THEORISING THE INVITING PEDAGOGY MODEL FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS IN AFRICA

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Abstract

This paper presents the Inviting Pedagogy Model, a pedagogy that attempts to integrate formal education that is Eurocentric with cultural education of African societies at a knowledge (ontological) and methodological (epistemological) levels in a teaching and learning situation. The paper argues that for an effective delivery of a complete and relevant education project (curriculum) that will make learners stay in school until completion and attain maximum benefits out of the teaching and learning situation, there should be an integration of both formal education and cultural education. The paper is informed by analysis of data that was generated from eight teachers, 48 learners and 20 community people in the rural areas of the Lagos State in Nigeria. The participants were from diverse backgrounds; that is, multicultural, multiethnic and multilingual groups and both female and male genders represented. The study took a qualitative design and thus the qualitative methods of data production and data analysis were used and drawing from Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse as an analytical framework. The finding shows that the Inviting Pedagogy Model incorporates relevant cultural knowledge, instils values and educates learners for the completeness of life that includes career pathing and social competence.

Keywords: Inviting Pedagogy Model, multicultural education, African contexts, values education, cultural education.

1 INTRODUCTION

Globally, the issue of school low retention rates or high attrition rates among the learners has been described as a challenge confronting the education sector. Though the number of learners’ enrollment seems to be increasing in terms of school access, the school retention rates are declining. A body of research [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] reports that many and varying reasons exist that lead to learners dropping out of school and these include, but are not limited to, economic, social, health, cultural, political and educational factors. Nigeria, like other African countries, has high attrition rates among the learners and this still presents a challenge. The issue of school dropout in Nigeria has existed for a very long time, even before the country’s independence from the colonial administration in 1960. The intense cultural education that exists in Nigerian communities coupled with the weak school education, are some of the main reasons for learners dropping out of school. However, in the context of high drop-out rates, some learners remain at school and complete their school education. Our argument in this paper is that even in the context of a strong and enticing cultural education, the appropriate delivery of formal school education keeps learners in schools. We therefore present the ‘inviting’ classroom pedagogy model that we believe is appropriate for multicultural rural contexts such as that of Nigeria.

2 METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative in design because we wanted to understand the perspectives of knowledgeable participants who had experience of the phenomenon, the participants’ point of view [6] [7]. The qualitative approach is relevant in this study as it refers to a broad class of empirical procedures designed to describe and interpret the experiences of research participants in a context-specific setting. In this study, we chose the interpretivist paradigm because it provides flexibility, is concerned with the social process whereby meaning is co-constructed with the participants, and allows simultaneous generation and analysis of data (with theory emerging from the data rather than being superimposed upon it) [8].

The study covers four rural secondary schools that are known to have high attrition rates among learners in Alimosho Area Council of Lagos State, Nigeria. Eight teachers were selected to form one focused group; out of which four were selected for individual interviews. Forty-eight learners (12 learners per school) were selected to participate in four focused group discussions. Twenty
participants from parents and community people were engaged in a workshop session. Participants were from diverse backgrounds and we ensured that at least the four major ethnic groups (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and Fulani) were represented in all groups of participants (that is, teachers, learners, parents and community members). Thus, data generation was through focused group discussions (FGD), individual semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, workshop sessions, and document analysis; all of which are relevant to the study design.

The data sources analysed were recorded FGDs, individual interviews, workshop sessions, and field notes that were written during classroom observations. The Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, Fufude, Ibibio and Irobo transcripts were then translated into English. We used different colour codes to code and re-code the data and to build concepts from textual data and marking important sections and adding descriptive phrases. As we engaged with the first cycle of coding processes, the coding patterns assisted us in identifying similarities, differences, frequencies, and sequences.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Socio-cultural Factors

The key findings reveal that socio-cultural factors still prevail in the communities, and that within a number of cultural festivals, cultural education is delivered. During the festivals not only the beliefs are a focus, but also cultural education forms the foundation that community people inculcate to the young and old. Therefore, the critical facet highlighted is that in the multicultural context in question, cultural education is much valued by both parents and learners because they see it as relevant to their lives. Its glorification emanates from the content, values, knowledge, skills, ways of learning and knowing, and the materials used to educate during the festival sessions.

Alongside the cultural education, formal education is offered in the schools; however, in its weakened form as most teachers have inadequate content knowledge and there are inadequate resources. Moreover, the school environment is hostile to the girls in particular. Therefore, the parents and learners prefer cultural education to formal education. In this paper, we argue for the inviting classroom pedagogies model, in the formal education schooling system, that integrate knowledge and methodologies used in cultural education and the learner-centred methods of formal education. Accordingly, the product will be a learner who remains at school until completion, has a clearer career path, and is socially competent.

3.2 Inviting Pedagogy Model (IPM)

The Inviting Pedagogy Model (IPM) is a theory that attempts to integrate formal education that is Eurocentric with cultural education of African societies at knowledge (ontological) and methodological (epistemological) levels in a teaching and learning situation. In other words, the model is advocating for the merger of the different (or two) worldviews; that is Eurocentric and African, in knowledge delivered, and pedagogical strategies used in a classroom situation. The immediate outcome is the education retention of a learner until completion of the schooling system. The ultimate outcome envisaged is the person who has realised his or her career of choice and is also socially competent to understand self and how self interacts with other people within and without his or her cultural group because of the acquired human values, life skills and intrinsic qualities. The key aspects of the Inviting Pedagogy Model are the three pillars and two actions that foreground the learner and his or her ontological and epistemological suppositions.

The three pillars of IPM are the relevant knowledge (R), accessible knowledge (A) and respect (R). Relevant knowledge relates to that knowledge, which leads to career path and knowledge that leads to social competence. Accessible knowledge refers to the knowledge that is at the level of the learner and is facilitated by a qualified and competent teacher using appropriate learner support materials, adequate and safe resources and carefully designed activities and incorporating culturally relevant methodologies. Respect (R) means teacher-learner and learner-learner interactions are underpinned by respect for dignity for each person.

The two actions for the IPM relate to the learner and they are physical attendance and cognitive participation. Physical attendance means learners go to school and attend all lessons and school activities. Cognitive participation means a learner’s mind is continuously actively engaged in the learning process, during which time the learner is empowered to lead the activities of the learning
process. Thus, the methodologies used in the inviting pedagogy model are engaging and learner-centred. The learner and the teacher become co-producers of knowledge.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of the study was to understand socio-cultural perspectives to education retention in a multicultural school context by exploring inviting pedagogy model in four rural secondary schools of Lagos State in Nigeria. We acknowledge that factors that outline the retention of learners in schools are context-specific; hence a case study and interpretive orientation. However, for the effective delivery of a complete and relevant education project (curriculum) that will make learners stay in school until completion and attain maximum benefit out of the teaching and learning situation, there should be an integration of both formal education and cultural education. It is the integration of both that forms the core of the inviting pedagogy model; for example, formal education will help learners for career path as well as social competence. This will cater for learners staying in the classroom to learn and complete their education since the integration of both types of education will empower the learner with adequate knowledge, skills, and value for self-learning and knowing.

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REFERENCES


