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Teacher Effectiveness: A Potent Attribute for Curriculum Implementation in Nigerian Educational System

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Abstract

The paper examined teacher effectiveness, a potent attribute for curriculum implementation in Nigeria's educational system, it enumerated the concepts of education curriculum, and curriculum implementation, and teacher effectiveness. Component of teacher effectiveness such as content knowledge. Teaching climate, classroom management, and quality of instruction were highlighted. The paper x-rayed effective teachers and their characteristics to include; holding high expectations, being positive in decision-making, always being prepared, creative compassionate, and respectful learners. It highlighted strategies to measure teaching effectiveness such as student rating, self-evaluation, administrative rating, and learning outcome measures. The paper equally examined the inhibitors to teacher effectiveness as follows; large class size, lack of remuneration and incentives, administrative leadership styles, and inadequate infrastructures and facilities. It suggested among others that; class size should be streamlined to enable the teachers to impact effectively; qualified teachers should be recruited for teaching to be effective and impressive outcomes to be realized. In addition, teachers should be encouraged to handle learning based on individual differences. This is because learners come from different backgrounds and possess different learning styles and abilities.

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Introduction

Education is a process by which the behaviour pattern of a citizen can be modified or changed to a desired direction. Education is a powerful instrument for the all-round development of an individual to make him/her a functional citizen for his/her well-being and nation in general. It is a system designed to enable learners to understand and evaluate the totality of their environment as well as ensure a better understating of culture and tradition. Education is a systematic and well-designed process for developing skills, and competencies and imparting knowledge to learners by the teacher. This implies that teachers are very significant for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Teacher effectiveness is the teacher's ability to utilize appropriate approaches, strategies, connections to students, and a particular set of attitudes that leads to improved students learning and achievement (Strong, Ward & Grant, 2011). It is the practical output of learning. Teacher effectiveness is the degree to which a teacher achieves the desired effects on students. It can be defined as the collection of characteristics, competencies, and behaviours of teachers at all educational levels that enable students to reach desired outcomes which may include the attainment of specific learning objectives as well as broader goals such as being able to solve problems, think critically, work collaboratively and become effective citizens. According to Esu (2012), schools are established for the attainment of individual and societal needs and goals. These goals can only be achieved through curriculum implementation by an effective teacher.

Curriculum implementation is one of the stages in the curriculum process which involves the actual transition of the prescribed curriculum document into reality. It is the actual delivery stage of the curriculum process. Some scholars are of the view that curriculum implementation is the means of executing the intended desires of the curriculum planners. Curriculum implementation is the network of translating and transforming the designed

curriculum into practical terms. Teacher effectiveness becomes a necessity in the actual implementation of curriculum in the Nigerian educational system

Concept of Education

Education is a systematic process and a purposeful activity directed towards achieving desired aims such as transmitting knowledge or fostering skills and character traits. It has been identified globally as the most powerful means for the development of a nation and its citizens. According to Aguba (2016), education is a process through which human beings become useful to themselves and the larger society by acquiring relevant skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes. It is a vital tool for the social, political, economic, and technological advancement and transformation of a society. The goals of education in Nigeria as stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (NPE) (FRN, 2013,p.14) are the;

- development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic, and effective citizen;
- total integration of individuals into the immediate community, the Nigerian Society, and the world;
- provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system;
- inculcation of national consciousness, values, and national unity; and
- development of appropriate skills, mental, physical, and social abilities, and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to society.

Inculcating these goals in the Nigerian educational system requires the active participation of teachers who are the chief implementers of the curriculum.

Curriculum and Curriculum Implementation

A curriculum is a prospectus or syllabus designed to guide teachers on the scope to be covered in any particular course, programme or subject (Umar, 2016). It is a key segment of education because educational programmes by themselves are not complete without a blue-print mapping out directions to be followed not only in classroom activities but with the total growth of the individual learner. A curriculum is a document that contains how the culture, competencies, skills, beliefs, and practices of a given society can be encoded and transmitted to learners from one generation to another. The curriculum is an engine room for all educational systems.

Curriculum implementation is the procedure of carrying out in practical terms all school activities laid down in the document called curriculum. It is the planned and guided learning experiences that are geared towards the full development of an individual and the society at large for the attainment of pre-determined goals. Curriculum implementation is the means of executing the intended desires of the curriculum planners. It is an important phase of the curriculum process where all the curriculum contents are exposed to learners through the various activities of the teachers and other agents. Indeed, curriculum implementation is a process by which all the pre-arranged and planned education documents are executed or put into practice through the combined efforts of the school administrators, teachers, learners, parents, and other agents.

Concept of Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness is the degree or extent to which a teacher can achieve or perform teaching tasks effectively. Teacher effectiveness is determined by the degree to which the goals are realized. It is the degree to which something is effective. It can be referred to as having the power to produce a required effect or outcome. Teacher effectiveness is the degree to which objectives are achieved and the targeted problems are solved. It is the capability to produce desired results or outputs. Teacher effectiveness is the impact that classroom factors such as instructional practices, teacher expectations, classroom organization, and use of classroom

resources have on student achievement. The teacher can utilize approaches, strategies, connections to students, and a particular set of attitudes that lead to improved students learning and achievement (Strong, Ward & Grant, 2011).

Teacher effectiveness focuses on students, their performance, teachers' behaviors, classroom procedures, and conduct that are implemented to better the outcomes of the students. It centers on quality and good teaching, possessing appropriate and sufficient knowledge of the subject matter, evaluating the students, identifying their appropriate learning needs and requirements, and passing skills regarding the usage of questions to engage and challenge the students are also important aspects of teacher effectiveness (Ko, Summons & Bakkum, 2013). It establishes the success rate of a teacher in fulfilling the mandate of teaching. To Barry (2010), teacher effectiveness can be described as being reflective of the peculiar attributes in the models of instruction known and always practiced by effective teachers.

Teacher effectiveness refers to the readiness/preparedness level of the teacher in the aspects of subject matter mastery, delivery techniques, and classroom interaction as well as providing feedback to the learners. Teaching effectiveness is the pedagogical and methodological elements involved in teaching to attain a particular set of objectives in a lesson. Teacher effectiveness is made up of the following components:

i. **Content knowledge:** This is when a teacher has a deep knowledge of the subject that he/she teaches and can communicate content effectively to the learners as well as a strong understanding of the materials being taught, the ways learners think about the content and equally evaluate the learners and provide feedback to them.

ii. **Teaching climate:** The quality of teaching and learning relationships between the teacher and student is also very important. Good teaching creates a climate that constantly demands students to succeed and provides high expectations from them. It challenges learners, develops a sense of competence, attributes, success to effort rather than ability and values resilience to failure.

iii. **Classroom management:** This involves effective management and control of classroom activities as well as efficient use of lesson time, coordinating classroom resources and space, and managing learners' behaviors with clear rules that are consistently enforced.

iv. **Quality of instruction:** The quality of instruction delivered by the teacher is very essential for effective teaching to take place. Emphasis should be placed on the pedagogical approaches, strategies, and methods employed by teachers to ensure quality instruction. Quality instruction is one of the aspects of teacher effectiveness. Quality instruction involves being skilled in effective questioning, deploying techniques such as reviewing precious learning, and giving adequate time for learners to practice.

v. **Professional behaviours:** Developing professional skills and practice, participating in professional development, supporting colleagues, and the broader role of liaising and communicating with parents also have a part to play in teaching effectiveness.

vi. **Teaching belief:** Teachers should have high expectations and beliefs in his/her teaching. Inculcating the right values and attitudes for the learners becomes very imperative. Provide positive acceptance which will create room for good interaction among learners. The figure below represents the components of teacher effectiveness.

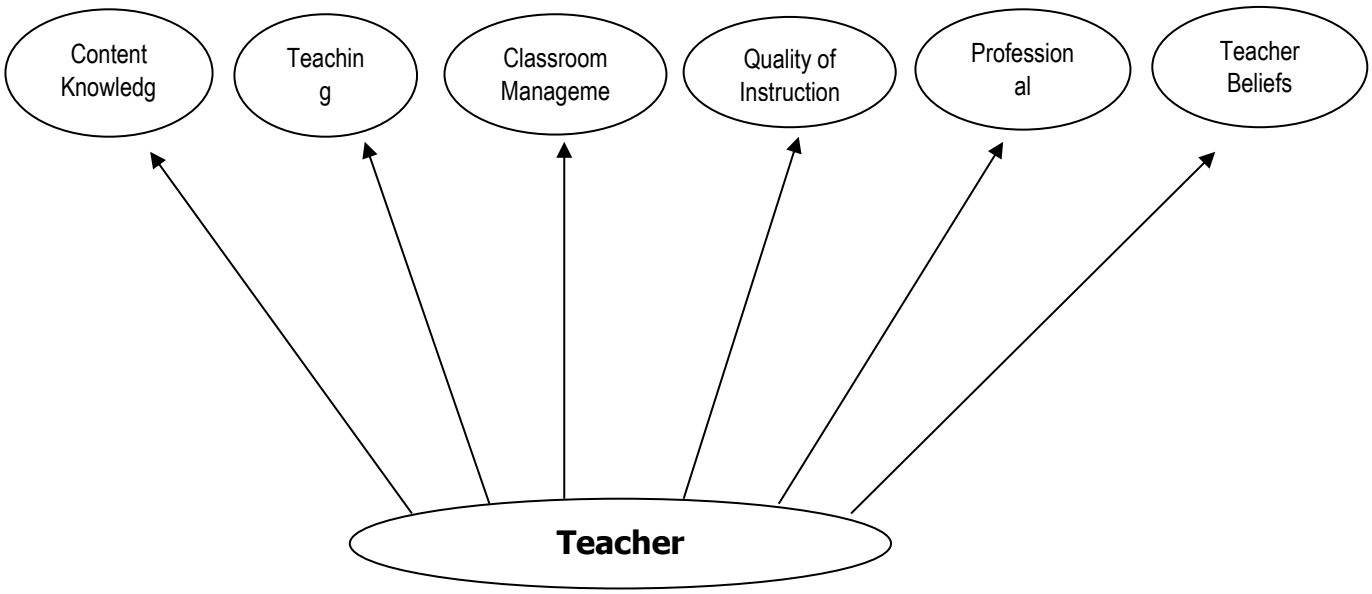


Figure 1: Components of Teacher Effectiveness

The routine practices of an effective teacher that differentiates them from other teachers include;

i. In-depth knowledge of the subject matter that the teacher teaches
ii. Firm understanding of learning theories and differences among students
iii. Planning and delivery of instruction
iv. Assessment of learners' performance about stated objectives of the lesson.
v. Teachers' ability to reflect, collaborate with colleagues, and continue ongoing professional development (Barry, 2010).

Criteria for Teacher Effectiveness

According to Maduabum (2009.p.4), the criteria of teacher effectiveness is categorized into three; the product criterion, the process criterion, and the presage criterion.

i. **Product Criterion:** The product criterion focuses on what a student learns. In other words, teacher effectiveness is how much and how well students achieve. This includes achievement in all domains – cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.
ii. **Process Criterion:** In the process criterion, judgments about teacher effectiveness are made in terms of what the teacher does, what the students do, the interaction between students and teacher or students-students but not in terms of students' achievement. The use of process criterion involves making observations of teacher and student's behaviour.
iii. **Presage Criterion:** As the name implies, presage is partly a predictive factor. A teacher's present and probably future effectiveness is judged based on one's intellectual ability, college grade, personal appearance, and other characteristics.

An Effective Teacher and its Characteristics

An effective teacher is one who consciously and deliberately delivers his/her teaching task effectively, is always prepared, sets clear and fair expectations possesses a positive attitude, is patient with the students, and assesses his/her teaching regularly. Darling-Hammond and Adamson (2010) defined an effective teacher as one who is intellectually challenging, motivating students, setting high standards, and encouraging self-initiating learning. Aina (2013) defined an effective teacher as one who consistently achieves goals that either directly or indirectly focus on the learning of students. An effective teacher adjusts his/her teaching strategies to fit the learning abilities of the learners and uses teaching materials appropriately

to recognize the individual differences in learners. Marzano (2007) articulates a comprehensive framework in the form of ten-point sets of tasks that represent a logical planning sequence for successful instructional design including;

- Establishing learning goals.
- Students' interaction with new knowledge.
- Students' practice to deepen understanding.
- Engaging students.
- Effective classroom management.
- Effective student-teacher relationships.
- Communicating high expectations for students.
- Effective standard-based formative.
- Summative assessment practices; and
- Using multiple measures of students' proficiency

An effective teacher possesses many characteristics. These include:

i. **Prepared:** The most effective teacher comes to class each day ready to teach that day's lesson. He/she avoids wasting instructional time and starts class on time, teaching for the entire class period.

ii. **Positive:** An effective teacher has an optimistic attitude about teaching and his/her students. He/she always looks on the bright side of every situation, communicating with students about their progress, praising and recognizing students for hard work, and equally helping students act kindly towards one another.

iii. **Hold high expectations:** An effective teacher believes that every student can be successful. He/she holds students to the highest standards and consistently challenges his/her students to realize their potential, builds students' confidence and teaches them to believe in themselves; sets no limit on students and believes that every student can be successful.

iv. **Fair:** An effective teacher handles students and grading fairly; provides all students equal opportunity and privileges; provides clear requirements, recognizes that fair means allowing every student to succeed and equally recognizes that not all students learn in the same way and at the same rate.

v. **Creative:** An effective teacher is resourceful and innovative in his/her teaching methods. He/she embraces changes and innovations in teaching and learning as well as uses technology effectively in the classroom.

vi. **Cultivate a sense of belonging:** An effective teacher has a way of making students feel welcome and comfortable in their classroom. Has a warm welcoming attitude that helps students know they belong in that classroom. Emphasizes how much he/she loves teaching and prefers it to other occupations.

vii. **Compassionate:** An effective teacher should be concerned about students' problems and can relate to them. He/she should understand when students are having a difficult time and act accordingly.

viii. **Respect students:** An effective teacher should not deliberately embarrass students. Teachers who give the highest respect get the highest respect. Respect students' privacy, and speak to students in private concerning their conduct.

ix. **Forgiving:** An effective teacher should not hold grudges. Forgive the students and start the day with a clean slate.

x. **Admit mistakes:** An effective teacher should be quick to admit mistakes when he/she is wrong. Make adjustments when students point out errors and oversights and apologize to mistakenly accused students.

xi. **Display a personal touch:** An effective teacher should be approachable and friendly, and connect with students personally.

Strategies to Measure Teacher Effectiveness

Developing teacher effectiveness is as important as measuring it. There are many strategies for measuring teacher effectiveness. Some of the strategies identified by Berk (2005) are:

i. Student ratings
ii. Peer ratings
iii. Self-evaluation
iv. Videos
v. Student's interviews
vi. Alumni ratings
vii. Employer ratings
viii. Administrator ratings
ix. Teaching scholarship
x. Teaching awards
xi. Learning outcome measures
xii. Teaching portfolios

Some of these measures are discussed. They include;

i. **Student ratings:** Student rating is one of the strategic measures to determine teaching and teacher effectiveness in institutions, it is the most influential measure of performance used to promote institutions that emphasize teaching effectiveness. Student ratings of teaching effectiveness provide feedback that can be used to identify teaching strengths and weaknesses as perceived by the students. Student ratings provide valuable insight that can be used to make positive changes in teaching and lead to enhanced student learning.

ii. **Peer ratings:** Peer rating provides a structured learning process for students to critique and provide feedback to each other on their work. It helps students develop lifelong skills in assessing and providing feedback to others and equips them with skills of self-evaluation and improving their work. Peer rating helps to provide a more complete picture of a teacher's performance so that accurate judgment can be made. The feedback obtained from peer ratings increases the frequency, extent, and speed of feedback for students while keeping the workload for teachers under control. Peer ratings refer to an aspect of formative evaluation of teachers that is done by their peers. It often deals with assessing aspects such as cooperation, delegation of authority, and willingness to assist colleagues. According to Schwartz (2018), it is seldom used in teaching effectiveness evaluation due to an increased tendency for bias.

iii. **Self-evaluation:** Self-evaluation is an assessment process that involves the teachers determining how they have been effective in different aspects of teaching including time management, student relationship, classroom management, and content delivery (Bandele & Oluwatayo, 2014). Self-evaluation is also called self-assessment. It is the ability to assess knowledge, learning performance, and skills that enables a person to become an autonomous learner. According to Borgmeier, Loman, and Hara (2016) self-assessment involves teachers in teacher evaluation by giving them ownership in the process of evaluation and creating a sense of awareness of the weak areas, they ought to improve. It allows teachers to take time to reflect, record, and synthesize what was learned and use this knowledge to bring about real changes (Weimer, 2013).

iv. **Alumni ratings:** Alumni rating is a form of rating that is done by students who have been previously taught by a particular teacher. The Alumni rating is done in line with the student's experiences during the period of instruction. Alumni ratings go beyond the general topics in traditional student ratings to include other aspects such as the usefulness of the course requirements, attainment of program outcomes, the effectiveness of admissions, procedures, preparation for graduate work, preparation for the real world, and so on.

v. **Administrator ratings:** This is the rating measure for teaching effectiveness. In this case, Deans, Heads of Departments, and Directors can evaluate faculty for an annual merit review according to criteria for teaching, services, and practices. They equally evaluate the teaching methods, classroom evaluation techniques and content in the discipline. The administrators may observe teaching effectiveness and examine documentation. Typically, a structured activity report is distributed to all faculties to finish a comprehensive picture of achievement in all areas over the past years. The administrators can rate the overall quality of performance in each area, which can be used to determine merit pay increases.

vi. **Learning outcomes measure:** Most of the proceeding sources of evidence involve direct ratings of teaching behavior. This is one of the indirect evaluation method because teaching performance is inferred from students' performance. Teaching effectiveness is assessed in terms of students' productivity. That is, it is outcome-based. Performances throughout the course on tests, projects, reports, and other indicators may be influenced by the characteristics of the students.

vii. **Teaching portfolio:** A teaching portfolio is a coherent set of materials including work samples and reflective commentary on teachers compiled by faculty members to represent his or her teaching practice as related to students' learning and development. It is a collective of art facts such as students learning data, reflection of thinking, and professional development experiences which provide evidence of a person's teaching accomplishments. It will equally include a summary of your teaching experience and responsibilities, a reflective statement of teaching, philosophy, and goals, a brief discussion of teaching methods, and strategies as well as activities undertaken to improve teaching and a statement of goal and plan for the future.

Inhibitors to Teacher Effectiveness

There are a lot of inhibitors to teacher effectiveness. They include;

i. **Teacher-Student Ratio:** Teacher-student ratio is the number of students who attend a school or university divided by the number of teachers in the school or university. For instance, a student-teacher ratio of 10:1 represents that there are 10 students to one teacher. The teacher-student ratio is very important in teaching effectiveness. For teaching effectiveness to be attained, the teacher-student ratio should be according to the specification of the National Policy of Education (FRN, 2013, p 8,9,&15) that the teacher: pupils: student ratio is as follows;

Pre-primary - Teacher: Pupil ratio - 1:35
Primary - Teacher: Pupil ratio - 1:35
Secondary - Teacher: Students ratio- 1:40

Teaching effectiveness can be achieved when the teacher-to-student ratio is taken care of and adequate teaching can occur.

ii. **Institutional leadership:** In most human interactions, the influence of leadership on behaviors and performance has been adequately documented. The school as a social institution depends on the way or manner in which a leader operates. The extent to which the leader exhibits the different types of leadership styles and their effect on productivity influence teaching effectiveness.

iii. **Insufficient accountability measure:** The focus of accountability measure is to demonstrate the competence and responsibility of teachers in the instruction and other educational practices in schools in conjunction with other related professional decisions. This is based on the assumption that the overall quality of the educational system is ensured by demonstrating evidence of accountability. This involves the teacher reporting accurately every aspect of the activities carried out in school for effectiveness to be attained in teaching. Insufficient accountability hinders teacher effectiveness and productivity.

iv. **Inadequate instructional materials and facilities:** Inadequate instructional materials and facilities hinder teaching effectiveness. As humans, we interact with social as well as physical environments. The importance of the physical environment in promoting effective teaching has been identified. Instructional facilities and materials are designed to suit the intended curriculum and learning outcomes.

v. **Understanding different learning styles:** A single classroom most often contains students with different learning styles and abilities. It is very difficult for a teacher to use one single teaching method or strategy and have it be effective for all the learners. Teachers are required to think strategically when preparing lesson plans to cater to all the learning styles in their classroom and should be flexible while actively teaching. These different learning styles are an inhibitor to teaching effectiveness if not properly tackled.

vi. **Lack of proper funding:** funding is an inhibitor to teacher effectiveness. When funds are not sufficiently given to teachers to enable them to procure all the instructional materials required, it hinders effective teaching and learning. For teachers to be effective, all the required instructional materials should be provided.

vii. **Lack of remuneration and incentives:** Remuneration is very important for inception teacher effectiveness to be achieved. Teachers deserve their wages to motivate them to put in their best in teaching and learning. In a situation where teachers' salaries and allowances are being owned for months and years, it hinders effectiveness in teaching and learning. It is only when teachers' salaries and allowances are being paid and when due that teaching effectiveness will take place. It is a matter of fact that teacher effectiveness leads to teaching effectiveness. Remuneration and incentives become imperative in teaching and learning.

Conclusion

Teacher effectiveness is the degree to which the teacher can engage and impart on the learners effectively. For teaching to be effective, an effective teacher iis required. It is only when teachers are effective that the desired educational aims and objectives will be achieved and learning outcomes improved. Negligence on the part of the teachers who are the pivot upon which learning takes place and the implementers of curriculum will lead to the unimpressive performance of learners. It is only when teachers are effective in all aspects of teaching such as pedagogy, communication, innovation, research, and classroom management that learning will equally be effective.

Recommendations

Based on the discussion, the following recommendations are made;

1. Teachers' remuneration and incentives should be paid and as when do to enable them to put in their best in teaching and learning.
2. The class size of the schools should be streamlined according to the specifications in the National Policy on Education for effective teaching to be realized.
3. The administrative leadership style of the school should be democratic to enable teachers to function effectively and productivity.

4. Qualified teachers should be recruited to teach for teacher Effectiveness and impressive learning outcomes to be achieved.
5. Funds should be provided to teachers to enable them to procure the required instructional materials for effective teaching to take place.
6. Teachers should be encouraged to handle learners based on their difference. This is because learners come from different family backgrounds and have different learning abilities and styles.
7. Government should organize training through workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers to sensitize them on the innovative areas in teaching and learning to enable them to function effectively in the classroom.

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