National Commission for the Colleges of Education (NCCE) should include at least acquisition of a practical skill in the graduation requirements of NCCE 2012 minimum

standards for adult and non-formal education. This will help students to acquire a skill that will help them be self-employed and self-reliant after graduation.

2. The National Commission for the Colleges of Education in Nigeria (NCCE) should, as well include teaching options such as economics, history, mass communication, political science among others, in the curriculum of students studying adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria. This will broaden their employment opportunities.
3. The maximum credits a student should attain before graduation should be reduced to 80 or 90 credits. This will help reduce academic stress, boost admission enrolment and ease graduation in the colleges of education in Nigeria.

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