

## **STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING TEACHING AND INSTRUCTION IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA**

**Ali Tijani Abdullahi Ph.D**

*Department of Special Education  
Bayero University, Kano*

### **Abstract**

*This paper discussed the ways through which teachers can improve teaching and instruction in inclusive education secondary schools. Also, the roles of the school principals in seeing to the effectiveness of teaching and instruction were also discussed. Teaching like every other science has a systematic way of planning teaching activities and implementing same within a specified time period. The non-adherence to these laid down rules has resulted in a lot of lapses which has resulted to the poor performance of our students in national examination. For learning to be successful, the teacher must plan, implement, and evaluate the lesson so as to ascertain the level of comprehension of the lesson by the students and also to know if the desired (stated) objectives were achieved.*

### **Introduction**

The poor performance of students in national examinations is becoming highly worrisome. All the various stakeholders in education are not only short of words but also seem short of ideas on how to tackle this problem which has become a yearly occurrence despite the gradual increase in students' performance since after 2009. But, over the years, instead of charting a common course on how to tackle this problem, the parents/guardians and the teachers have often blamed the government and the government in return are blaming the teachers for their lack of commitment to their job as one of the causes of the problem.

At its meeting in November, 2009 in Ibadan, WAEC's National Examination Committee (NEC), agreed with the conclusion of the chief examiner's report that many candidates failed because 'they could not express themselves in written English, could not interpret questions, were poorly prepared, did not write clearly, and were technically incompetent'. They endorsed the recommendations that teachers should teach well and cover the syllabus, science laboratories should be well equipped, and candidates should be well prepared for examination and taught how to answer questions (Belo-Osagie, 2009).

A critical analysis of the chief examiner's report will show that much of the questions lie on the teachers. For instance, how did a candidate who could not express himself/herself in written English got to that level? How has he/she being passing previous promotional examinations? These are some of the questions that must be answered if we are serious about finding lasting solutions to the problem. The teachers as

was noted by the NEC meeting must live up to the task of preparing students not only to pass examinations, but also to become contributive members of the society upon the contribution of their studies. The teaching and instructional technique must be improved so as to adequately prepare the students to meet the challenges of modern society.

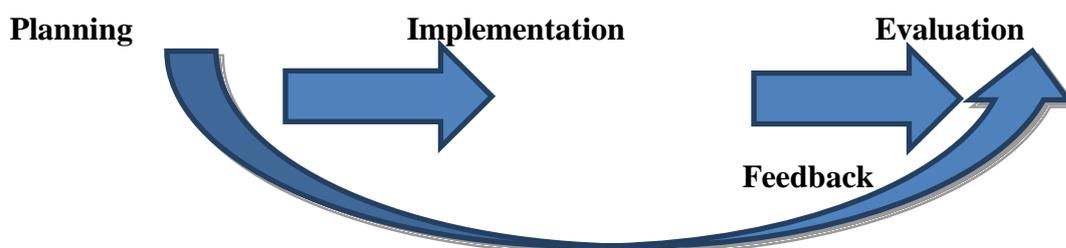
Though there has been a consistent improvement in students' performance since 2010 but some of the issues pointed out in the chief examiner's report of 2009 are still lingering. For instance, 2012 WASSCE result showed an increase in candidates' performance of about 8 percent from that of 2011, and WAEC pointed out that 'there has been a consistent improvement in students' performance since 2010'but there are still problems such as the high rate of examination malpractice in the country, dearth of qualified teachers including inadequate facilities in both public and private schools and poor funding(Onuoha, 2012).

Teachers still bear a bulk of the burden and there has to be an improvement in the instructional strategies for us to record a sustainable improvement in students' performance. Instruction according to Adebayo (2009) usually sets forth principles and strategies of optimizing learning. Learning involves relatively permanent change in behaviour in the areas of knowledge, attitudes and skills as a result of exposure to specific experiences. The teacher should be more concerned with how teaching and instruction in general can bring about effective and efficient learning in the students. He noted that teaching is perhaps as complex as the human behaviour it intends to control, modify and transform.

From the foregoing, therefore, the centre of teaching and instruction is the teacher and this suggests that, to achieve totality in the education of the child, some strategies should be worked out to improve the general performance of students. In this paper therefore, the stages in instructional process, stages and approaches to lesson development, and the strategies for effective classroom instructions were discussed.

### **Stages in Instructional Process**

Lawal (2000) described the stages in instructional process with the aid of a diagram which depict the process as a continuous process that begins from planning to implementation to evaluation and after which there is a feedback that takes the process back to where it started and flow in the same previous manner. For the purpose of clarity, the diagram is reproduced below.



A diagram showing the simplified model of the instruction process (Lawal, 2000). The model of the process of instruction in the figure above is applicable to the following hierarchical layers educational processes:

- a. Curriculum development (ultimate)
- b. Scheme of work development (intermediate)
- c. Lesson development (proximate)

Adebayo (2009) pointed out that all these three process should be of interest and concern to classroom teachers. The one which is most centered on them is the proximate process of lesson development, which involves the micro-process of planning, implementation, and evaluation of teaching and learning activities as the key components of instructional process.

### **Stages and Approaches to Lesson Development**

**1. Planning:** Planning is usually for the future, but a sensible and sensitive planner must also look backward. In other words, to plan effectively for the future, we need to address and possibly redress the past. If, for instance, a teacher’s last lesson proved unsuccessful, as indicated in the learner’s poor achievement scores, the teacher would need to undertake some corrective or remedial teaching and also develop some form of diagnostic evaluation into the beginning of the next lesson to ensure learners’ adequate entry behaviour.

If, on the other hand, the previous lesson proved largely successful, the teacher still needs to undertake prognostic evaluation as a strategy of developing the learner’s current achievement into the plan for the next lesson. Under the planning stage, the teacher has to answer the fundamental questions of whom, why, what, when, and how (Adebayo, 2009). Little wonder why Milkova (2012) sees the planning as the designing of the teacher’s road map of what students need to learn and how it will be done effectively during the class time. Milkova, pointed out that a successful lesson plan addresses and integrates three key components of objectives for student learning, teaching/learning activities, strategies to check students understanding.

**2. Implementation:** This is the stage at which the teacher actualizes his/her plan by integrating the art and science of teaching with contextual factors of the school and the classroom, among others. The contextual system according to Edem (2007) includes “the variables of the society, the community, the school and the classroom within which teaching or instruction take place”. The teacher as an individual rarely has any direct control over the context of the society and the community, and hardly any control on the intrinsic factors that hampers or enhances learning within an individual.

However, the teacher can better play his role as an agent of change if he/she can have access to developmental trends in the science of teaching while attempting to develop his/her talents, knowledge, skills, and attitude into an effective and efficient art through a conscious and systematic refining of his/her personality.

---

In the process of implementing his teaching plan, Edem (2007) highlights that the teacher initiates and sustains active and lively classroom interaction through carefully selected and implemented techniques of:

**i. Introduction:** The teacher may introduce the lesson to the students with a question bearing in mind the stated objectives of the lesson this is to know their preconceived notion about the topic. Milkova (2012) gives an example of taking a simple poll by asking “how many of you have heard of X? Raise your hand if you have”.

**ii. Presentation:** the lesson should be broken into bits (i.e. through the use of task analysis) and presented in steps flowing continuously from simple to complex. The teacher must estimate how much time to spend in each of the segments and the relevant examples to use. All these should be done during the planning stage of the lesson and strictly followed when in the classroom.

**iii. Evaluation:** this is simply the means of checking for understanding. Without having clearly stated objectives, it will be very difficult for the teacher to know if the students understand what has been taught. The teacher also have to give room for the students to ask question, it is usually better for him/her to anticipate before time the kind of questions that the students may ask. The evaluation is the feedback mechanism that eventually leads to the next planning - implementation - evaluation process.

**iv. Summary:** the teacher should go over the lesson highlighting the main points of the lesson. It is a very important to note that the evaluation outcome will form the bases of the summary.

### **Strategies for Effective Inclusive education Classroom Instruction**

**The Classroom Teacher** - In the instructional area, Iheanacho (1986) and Santrock (2004) point out that a competent teacher should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Set annual goals (i.e. long term goals with short term objectives).
2. Assess and describe each child in terms of academic performance, social adjustment and motor performance.
3. Know areas of strength and weaknesses of a child in mathematics, reading, language skills, etc.
4. Plan instruction using test result data.
5. Prepare materials for instruction.
6. Implement a child’s Individualized Educational Programme (IEP) to achieve his long term and short term objectives.
7. Develop curriculum that suits each child’s age level, vocabulary and mental development.
8. Creativity must come into play in the preparation instructional materials for individual or group work.
9. Make good use of package teaching materials.
10. Task analyse a child’s instruction in a way that it will improve on the child’s learning behavior.

11. Carry out continuous assessment as he/she teaches in order to make necessary change to meet the child's needs.
12. Know how to use proper reinforcement to achieve his/her goals.

**The School Principal** – School principals should acquaint themselves with modern practices in the teaching and learning process so as to be able to advice the teachers on the best classroom set up and requirements. The following were suggested by Iheanacho (1986) and Edem (2007) as the strategies through which secondary school administrators can help to improve classroom instruction.

1. Communication. Discussing with teachers on how to set realistic instructional goals at various class levels; taking into consideration the individual differences of the children.
2. Helping teachers adjust the curriculum so as to suit the special needs students in the classroom (i.e. in the case of inclusive education).
3. Helping the teacher to locate and prepare interesting instructional materials.
4. Informing teachers about support services available such as in-service training, workshops, conferences, seminars, etc.

The principal has the highly complex task of utilizing and directing both the human and material resources available to him towards the attainment of the school goals. As a school leader, he has the legal power to protect his students against the excesses of the teachers and resolve any friction that may arise between them. For instance, a teacher's capacity to influence the students he teaches goes far beyond teaching in the classroom to include but not limited to the effect of his attitudes, mannerisms, and ways of doing things in and outside the classroom.

### Conclusion

The central focal point of the school is teaching. Therefore, the primary duty of the school principal and teachers is to plan and coordinate

### References

- Adebayo, L. (2009). Instructional approaches, methods and techniques: issues and guide-post. In P. N. C. Ngwu (ed). *Secondary Schools Management 2008 Principals Yearbook*. Immaculate Publications Ltd. 90-97.
- Belo-Osagie, K. (2009). Poor language skills, handwriting cause failure in WASSCE. Retrieved from <http://www.thenationonlineng.com> on 03/02/2013.
- Edem, D. A. (2007). *Introduction to educational administration in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Iheanacho, I. J. (1986). *Administrators of special education: organizational issues in Nigeria*. Enugu: CECTA (Nigeria) Ltd.

---

Lawal, A. (2000). Concepts in teaching.  
In I. O. Abimbola (ed).  
*Fundamental Principles and  
Practice of Instruction*. Ilorin:  
Department Of Curriculum Studies  
and Educational Technology,  
University Of Ilorin. 109 - 117.

Milkova, S. (2012). Strategies for  
effective lesson planning.  
Retrieved from

[www.crit.umich.edu/gsis/p2\\_5](http://www.crit.umich.edu/gsis/p2_5). On  
03/04/2013.

Onuoha, I. (2012). WAEC releases  
results. Retrieved  
from [http://www.businessdayonline  
.com/NG/index.php/news/284-  
breaking-news/42651-waec-  
result-are-out](http://www.businessdayonline.com/NG/index.php/news/284-breaking-news/42651-waec-result-are-out). On 03/04/2013.

Santrock, J. W. (2004). *Educational  
psychology*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.