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**EFFICIENT BASIC EDUCATION MANAGEMENT VIA TEACHERS  
EFFECTIVENESS AS TOOL FOR NATIONAL  
TRANSFORMATION IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*The paper examined Efficient Basic Education Management as a tool for National Transformation via Teachers' Effectiveness. Basic education is given to children aged 0 to 15 years including early childhood education ranging from 0 to 5 and 9 years of formal schooling (FRN, 2008). Early childhood education is segmented into ages 0 to 3 years situated in daycare centres managed by private sectors and social development services but 3 to 5 years are within formal education sector. It is aimed at attaining MDGs goal number two plus education for all (EFA) in 2015 as proposed by UNESCO in 2005. It provides the child with diverse basic knowledge, skills for entrepreneurship, wealth Creation and further education. It caters for school dropouts, adults and mass literacy. Management is the performance of executive duties by*



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*carrying-out decisions to fulfil a purpose and control the day-to-day running of organization. Educational management refers to the application of theories and practices of management to the field of education. The school manager implements the curriculum by conducting cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains' activities. However, challenges facing school management include lack of teachers' effectiveness due to poor leadership. Thus, the aim of transforming the nation via basic education teachers' effectiveness is defeated. The government is urged to sponsor conferences, seminars and workshops among others to attain set goals for basic education programmes.*

**Keywords:** Basic education, management, teachers' effectiveness; transformation.

Basic education describes education given to children aged 0 to 15 years which encompasses early childhood education ranging from zero to five and nine years of formal schooling (FRN, 2008). Accordingly, early childhood education is however segmented into ages 0 to 3 years situated in daycare centres fully managed by the private sectors and social development services but 3 to 5 years are within the formal education sector. The recent basic education programme is in response to the attainment of number two goal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and it is targeted at achieving education for all (EFA) in 2015 as proposed by UNESCO in 2005. It is equally connected with the child's Right Act which advocates free and unfettered access to basic education. The introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) is linked with the provision of free access to compulsory schooling, training, skill acquisitions, trade and consideration for gender equity, equality, ethnicity, race, colour, physically challenged individuals or low parental background (FRN, 2008).

The Federal Government of Nigeria launched UBE on 30th September 1999 as a nine-year continuous schooling. It consists of six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education which can be described as lower basic and upper basic education programmes respectively (FRN 2008). The UBE also embraces early childcare and education (ECCE), mass literacy for adults, women and adolescents who are out of school, school dropouts, nomads, migrant farmers, migrant fishermen, handicapped children, talented and gifted children.

### **Objectives of Basic Education Curriculum and National Transformation**

For purpose of efficient management, coordination and monitoring, the Federal Government of Nigeria has instituted a Basic Education programme in section 2 subsection 4 of 2008 5th edition of National Policy on Education to:

- i. Provide the child with diverse basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship, wealth generation and educational advancement,



- ii. Develop patriotic young people equipped to contribute to social development and in the performance of their civic responsibilities,
- iii. Inculcate values and raise morally upright individuals capable of independent thinking and who appreciate the dignity of labour;
- iv. Inspire national consciousness and harmonious co-existence irrespective of differences in endowment, religion, ethnic and socio-economic background,
- v. Provide opportunities for the child to develop manipulative skills that will enable him/her to function effectively in society within the limits of the child's capacity.

The UBE programme is billed to attain the following aims apart from meeting the objectives of EFA by 2015. These objectives include to:

1. Develop in every citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong desire for its vigorous promotion,
2. Provide free compulsory UBE for every Nigerian child of school-age group,
3. Ensure adequate acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy and manipulative life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values required for laying a solid foundation for lifelong learning,
4. Cater for school dropouts and out-of-school children through various forms of complementary approaches and promotion of basic education. These well-conceived objectives of UBE are very elaborate to reposition the transformation of Nigeria as a nation into an enviable height if its curriculum is properly implemented.

### **Efficient Management of Basic Education Curriculum**

Notwithstanding, section 9 subsection 125 of 5th edition (2008) of the National Policy on Education clearly stipulated that the success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning framework, efficient management/administration and adequate financing. This has prompted the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) to put in place 4- year strategic plan for the development of the education sector from 2011 to 2015. The proposal calls for educational leadership capacity skill-building in effective resource mobilization and management of human, materials, financial and time as well as adequate work practices. The policy document required mandatory continuous training before and during the period of service for educational planners and managers so that the individuals must be those who are naturally or occupationally (not by force or accident) carried out yet conscientious, intelligent, diligent, patient with realistic and non-mundane value orientation in a hopeful training environment for a future.

The term management implies the process by which a cooperative group direct action toward common goals. It can be regarded as the performance of executive duties, the carrying out of policies or decisions to fulfil a purpose as well as the controlling of

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the day-to-day running of an organization (Nwadiani 2013). Management is concerned with a process of creating, maintaining, simulating, controlling and unifying (formal and informal), organizing human and material energies within a unified system designed to accomplish the predetermined objectives of the organization according to Nwadiani (1999). To achieve efficient management, there must be absolute cooperation within the internal system. It is therefore opined that the school manager should be able to manipulate other variables effectively aimed at the successful attainment of set objectives.

Educational management is the application of theory and practice of management to the field of an educational institutions by way of structuring, organizing, controlling, inspecting, supervising and proprietorship (Awuja, 2006). The importance of educational management cannot be overemphasized if the teacher must be effective in teaching-learning situations. The roles of teachers are central to basic education management because, they are "curriculum implementers who conduct most cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains' activities within and outside classrooms. The basic education manager is responsible for building knowledge of teaching, constructing personal identity among teachers and developing procedural standards for classroom management.

Section 9 subsection 127 (FRN, 2008) states that the managerial machinery efficiency for the national basic education system shall be based on the following cardinal principles such as shared responsibility for the funding and management of basic education, involvement of the communities in the management of their schools; effective communication between state and national machinery for policy formulation and implementation. And finally, they spell out appropriate devolution of educational functions to states, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and local governments to integrate educational development policy with national objectives. This implies that the local, state and federal authorities shall provide adequate numbers of qualified educational personnel.

To provide efficient management control over basic education for the maintenance of quality assurance and improvement of the system, the national council on Education (NCE) comprising of the Honorable Minister of Education and state commissioners for Education, the Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCCE) made up of experts, officials and other relevant stakeholders provide the necessary framework for policy formulation. They have put in place machinery for monitoring and evaluating the basic education of the national policy on education through regular and continuous supervision of instructional plus other educational services. It is generally believed that the quality of an educational institution is determined by the quality of teaching-learning process. However, the challenges of poor teacher quality are becoming

more pronounced as the poor quality of educational outcomes recorded in recent years is attributable to the poor quality of teachers among other variables.

### **Challenges Facing Teachers' Effectiveness**

Teacher education has encountered several challenges which negatively affect educational outcomes. These include:

- a. Lack of orientation and induction of new teachers,
- b. Lack of continuing professional teachers' development.
- c. Poor school leadership recruitment, appointment and training,
- d. Poor pre-service teacher education,
- e. Ambiguous framework of teaching standards and
- f. Inadequate incentives to attract and retain quality teachers. Other challenges that exacerbated all the issues raised earlier is the poor quality of candidate intake most of whom take teacher education as a last resort and are ready to abandon it soon after better opportunities come their way.

Furthermore, most basic education teachers are ineffective due to inadequate provision of instructional resources, inaccessibility to modern libraries and lack of exposure to information and communication technology (ICT) in our education systems. As a result, most teachers' skills of teaching are too limited to be able to implement curriculum effectively. Hence, basic education teachers are unable to efficiently manage the classroom of the 21st century. This state of affairs in turn negatively affects effective national development and transformation.

Lack of orientation and induction of newly recruited teachers before deploying them to the classroom kick against teachers' effectiveness that is capable of distorting national transformation. If the newly employed teachers are not given proper orientation, induction, monitoring and support programmes in the classroom environment, they may become ineffective and consequently, lack of national transformation. Any nation that aspires to become adequately transformed via teachers' effectiveness, should give proper preparation, orientation, monitoring and supervision of the new teachers to ensure effectiveness.

Exploring what works in basic education management using effective teachers as an instrument for national transformation to provide clues that "low birth weight" quality education can mar teachers' effectiveness in any nation to a very large extent. The transformation and development of a nation are dependent on the quality of teachers according to Nwajei and Awuja (2013). Teachers constitute the hub on which national transformation and development revolve. Teachers are the greatest influence on a student's academic performance who produce research-based learning tools used to advance high-level quality and equity in national transformation through teaching and

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learning processes. Notwithstanding, lack of continuous professional development has led to poor quality teachers to a very large proportion. Several teachers have been teaching for years without opportunities to improve on their competencies, skills and qualifications. There is no post-initial professional training aimed at updating knowledge and skills. Mere acquisition of certificates without necessary post-initial job orientation or training can decline teachers' effective performances.

School leadership appointment, recruitment and training due to subjective manner that may not be dependent on clear-cut performance indices has to bedeviled teachers effectiveness. Many school leadership appointments are based on nepotism, bribery, corruption, tribalism and not on creditability. The ability of an educational manager to function effectively is to play a central role in the actualization of educational goals by ensuring the survival of the entire educational system. However, if there is a mismatch between teaching qualification and managerial competence, teachers' ineffectiveness may manifest (FRN, 2008).

### **Teacher Effectiveness as Tool for National Transformation**

Teachers interpret and communicate the curriculum to learners. The educational system is only as good as the quality of its teachers (FRN, 2008). Hence, efficient educational development of teachers is paramount to any country including Nigeria to justify the effective utilization of such a nation's huge investment in educational management. Qualified teachers are expected to act as role models to learners in order to transmit desirable values from one generation to another.

Teachers generally have the responsibilities to teach, instruct, guide, counsel and evaluate learners. Effective teacher recruitment with the right quantity, quality and subject specialty who is capable of implementing and interpreting school curriculum is one of the basic determinants for national transformation. Immediately after Nigeria independent in 1960, the school curriculum was narrower than now and the few teachers recruited were happy to remain committed to the job because, teaching was regarded as a white-collar job but today, the reverse is the case. Whereas the basic education curriculum is comprehensive and diversified which caters for individual differences, the number of teachers supplied annually falls below the 1:40 teacher-pupil ratio as stipulated standards for subject specialty teachers since the inception of UBE (Nwadiani and Ugolo, 2011). Teacher effectiveness is challenged with the problem of curriculum innovations, inadequate funding and apathy of people towards the teaching profession as well as poor recruitment strategies.

Truly speaking, teacher training affects the degree of teacher effectiveness in the sense that availability of training facilities, equipment, gadgets, selection of candidates based on standards and interest of new entrants to study education courses. No doubt,

training is very expedient to facilitate teacher effectiveness leading to national transformation. Qualified teacher in a specialized subject area is critical to improving student learning quality because, no education system can rise above the quality of its teacher (FRN, 2008). The 5th edition of 2008 National Policy on Education (NPE) states that Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) is the minimum teaching qualification for basic education. The curriculum of NCE as developed by the National Council for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is judged to be adequate for the training of effective basic education teachers to translate the Nigerian nation to an enviable height. However, training opportunities are inadequate for teachers' effectiveness.

Ann (2008) complained that the world is lacking science and mathematics teachers due to a decline in status, poor working conditions, job insecurity, low salaries and lack of career progression which deter several eligible willing people from becoming teachers. Teacher allocation and retention constantly affect the quality educational system. While some effective teachers are transferred, retired, died, granted study leave or change of job, others may face disciplinary actions like retrenchments. The consequences could be a severe persistent shortage of teachers to teach nomadic Fulanis, migrant farmers, migrant fishermen and other sub-cultural special target groups. This ugly development greatly affects teachers' effectiveness which cannot in any way promote national transformation. The statutory function of a basic education teacher are to impart knowledge, wisdom and creativity through the implementation of curricula whereby learners acquire the first school leaving certificate. It is important to stress the need to raise young Nigerians' awareness of life-transforming options by making the right career choices as adequate for national transformation.

Qualified teachers are expected to be competent, caring and compassionate to be able to build in elementary school children desirable characters to obey simple rules and regulations (Ikoya, 2011). Effective high calibre teachers make most professionals come to the peak of their careers due to the first giant stride made through them during primary school to give them proper guidance when they were growing up. These professionals today are serving in various capacities in different sectors of the economy to facilitate national transformation.

Unfortunately, with the indispensable nature of teaching jobs in Nigeria, Nwadiani (2013) observed that Nigerian teachers earn fewer salaries than thirty countries he has surveyed. In the UK, the weekly earnings of secondary school teachers with B.Ed degrees are higher than the salaries of engineering professionals. The most uninteresting aspect of the basic education teacher programme is the issue of deprivation of financial assistance which has led to low enrolment. Without an effective teacher, who implements basic education curricula that could lead to rapid national transformation? Presidents, governors, senators, medical doctors, engineers and professors are trained by primary

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school teachers at the beginning of their formal educational journey and they are highly remunerated but teachers are most poorly paid. Why? In developed countries like China, Germany, Hong Kong and Korea, teachers sometimes earn more than engineers compared to Nigerian situation.

Nwadiani (2013) described the teaching profession as a free zone because the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria lack the political will to enforce the professionalization of teaching. It means that anybody without professional training can be appointed as a teacher. Worse still, the ethical standard of the Nigerian teacher is very low. The national transformation of the basic education curriculum is an innovation capable of rising the newest generation of teaching workforce liken to generation "Y" that existed between 1977 and 1995. Accordingly, the relationship between teacher effectiveness (TE) and national transformation as a task that must be accomplished should be based on the improvements in the academic quality of the teaching workforce to focus on ever-increasing policy activity targeted at enhancing basic education teacher quality.

### **Conclusion**

Effective teachers are the key to learners' success at any level of Education. This paper has examined efficient basic education management through teachers' effectiveness, goals of basic education, challenges, teacher effectiveness as a tool for national transformation and established that efficient basic education via teacher effectiveness enjoy the national transformation in Nigeria. On the flip side, poor implementation of curriculum at the basic education level by newly employed teachers due to lack of orientation may occur. Conclusively, teacher effectiveness aimed at efficient management of basic education promotes national transformation.

### **Recommendations**

Judging from the above discussions, it is hereby recommended that:

- a. Newly recruited teachers should be given proper orientation and induction to enable them to marry theoretical lessons with actual practices,
- b. Conferences, seminars and workshops should be organized for the leadership of basic education periodically to equip them with managerial skills,
- c. Government has been urged to review upward basic education teachers' salaries to enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labours like other professionals and
- d. Student teachers should be sent on one-year of compulsory industrial training (IT) before they can start a Bachelor degree in education (B.Ed), especially for NCE holders.

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