

An Assessment of the Level of Competence Acquired By Graduates of the Undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University Of Nigeria, Nsukka

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Abstract: *This study assessed levels of competence acquired by graduates of undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, for: teaching Physical Education, administering sport, coaching sports, performing Physical and occupational therapy activities. Survey research was involved in the study. Competence Test Items in Physical Education (CTIPE) was an instrument used for data collection. Results revealed that level of competence acquired by the graduates of the programme were slightly low (40-49%) in administration of sport, coaching, physical and occupational therapy, but low (below 40%) in the teaching of Physical Education. Inference drawn from the result of the findings indicate that while on the programme as students in training, the graduates did not acquire adequate competences for purposes of sport administration, coaching, performance of physical and occupational therapy. Also, level of competence acquired for teaching Physical Education is rather low. Generally, the findings of the study require that the undergraduate Physical Education curriculum of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka should be revisited with a purpose of making the curriculum objectives more achievable through appropriate curriculum delivery mechanisms.*

I. Introduction

The current undergraduate Physical Education programme of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) established in 1991/92 session was meant to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) offer students the opportunity for the acquisition of the necessary skills and competences for successful teaching of Physical Education in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions;
- (ii) prepare students for effective organization and administration of sport in institutions like sports councils/commission as wells as in the community;
- (iii) equip students with knowledge and skills of coaching sports;
- (iv) produce qualified high level manpower to serve in rehabilitation institutions as Physical and occupational therapists and health counselors; and
- (v) equip students with appropriate skills and competences for individual survival and contribution to national goals and aspiration through Physical Education.

The achievement of these objectives was meant to place the graduates of the programme on vital national jobs in Physical Education, sport and recreation as in teaching, administration of sport, coaching, physical and occupational therapy. The curriculum serves as an input into the training of the undergraduate students on the programme. The process of achieving the intentions of the curriculum is judiciously guided by the approved admission and academic regulations of the senate of UNN. The first batch of graduates of the current undergraduate Physical Education Programme was produced in 1993. Since then, the department of Health and Physical Education of UNN has been producing graduates from the programme on annual basis.

There appears to have been no empirical data on the performance of the employed graduates of Physical Education Programme of UNN since the first batch of graduates was released into the labour market in 1993 on their fitness into current available diversified jobs in Physical Education activities. For example, according to Amusa and Toriola (2003). The focus of training in Physical Education at present has shifted from merely producing participant (athletes) and teachers to preventive health, health and wellness of individuals, prevention of major risk factors of life and so on. Hence, there is adoption of nomenclatures and programmes such as Human movement studies, Biokinetics, Human kinetics, Sports Exercises and Nutritional Science, Kinesiology, Sport and Physical Rehabilitation Science.

The acute shortage of information in the university on the level of competence acquired by the graduates beside the classes of degrees awarded by the senate of the university as classification of academic achievement to students might have denied the programme necessary plans for improvement. This situation has therefore necessitated the present study.

The purpose of this study was to determine the levels of competence of graduates of the undergraduates Physical Education of UNN in teaching of Physical Education; administration of sport; coaching of sport; physical and occupational therapy.

II. Methodology

The following four research questions guided the study:

1. What level of competence did the graduates of undergraduate Physical Education of UNN acquire for teaching Physical Education in schools and colleges?
2. What level of competence did the graduates of undergraduate of Physical Education Programme of UNN acquire in administration of sport in the field?
3. What level of competence did the graduates of undergraduate of Physical Education of UNN acquire for coaching sport?
4. What level of competence did the graduates of undergraduate of Physical Education Programme of UNN acquire in Physical and occupational therapy activities for functioning in the field.

A 90 item competence multiple choice task item, that is, Competence Test Items in Physical Education (CTIPE) was developed by the researcher for collecting data on the mastery of knowledge and skills acquired by graduates of undergraduates Physical Education programme of UNN in teaching, administration of sport, coaching, physical and occupational therapy. Each multiple choice test item has four options where one is correct and the other three are distractors. Seven experts from Physical Education, Test and Measurement validated the CTIPE.

One hundred and thirty nine (139) copies of the CTIPE were administered on graduates of the programme with the help of six research assistants, one in each state of Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi, Abia, Imo and Delta. The researcher and lecturers from the programme who volunteered assistance contacted few other graduates who work outside the six states personally. Graduates were required to tick their position on each item on CTIPE. Ninety-nine (99) copies of the questionnaire were retrieved for analysis.

Frequency counts and percentages were involved in the analysis of data. In taking decision on the level of competence acquired, the following is applicable.

% Score	Remarks
70 and above	very highly competent Highly Competent Competent Slightly Competent
Below 40	Low in competence

III. Results

The data for answering research questions 1,2,3 and 4 are in table 1,2,3,and 4 respectively.

Research Question 1

What level of competence did the graduates of the undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka acquire for teaching Physical Education in schools and Colleges?

The data for answering research question 1 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Level of Competence Acquired by the Graduates of Physical Education for Teaching (N=99)

S/NO	Item	f	Competence	
			%	Remarks
1	Structuring a course in Physical Education Competence	12	12.12	Very Low
2	Designing a course unit in Physical Education Competence	26	26.26	Very Low
3	Planning a lesson on Physical Education Competence	31	30.81	Very Low
4	Selecting instructional resources for teaching Physical Education Competence	25	25.25	Very Low
5	Developing instructional materials Competence	26	26.26	Very Low
6	Applying basic instructional materials in teaching Competence	29	29.29	Very Low

7	Utilizing visual aids in teaching Competence	32	32.32	Very Low
8	Using educational technology for teaching Competence	45	45.45	Very Low
9	Employing variety of teaching methods Competence	40	39.89	Very Low
10	Directing learners physical activities Competence	49	48.99	Very Low
Average % Competence			31.66	

Data in table 1 revealed that the percentage competence score of the graduates of undergraduate Physical Education Programme of University of Nigeria, Nsukka ranged from 12.12-48.99%. This indicated that with reference to teaching, the graduates are slightly competent in two areas of teaching as reflected in items 8 and 10 in Table 1. The graduates are very low is competence in eight of the items in teaching as contained in Table 1 above. Generally, as observed from the table, the graduates are incompetent in teaching.

Research Questions 2

What level of competence did the graduates of undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka acquire in the administration of sport in the field? The data for answering research question 2 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Level of Competence Acquired by the Graduates of Physical Education for Administration of Sport (N=99)

S/No	Item	Competence		Remarks
		f	%	
1	Maintaining sport facilities and storage rooms	58	58.09	Competent
2	Planning sport activities	44	43.94	Slightly competent
3	Organizing sport schedules	67	66.67	Highly competent
4	Coordinating sport schedules	67	66.17	Very Low Competent
5	Evaluating exercise and sports performance Competence	33	32.53	Very Low
6	Providing health services for the players Competence	35	35.35	Very Low
7	Implementing welfare packages Competence	35	35.35	Very Low
8	Problems in sport management	43	43.44	Slightly Competent
9	Understanding organization behaviour	44	44.45	Slightly Competent
10	Personnel administration in sport	41	41.42	Slightly Competent
Average % Competence			46.87	

Data in Table 2 showed that the percentage score of the graduates of the undergraduate Physical Education ranged from 32.53 - 67.17%. This indicated that with reference to administration of sport, the graduates are highly competent in two items as reflected in items 3 and 4. The graduates are competent in item 1. They are slightly competent in 4 items that is items 2,8,9 and 10. The graduates are very low in competence in 3 items, that is, item 5,6, and 7 as contained in Table 2. Generally, as observed from the table, the graduates are slightly competent in administration of sport.

Research Question 3

What level of competence did the graduates of undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka acquire for coaching sport in the field?

The table for answering research question 3 is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Level of competence Acquired by the Graduates of Physical Education for Coaching Sport (N=99)

S/NO	Item	f	Competence		Remarks
			—	%	
1	Utilizing skills, tactics and strategies as appropriate in each sport	41	41	41.41	Slightly Competent

2	Training in special areas of sport	40	40.40	Slightly Competent
3	Minimizing potential risks inherent in sports participation	45	45.45	Slightly Competent
4	Utilizing social psychological aspects of coaching	46	46.46	Slightly Competent
5	Employing growth, development and learning psychology	46	45.96	Slightly Competent
6	Employing exercise science for training, conditioning and nutrition	41	41.41	Slightly Competent
7	Recognizing the need for professional growth and development opportunities	31	31.31	Very Low
Competence				
8	Sustaining interest in group learning through teaching and coordinating methods	46	45.96	Slightly Competent
9	Sport facility management	58	58.09	Competent
10	Leadership in recreation and leisure processes	36	36.37	Very Low
Competence				
Average % Competence			43.28	

Data in Table 3 revealed that the percentage score of the level of competence acquired by the graduates of the undergraduate Physical Programme for coaching sport in the field ranged from 31.31 – 58.09%. This indicates that with reference to coaching of sport the graduates are competent in one area of coaching as reflected in item 9 in Table 3. The graduates are slightly competent in seven areas of coaching as indicated in Table 3. The graduates are slightly competent. The graduates are very low in two of the areas as reflected in items 7 and 10 of Table 3 above. Generally, as observed from the table, the graduates are slightly competent in coaching of sport in the field.

Research Question 4

What level of competence did the graduates of the undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka acquire in Physical and occupational therapy activities?

The data for answering research question 4 is presented in Table 4

Table 4: Level of competence acquired by the Graduated of Physical Education in Physical and Occupational Therapy (N=99)

S/NO	Item	f	Competence %	Remarks
1	Therapeutic and leisure practices	55	55.55	Competent
2	Supervision and management of recreation and leisure services	62	62.62	Highly Competent
3	Coordinate of group and community recreational programmes	14	14.14	Very Low
Competence				
4	Inspiring and mobilizing recreational participation	65	65.65	Highly Competent
5	Evaluating patient to establish physical ability	42	42.42	Slightly Competent
6	Planning physical therapy work out	36	36.36	Very Low
Competence				
7	Employing physical skills and procedures to influence psychological states	40	40.40	Slightly Competent
8	Applying knowledge of mobility evaluation procedures	36	36.36	Very Low
Competence				
9	Interpretive understanding of referral advice of specialists	44	44.44	Slightly Competent
10	Supervising and monitoring patients on rehabilitative programme	35	35.35	Very Low Competence
11	Planning intervention strategies for rehabilitation	42	42.42	Slightly competent
12	Counseling Patients for relief	40	40.40	Slightly Competent
13	Supervising patients on specific rehabilitative			

activities	37	37.37	Very Low	
Competence				
14	Administering prosthetic devices on patients	48	48.48	Slightly competent
15	Employing technological therapeutic devices to alleviate condition of patients	55	55.55	Competent
Average % Competence		43.6		

The data in Table 4 revealed that the percentage score of the level of competence acquired by the graduates of the undergraduate Physical Education Programme of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in physical and occupational therapy activities ranged from 14.14 – 65.65%. This indicates that with reference to providing services in physical and occupational therapy, the graduates are highly competent in two areas of physical and occupational therapy as contained in items 2 & 4 in Table 4. The graduates are averagely competent in two areas of the items on physical and occupational therapy, which is items 1 & 15, as contained in Table 6 above. They are slightly competent in six areas, while they are very low in competence in five areas of physical and occupational therapy activities as contained in table 4 above. Generally, as observed from the table, the graduates of the undergraduate Physical Education of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka are slightly competent in providing services in physical and occupational therapy in the field.

IV. Discussion

Findings on the level of competence acquired by the graduates in the undergraduate Physical Education programme of the University of Nigeria for teaching in schools and colleges is from very low competence to slight competence (12.12 -48.99%) in items that constituted the teaching competence. The graduates demonstrated very low competence in eight (8) items, while they demonstrated slight competence in two. The findings of the study can be interpreted to mean that the graduates of undergraduate's physical Education did not acquire much in the strategies or methods and techniques of teaching while in the University. The teaching practice Programme is expected to compensate for any deficiency in the acquisition of teaching methods and techniques. If the teaching practice had been effective on the graduates while they were in the university, one is likely to observe in the employed graduates a higher competence in teaching than what the study found out. The findings of this study are in agreement with that of Agwubike (1985) who reported on the low performance of professional competences by agricultural science teachers in Bendel State. The findings of this study is also consistent with findings of Suhr (1987) who found out that special education graduates were more competent in some areas of the curriculum than others. The level of professional competence of the employed graduates can be associated to a number of variables. To a great deal, the admission criteria of the University of Nigeria and its department of Health and Physical Education provide sufficient evidence on the level of ability before a candidate commences study. Finding of the study by Ferguson and Womack (1993) noted that the quantity and quality of education courses that the prospective teacher is exposed to impact on his level of teaching effectiveness more that his core or subject matter area of emphasis. Therefore, this finding must have implications for the level of competence exhibited by the employed graduates in teaching, administering sport, coaching of sport, physical and occupational therapy activities. In other words, probably with the low level competence of graduates of Physical Education in teaching, the students that these graduates are teaching are most likely to have very little understanding or knowledge in the content of Physical Education that they are exposed to by the teacher in areas like administration of sport, coaching of sport and in physical and occupational therapy.

The findings of the study on the level of competence acquired by the employed graduates in administration of sport in the field in the South East revealed that it is from low competence to high competence. The finding may still be a continued reflection on the low level of competence of the employed graduates' teaching methodology and techniques. This statement is made due to the observation that if a teacher cannot impact effectively through approved methodology of teaching what he has acquired, he may also find it difficult to make others learn effectively knowledge, skills and attitudes in other aspects of Physical Education. Therefore, teaching methodology is meant to help the teacher deliver strategically knowledge, skills and attitudes to students and other trainees. Findings from the study of Boardman (1985) suggested that the acquisitions of relevant and high level competence are particularly critical in effective performance of a professional. The employed graduates of Physical Education in administration of sport job positions are professionals that require knowledge and competence in such areas as planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating, reporting, budgeting and evaluation, all are essential areas in administration of sport that can guarantee high level competence.

Findings on the level of competence acquired by the graduates for coaching sport in the field is low (43.28%). This finding possibly reflects further the earlier observation the researcher made on the low level competencies acquired by the employed graduates in teaching. What the researcher is saying is that the coaching competence exhibited by graduates of the undergraduates Physical Education programme is low. Which means that this observed level of competence is probably what they can impart on the field as an indication of what they have acquired, but inability to teach using various strategies and techniques of teaching, such as planning, organizing and implementing had been identified as a major factor in the effectiveness of the graduates in the field. Therefore, these may also have their own effects on coaching competence. That is, a very good coach is likely to be a good teacher.

Findings on the level of competence acquired in physical and occupational therapy activities by the employed graduates for providing services in the field is low (43.60%). This finding indicates that the employed graduates did not acquire much competence in physical and occupational therapy activities while in training which could have enhanced them in providing effective services. The finding may be associated with the absence of specific and directional courses in this area in the undergraduate Physical Education programme of the University of Nigeria. Nevertheless, the score 43.60% indicated that graduates must have some ideas or must have interacted with some related activities in this area in other courses they have taken. Specifically, the curriculum for the undergraduate Physical Education Programme revealed that students were exposed to some few courses in health and safety education, anatomy, kinesiology, physiology and athletic injury care. Knowledge and skills in this curricula areas are likely to have accounted for the level of competence acquired by the graduates in physical and occupational therapy.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study provided information on the level of competence of graduates of the undergraduate Physical Education programme of UNN in the four objective areas of the curriculum. The objective areas include teaching of Physical Education, administration of sport, coaching of Sport, Physical and occupational therapy. Based on the findings on the levels of competence acquired by the graduates, there is an urgent need to put in place retraining need policy through which the retraining needs of the graduates can be met. Policy on retraining needs should be directed at employed graduates of the Physical Education Programme for enhanced effectiveness. Such retraining needs could be met through short duration in-service programmes that be can facilitated by Physical Education experts in the Health and Physical Education department of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Also, emphases should be placed more on practical activities and the acquisition of high-level skills by the students in the professional areas in the undergraduate Physical Education programme to make the graduates more relevant in professionalism in Physical Education, sport and recreation.

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