

Policy-Practice Disconnect: Challenges of Educational Policy Implementation in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

Educational policies in Nigeria are often well-designed on paper but face significant hurdles during implementation. Despite the development of comprehensive educational policies in Nigeria, a persistent gap exists between policy formulation and successful implementation at the university level. A significant recent policy development is the introduction of the Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) by the National Universities Commission (NUC), designed to replace the older Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS). Even though CCMAS aims to ensure uniformity and quality in curriculum development across Nigerian universities, its implementation has revealed longstanding systemic challenges in translating national policy into institutional practices. This paper investigates the key challenges that hinder translating educational policies into effective institutional practices in Nigerian universities. This study adopts a qualitative approach to collect relevant data from selected universities in Nigeria. The data trends highlight the disconnect between federal education goals and institutional realities, as shown in the infrastructure deficits and staff resistance to change, with serious implications for education quality and institutional governance. To bridge the gap between policy and practice, the study proposes a comprehensive framework that includes participatory policy development, capacity building for implementers, decentralized implementation strategies, and continuous policy feedback loops through robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The study contributes to the discourse on educational reforms by offering actionable insights to help policymakers and university leaders foster more effective and sustainable policy adoption across universities.

Keywords: Approach; Governance; Institutional; Qualitative; Reform