

TEACHING METHODOLOGY *in* THE HUMANITIES



Edited by
'Raheem Adebayo Lawal

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INTRODUCTION

Economics examines the choices people make about the use of limited resources to satisfy unlimited wants. This helps to explain and predict how goods and services will be produced and consumed. It further tells on who gets what, how and why.

Economics is one of the six elective subjects in the senior secondary curriculum. The pupils are expected to spend 6 years in Primary School, 3 years in Junior Secondary School, 3 years in Senior Secondary School and at least 4 years in the university. The Senior Secondary is mainly divided into three arms namely Science, Arts and Commercial classes. A student in the Senior Secondary section is expected to choose one of the arms from their first year and this class determines what the student could or could not study at the tertiary level because they have subject combinations tailored towards certain disciplines, although subjects such as Mathematics and English Language are compulsory for all the classes.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

1. describe the nature and scope of Economics;
2. outline the four major objectives of secondary school Economics curriculum;
3. highlight any ten major Economics themes in the curriculum and name at least three sub-topics under each; and
4. discuss five problems and prospects of teaching and learning Economics at Secondary School level.

ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

Obemeata (1991) observed that opinions (in the 1950's) did not favour the teaching of Economics in Secondary Schools because most educational policy makers in Nigeria were British and were influenced by what obtained in Britain. Again, most of the Economics graduates in Nigeria did not stay long enough in teaching to mount pressure for the inclusion of Economics in the Secondary School curriculum.

The philosophy of the Economics as stated by Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2013) is to present Economics as a subject that has relevance in everyday life and could prepare graduates for an entrepreneurial career in future. The development of the human capital and the entire country is also the hallmark of the new Economics curriculum.

OBJECTIVES OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL (SSS) ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

Under the new (2013) National Policy on Education (NPE) and as designed by NERDC, the SSS Economics curriculum equips graduates of the SSS with the basic knowledge and skills that will enable them to better appreciate the nature of economic problems in the society. In the light of this philosophy, the specific objectives are to:

- (i) equip students with the basic principles of Economics necessary for useful living and for higher education;
- (ii) prepare and encourage students to be prudent and effective in the use of scarce resources;
- (iii) raise respect for the dignity of labour;
- (iv) enable students to appreciate the social values of our society.

The outlined lofty objectives are to equip students which would help to foster the intellectual power of students in general, and develop economic perspectives that will benefit their further studies in a variety of Social Sciences.

SSS ECONOMICS CURRICULUM CONTENT

The revised SSS Economics Curriculum as presented by NERDC (2013) comprised 27 main concepts. An attempt has been made to integrate the theoretical foundations of the subject with their practical applications since the underlying philosophy of this curriculum is to present Economics as a subject that has relevance to everyday life.

A conceptual approach was adopted in identifying the relevant topics essential for the achievement of the set objectives. It is to be noted also that the structuring of the content was based on the spiral spread so as to make it possible for a concept to be learnt from its basic (from SSS I) to its complex nature (in SSS III).

S/N	Major Themes	Sub – themes
1.	Definitions and Scope Of Economics	• Definitions of Economics • Basic Concepts of Economics • Scope of Economics • The Basic Economic Problem • Importance of Economics
2.	Alternative Economic Systems	Meaning, Features, Examples, Advantages and Disadvantages of: • Capitalism • Socialism • Mixed Economics
3.	Basic Tools of Economic Analysis	Basic Tools: • Tables, Graphs, Charts, Functions and Equations • Measures of Central Tendency • Measures of Dispersion
4.	Production	• Meaning and Type • Factors of Production • Factors Influencing the Level of Production • Production Possibility Curve • Division of Labour and Specialisation • Economies of Scale • The Law of Diminishing Returns and the Law of Return to Scale
5.	The Theory of Consumer Behaviour	• The Cardinal Approach • The Ordinal Approach • Utility Maximisation under the Two Approaches • Consumer Surplus • Derivation of Demand Curve from the Theory of Diminishing Marginal Utility
6.	The Theory of Demand	• Meaning and Law of Demand; Demand Schedule and Curve • Exceptional Demand Curve • Determinants of Demand • Change in Quantity Demanded and a Change in Demand • Types of Demand • Elasticity of Demand- Price, Income and Cross Elasticity of

7.	Theory Of Supply	• Meaning and Definition • Abnormal Supply Curves • Factors Affecting Supply of a Commodity • Change in Quantity Supplied and Change in Supply • Types of Supply • Elasticity of Supply
8.	Theory of Price Determination	• Price Determination under a Free Market • Price Mechanisation • Price Determination under a Regulated Market • Price Control
9.	Agriculture	• Meaning, Components and System of Agriculture • Problems Militating against Agricultural Production in Nigeria • The Role of Agriculture • Agricultural Policies in Nigeria • The Marketing Board
10.	Industry	• A Firm and an Industry • Location of Industry • Localisation of Industry • Industrialisation • Industrial Policies- Indigenisation, Privatisation, Commercialisation and Nationalisation
11.	Distributive Trade	• Meaning and Chain of Distribution • The Wholesale • The Retailer • Problems of Distribution in Nigeria
12.	The Theory of Cost	• Different Views of Cost • Cost of Production • Short run and Long run Costs • Optimum Factor Combination • Marginal Cost and Supply Curve of a Firm
13.	Market Structures	• Perfect Market • Imperfect Markets- Pure Monopoly, Discriminating Monopoly, Monopolistic Competition and Oligopsony • Other: Monopsony, Oligopsony and Duopsony
14.	Business Organisation	• Private and Public Enterprises • Private Enterprises: Sole proprietorship, Cooperative Societies and Joint Stock Company • Sources of Finance to Firm • Public Corporation
15.	Population	• Population Census • Determinants of Population Growth • Population Size and Growth • Population Density: Increasing Population and Declining Population • Population Concepts: Over-population, Under-Population and Optimum Population

		• Population Structure/Distribution: Age, Sex, Occupational and Geographical Distribution • Population Theory: The Malthusian Theory and Demographic Transition Theory
16.	Labour Market	• Concept of Labour Force • Demand for Labour • Wage Determination • Mobility of Labour • Efficiency of Labour • The Concept of Unemployment • Trade Union • Employers' Association
17.	Money	• Meaning and Historical Development of Money • Types of Money, Characteristics of Good Money, Function of Money, Demand for Money and Supply of Money • The Quantity Theory of Money and Graham's Law
18.	Inflation and Deflation	• Inflation: Meaning, Measurement, Types, Causes, Effects and Controls of Inflation • Deflation: Meaning, Causes, Effects and Control of Deflation
19.	Financial Institutions (Banking)	• Commercial Banking • Central Banking • Merchant Banking • Development Banking
20.	Non-Bank Institutions & Financial Market	• Insurance Companies • Mortgage Institution • Investment Trust • Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) • The Stock Exchange • Money and Capital Market
21.	International Trade	• International Trade & Domestic Trade • Reasons for International Trade • The theory of Comparative Cost • Advantages & Disadvantages of International Trade • Composition & Trend of International Trade among West African Countries • Economic Integration & Custom Union
22.	International Payment	• Terms of Trade • Balance of Trade • Balance of Payment • Devaluation of Currency
23.	Public Finance	• Meaning & Objectives of Public Finance • The Budget: Meaning & Types

		• National Income • Factors Affecting National or Country's National Income • Uses of National Income Statistics • The Limitation of the Use of National Income • The Theory of Income Determination: Circular Flow of Income, the Concept of Average & Marginal Propensities to Consume and Supply
25.	Economic Growth and Development	• Economic Growth and Development • Characteristics of a Developing Economy • Measures to Accelerate Economic Development • Development Planning • Nigeria's Planning Experience
26.	Petroleum and the Nigeria Economy	• Development of the Petroleum Industry in Nigeria • Effects of Petroleum on the Nigerian economy • The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) • The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)
27.	International Economic Organisations	• Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) • Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • African Development Bank (ADB) • The European Economic Community (EEC) • International Monetary Fund (IMF) • The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) • International Finance Corporation (IFC) • International Development Association (IDA) • General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) • United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Twenty-seven (27) outlined teaching units have been spread over the three years on the basis of the nature and complexity of the topics and the total teaching time available in each year. In the light of this, nine (9) units are allocated to SSS I in order to give more time for the treatment of each topic so as to provide adequate foundation for subsequent work. Ten (10) units are allocated to SSS II on the understanding that there is a greater familiarity with the subject. Only eight (8) units are allocated to SSS III because the effective teaching period is shorter than in SSS II.

CRITIQUE OF SSS ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

1. **Inadequacy of evaluation strategy:** So much emphasis has been placed on the use of comprehensive and continuous assessment which favours cognitive development above other domains of education.
2. **Lack of commitment by Economics Teachers:** Lack of initiative, innovation, skills, independent/constructive mind and creative ideals characterise teachers' position on the innovations.

3. **Changes in Learning and Instructional Materials:** The changes require teachers to question their traditional subject practices and classroom routines. Most teachers are however very conservative and adamant to change.
4. **Obsolete Textbooks:** Most Economics textbooks are badly written, sketchy and lack the in-depth content. They are largely descriptive. They are poorly illustrated and contain lots of inaccuracies and they are mostly produced in a hurry.
5. **No training and re-training programme for teachers:** No refresher courses or workshops or even conferences for Secondary School teachers of Economics.
6. **Students' poor attitude and interest:** Students' negative attitude towards the subject is having great adverse effect on their performance in the subject.

HOW TO PROMOTE THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ECONOMICS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. **Less emphasis on cognitive domain in evaluation:** problem-solving approach that requires more than simply recall or performance of rudimentary skills should be adopted.
2. **Adequate commitment by the Economics teachers:** Teachers need to be more committed and dedicated and they must be adequately motivated.
3. **Provision of adequate teaching and learning resources:** Audio-visual aids, textbooks and all other teaching resources should be made available in sufficient quantity and right quality.
4. **Regular conferences and workshops:** The government should sponsor or organise conferences, workshops and refresher courses for Secondary School teachers of Economics.
5. **Students of Economics should be motivated and encouraged:** The pedagogical practices should be learner-centred. They should be actively involved in classroom activities.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Economics as a secondary school subject is not only important to students but the society at large, because its usefulness cuts across all the spheres of human life. It equips students with a preliminary understanding of certain economic ideas and a general impression about the Nigerian economy. It is however obvious that Economics teachers are facing critical challenges and these need very urgent attention. Specifically, for improved academic achievement in Economics, teachers need to be adequately motivated, regular refresher courses and workshops instituted and appropriate teaching/learning resources provided.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the nature and scope of Economics within the context of the secondary school curriculum
2. Highlight any five reasons why we study Economics
3. Outline any four major themes in Economics and the sub-topics under such themes.
4. Describe the main challenges of teaching Economics at the Secondary School level and suggest solutions.

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