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## CONTENTS

Volume 9 Journal of Pristine Number 1, December 2014

✓ Quality Education for Effective Leadership and Sustainable Efficient National Development ..... ..... <b>Professor S. D. Nwajei and Dr. S. A. Awuja</b>	1
Multicultural Education as a Tool for Fostering Peace and Unity..... <b>Dr. D. Akporehe and Dr. C. Osiobe</b>	7
E-Learning and Distance Education: Rationale and Problems..... <b>Dr. E. N. Okafor</b>	17
Quality in Teacher Production: The Key to Quality in the Universal Basic Education ... <b>Dr. Joseph Izuchukwu Kanu; Kevin Onyemaechi Egesi and Ndidi Anyatonwu</b>	24
Implications of Green Marketing for a Developing Economy ..... <b>Vincent O. Iweama</b>	33
Teachers' Effectiveness and Gender as Correlates of Student's Academic Achievement in English Language in Ondo State, Nigeria ..... <b>Patrick Aliu Akinmusire</b>	45
Improving Social Studies Education through Research for Sustainable Peace and Security in Nigeria ..... <b>Justus Chuks Iwegbu</b>	53
Proximate Analysis of Unripe Plantain ... <b>Anslem O. Agbini; Isaiah O. Otalekor; Ovie F. Osiobe and Kate E. Mokobia</b>	61

A Critical Look at the Universal Basic Education Scheme in Nigeria: A Case Study of Katagum LGA of Bauchi State .....	<b>Chiomu Abiodun Oriaku</b>	69
Nature and Scope of Social Studies Education and National Development .....	<b>Dibal Salmamza</b>	76
Early Childhood Education in Yoruba Culture: A Paradigm of Panacea to Security Challenges in Nigeria .....	<b>Segun Adenipekun Olanibi</b>	84
The Challenges Facing Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme for Sustainable Development in Nigeria in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century and the Way Forward...	<b>Musa Adamu Mshelia</b>	92
Suggested Paradigm for Science Teacher's Professional Development for the Achievement of MDG's in Nigeria .....	<b>Amina Ali Suwaid</b>	99
Effects of Music and Communication Technology on the Nation's Advancement .....	<b>A. K. Oghiator And Osborne Ofori Ofosu</b>	109
Accounting Information Qualitative Characteristics Gap: Investors' and Auditors' Perspective...	<b>Anthony O. Unuigbokhai and Pius E. Ohenhen</b>	120
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Technical and Vocational Education: Promise and Problems .....	<b>Bashir Alhaji Bala and Abdullahi Mamuda</b>	129
Challenges of Administrating Curriculum and Instruction in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State..	<b>Joyce David Eduok</b>	136

Democracy and Nation – Building: The Role of Ex – Military Personnel in Nigeria (1999 – 2011 as Case Study)- <b>Braimah Michael Oyarekhua; Dr. Jimoh Jafaru and F. I. Ohiokha</b>	144
The Role of Railway in the Development of Kafanchan Town between 1920-1950 - <b>Dr. Charles B. Azgaku</b>	155
Effects of Guided-Discovery and Think-Pair-Share Strategies on Secondary School Students' Attitude towards Chemistry- <b>Dr. Oladipupo A. Bamiro and Dr. Olufemi A. Ajayi</b>	162

# QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE EFFICIENT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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## **Abstract**

*Ideally, the pride of any effective leadership eligible for measuring the impact of efficient national development in a manner that its citizenry could derive joy from her key contributions through the basic value-added model in education, health, economic and democratic governance. For a country to be in a Phase of development there must be pre-conditions which include quality education and effective leadership. Quality education is indispensable for efficient leadership and enlightened followership to speed up sustainable development. Nigeria's philosophy and goals of education are articulated in the "National Policy on Education" involving collective widespread consultations with stakeholders such as curriculum developers/ planners, subject specialists, market women and employers of labour by the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) to ensure input from the three tiers of governments (Federal, State and Local) for successful policy implementation. Teachers who are chief implementers have a dominant influence on the learner's academic achievement because of teaching and learning which determine the product (leadership). The teaching-learning process is measured in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, service delivery and educational achievement the world over. Hence, quality education is tied to effective national development through teacher leadership model standards designed to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders that decide the kind of knowledge, skills and competencies needed to focus on sustainable national development in this paper.*

No doubt, quality education is an indispensable tool for both progressive leadership and enlightened followership in order to facilitate national development (Sahlberg. 2010). The effectiveness of education is measured by its positive contribution

### *Pristine*

to creating necessary awareness for the learners to cultivate social, political, economic and cultural attitudes towards leadership competencies attached to the mission and vision for national development. Emeka (2000) states that persons who acquired quality education often act sincerely, loyally, bravely, kindly, truthfully and fairly even when tempted by the opposite forces to indulge in anti-development behaviour. It follows that our educational system should be directed towards producing effective leadership and followership at all levels among the citizenry as the national development needs critical mass in quality education. This might be one of the several reasons why Emeka (2000) observed that leadership is most effective when anchored to quality education to support a notion of effective nation-building.

On the contrary, lack of good governance militates against national development the world over. Accordingly, when there is ineffective leadership, efficient national development is minimal (Ajala, 2002). Consequently, the result is bad leadership in the country. Quality education and effective leadership are sine-qua-non in effecting and promoting national development because in the abundance of leadership effectiveness and national development are optimum. Ordinarily, effective leadership needs a complex set of knowledge, skills and qualities for diverse creativities so that his/her vision is inclusive and attainable by gaining insight via curriculum implementation for national development (Nwajei and Awuja - Ademu, 2013). Of course, it is vital to acknowledge that the leader who knows the best pedagogical practices of a vibrant learning environment such as designing interdisciplinary units to complement efforts of the Federal, state and local standards. Effective leadership could provide excellently essential high-quality education for his / her citizens by keeping two important principles in mind while making decisions.

Firstly, the decision-making process should be based on an explicit role of leadership thereby telling the staff exactly what kind of decision the leader is about to make in the school system. The leader or principal could delegate or collaborate on a staff-driven decision by consulting them before a decision is reached. Secondly, the principle of decision-making revolves around the appropriate use of data to do what is best for the children leading to the attainment of effective future quality leadership. To ensure excellent quality curriculum delivery and uncommon quality leadership for national development, the principal must regularly communicate his/her vision in every way he/she can as often as possible (Awuja, 2012). As a necessity, the leadership at any level should listen to the staff, the students and the parents who constitute the school community. Equally, it is a requirement to listen regularly to curriculum specialists as well as the counselling staff.



### **Benefits of Quality Education for Effective Leadership and National Development**

Accordingly, the importance of quality education is to engineer desirable social change through the promotion of enviable national development according to Ajala (2002). Quality education involves character training for respect and responsibility to the citizens for good character development. These two form fundamental moral values as indices which society should teach its citizens. Other values include honesty, equity, fairness, tolerance, prudence, self-discipline, helpfulness, compassion, cooperation, courage plus other democratic values.

Additionally, an educated leadership is vital to implementing informed sustainable development because a national sustainability plan is capable of enhancing or limiting the developmental level attached to any nation around the world. Nations with high illiteracy percentage rate, ignorance and unskilled workforces have fewer developmental options (Sahlberg, 2010). Such nations are forced to buy energy and manufactured goods from the international markets with hard currencies. To obtain hard currency, the nations require international trade negotiation which can lead to exploitation of natural resources or conversion of lands from self-sufficient family-based to cash-crop agriculture. Quality basic education and effective leadership enable farmers to gain title to their land and apply for credit at banks or other lending institutions ( Sahlberg, 2010).

Besides, the effects of quality education on agriculture tend to be greater when the proportion of females educated to the threshold level equals that of males. Quality education benefits a woman in life-altering modes so that she can eventual gains higher status as well as an improved sense of efficacy leading to profound changes in her economic status. Interestingly, educating women creates a more equitable status for them to increase their capacity to participate in community decision-making toward achieving both local and national sustainable development. At least, quality basic education is needed before birthrate drops and infant health to improve children's education.

Furthermore, good community-based quality leadership education could affect the effective social, economic and environmental well-being of the citizenry. It is believed that the level of the quality education increases the probability of employment in a rapidly changing economy but a lower- secondary education is necessary to intensify the use of existing land to provide alternative off-farming employment resulting in rural-urban migration (Sahlberg, 2010). Quality basic education could improve the quality of life. Education raises the economic status of families by enhancing living conditions, lowering the rate of infant mortality and facilitates educational attainment of the next generation. Definitely, quality education holds both individual and national implications for effective leadership and sustainable development.

## *Pristine*

However, ineffective leadership is often cited as an impediment which leads to high poverty and low national development. Yet, the impact of leadership effectiveness could depend on whether high or low-quality education can affect a variety of decisions making, especially for the revitalization of failing national development. The historic 1969 curriculum conference was conveyed following the political independence of Nigeria which our educational system needed a critical re-examination of its worth of objectives, content relevances, methods, evaluation, administration and so on which the colonial masters left for us. The conference recommended a new set of objectives to provide a desirable guide for major curriculum review that gave birth to the National Policy on Education of 1977, 1981, 2004, 2007 and 2008 respectively. The revised editions of the policy document look cognizance of our national interest and aspirations while designing it to ensure that developmental issues are addressed. Hence, Ajala (2002) points out that the new National Policy on Education has all the necessary ingredients for landing Nigeria into the future technologically, politically and socially landmark if it is well implemented.

### **Challenges for Effective Leadership Education And National Development**

Nigeria is a country of rich ethno-cultural diversity of over 350 distinct ethnic groups and indigenous languages with an estimated population of 140 million (FRN, 2008). The landmass is about 924,000 square Kilometers in sub-Saharan Africa which ranges from the mangrove swampland of the Niger-Delta region in the south to the rainforest, the Sahel and Sudan savannah interior encroaching Sahara desert northward. The Nigerian Education sector faces challenges of effective leadership at the three tiers of government (Federal, State and Local) despite ample constitutional provisions to ensure the adequate equal rights for free compulsory educational opportunities at a basic level to eliminate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty nationwide. The key challenges result from ineffective coordination of activities and interventions to strengthen quality educational control through efficient monitoring at the three tiers of government (Federal, State and Local).

The revision of the 2004 edition for the 2007 edition of the National Policy on Education was informed by the need to reposition Nigeria's education sector within the overall context of the governments' reform agenda enunciated in the National Economic Empowerment and Development's Strategy (NEEDS) to effectively meet the challenges of the EFA initiative, MDGs and NEEDS to refocus education quality, service delivery, wealth creation, poverty reduction, employment generation, social/economic transformations and national value reorientation for sustainable development.

Consequently, the 5th Edition of the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2008) highlights, emphasizes and consolidates primary and Junior Secondary Education to a 9 year of Basic Education in line with the UBE programme for quality assurance through

restructuring curricula to improve the capacities of the failing quality education and effective leadership at the Federal, State and Local levels to effectively address the persistent gaps in education policy of ineffective curriculum implementation.

### **Conclusion**

Most countries that excel in quality education for effective leadership and efficient sustainable national development employs a wide array of purposeful strategies to build an excellent teacher workforce because teachers are the single greatest influence on students' academic performance. A nation's philosophy and goals of education are articulated in National Policy on Education involving collective wide consultations of stakeholders by the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) to ensure input from the three tiers of governments (Federal, State and Local) for successful curriculum implementation of the policy document. Teachers are the chief curriculum implementers whose influences on the learners are indispensable because teaching and learning qualities determine the products (Leaderships) and measure knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, service delivery, learning and educational achievement the world over. Hence, the conclusion is that quality education for effective leadership and national development can hardly be detached from the teacher leadership model standards designed to stimulate dialogues among stakeholders of the teaching profession who determine the kinds of knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies required for effective leadership for national development. The leadership traits emerge from the leader behaviour characteristics derived from various interpersonal orientation and ability dimensions. (Ukeje and Okorie, 1990).

### **Recommendations**

Judging from the discussions above, it is recommended that:

- a. Purposeful strategies to build an excellent quality teacher leader workforce through training and retraining via conferences, seminars and workshops should be encouraged by the government periodically.
- b. Teacher leadership model standards should be established to facilitate dialogue among members of the teaching profession targeted at competencies, skills among acquisitions, attitudes and knowledge.
- c. Curriculum developers are urged to incorporate quality education for effective leadership and national development into future curricula.

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