

## REBUILDING TRUST IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

This paper discussed university education in Nigeria with a view of accessing Nigeria's educational standard in meeting educational management standards for university effectiveness. The paper also examined the challenges faced by the Nigeria university educational management which includes inadequate funding, politicizing of university education, influencing the appointment of Vice Chancellors to sooth political ills, conflict on the control and responsibility of universities between the tiers of government. The paper further examined ways the Federal Government and university education stakeholders can sustain, maintain and improve trust in educational management of the University for Effectiveness in Nigeria hence, the collapse of trust in Nigeria's educational management. The paper therefore recommends that there should be an active participation of the allies in university education in Nigeria not just on papers, policies and principles but policies into practice.

**Keywords:** Education, Effectiveness, Management, Rebuilding, University

### **Introduction**

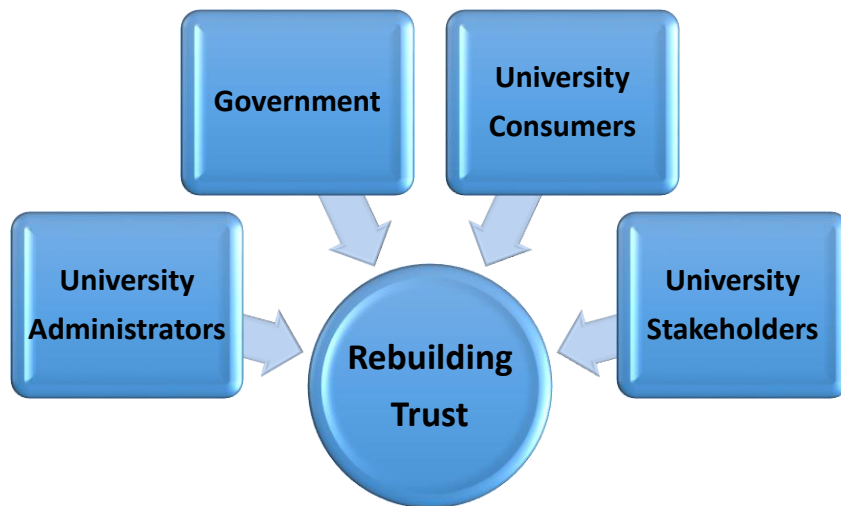
The education industry like every other industry requires a land space for it to function efficiently as to attain its predetermined goals. Beyond the spaces, the education industry also requires structure in form of building and facilities that aid the human capital in goals attainment. This implies that the effectiveness of this industry is solely dependent on the availability of the needed school plants. The benefit of school plant planning is unquantifiable in achieving educational set goals and objectives NPE (2014), in other words, without school plants educational delivery cannot be attained.

An effective University system is built on vision, ideas, direction and most importantly inspire people to bring the trust between them and a team effort to work together in order to attain the expected aspirations of the University (Adegbesan, 2010). The University must influence the activities of teachers towards obtaining or achieving the goals of improving academic achievement of students. In the University, delegation is used to entrust a task, authority or responsibility to another person and in some cases, people especially to a subordinate to execute designated responsibilities.

The goals of university in Nigeria are the development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen; total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world; provision of equal access to qualitative university

opportunities for all citizens at all levels of university, within and outside the formal school system; inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity; and the development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and the competencies to empower individuals to live in and contribute positively to the society (NPE, 2014).

To trust, it requires having faith and confidence in the effectiveness of another person, which involves the courage by a matured leader. Delegation enhances time management and promotes effectiveness and productivity in the organization (Allen, 2015). This also requires giving the subordinate the free hand to explore, think critically and find the best alternative to solve the task ahead. In the University, Akpanuko (2012) explained that this trust has been breached from all sides, be it from University administrators, government, University consumers and other stakeholders in the University (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1: Rebuilding trust in educational management for effective university education Nwokocha, J & Akande., H (2020)*

**Conceptual Clarification**

University effectiveness is the concept of how effective a University organization is in achieving the outcomes the organization intends to produce. Organizational effectiveness groups directly concern themselves with several key areas. Without effective leadership, organizations and institutions will not excel. It is the drive way through which institutions can take to reach greater heights. The trend in some countries is that leadership is appointed as a result of possession of a qualification. Indeed, many researchers Ololube, (2017) and Adegbesan (2010) agree that institutional leadership is the key to improving quality. It can also be noted that leadership plays a pivotal role in the success of higher education institutions and is a critical factor in sustaining and improving the quality and performance of higher institutions. Leadership is a critical element of school administration and management. According to Ololube (2017) running a school effectively

requires full cooperation of all stakeholders who need direction and coordination. This process is called leadership. Leadership is the process of providing a suitable environment and influencing people to strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of organizational goals.

The integrity of a government, University administrators, University consumers and stakeholders is to come to limelight as integrity is a veritable tool to achieving the pre-set University educational goals and in this quest of rebuilding trust in educational management for effective University education in Nigeria all players must achieve effective administration of the school and implementation of University policies, every player needs to be honest to attract trust from all levels of key players in the university system. The traits of university stakeholder's player like the federal government and university administrators have been seen to affect the quality of university performance and university reform efforts have not taken place to a great extent. There are numerous challenges which have negatively affected public universities in Nigeria. These challenges include: inadequate funding, politicizing of university education, influencing the appointment of Vice Chancellors to sooth political ills, conflict on the control and responsibility of universities between the tiers of government, recruitment of non-professionals in teaching, host community influence, recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff, and students' entrances, examination malpractice, cultism, truancy, stealing, distrust between participants in the university. Others are lack of planning for schools, discontent among staff, lack of training and retraining in school administration, communication gap between university and outside world, lack of participation of subordinates in decision making, destruction of facilities by vandals and insecurity.

### **Capacity Building and Institutional Development in Higher Education**

University stakeholders are to be responsible for the building and sustaining of effective university education in Nigeria with all participants promoting trust and communicative behaviour (Nwabueze, 2016). Recent researches Madumere-Obike and Nwabueze (2012) and Nwokocha (2019) show that most crises and conflicts in Nigeria universities could be resolved successfully with every participant proactively playing their parts. The assumption that, incessant students failures in both internal and external examinations are as a result of university administrators' poor performance. Due to non possession of certain administrative core values like creativity, vision, intelligence, initiative and honesty which play significant role towards university performance, has created variation in performance of universities in Nigeria (Madumere-Obike & Nwabueze, 2012). It is equally assumed that traits enhanced performance as efficient and proactive Vice Chancellors are expected to achieve effective performance in Nigeria Universities. This means that absence of innate essential qualities would mar optimum university performance and universities would not be able to achieve its pre-set objective of being a vital hub to meet individual, organizational and State goals. In light of the above problems in Nigeria Universities and in an attempt to proffer solutions to these problems, the Federal Government, University administrators, university consumers and stakeholders must work toward achieving goals and enhancing performance in universities.

The Vice Chancellor occupies an important position in the University. If education is the major foundation for the future strength of Nigeria, university education which is a form of higher education must be the cornerstone. Likewise, as universities continue to evolve and as shifts in the

demographics of populations continue to occur nationally, there is a need and call for different relationship paradigms to assist in the proper guidance of those that are placed for the management and administration of universities. These new paradigms will be marked with servant leaders who empower as opposed to delegate; build trust rather than demand loyalty; and instead of hearing and leading from the head, seeks to understand and lead from the heart.

### **Strategies for Rebuilding Trust in Educational Management for Effective University Education in Nigeria**

The university Vice Chancellors and other university administrators have the ability to improve overall university perceptions by simply attending to fundamental components inherent in quality relationships. As key players for effective university education in Nigeria, the Federal and State Government, university administrators and stakeholders begin to feel better about themselves and what their collective missions are as a result of significant interactions with their responsibilities as they must become more effective in their roles (Ogunde, 2011). Daily interpersonal interactions of stakeholders are necessary to garner trust and support for the attainment of university goals. In the university, this means that, instead of worrying constantly about setting the direction and then engaging teachers and others in a successful march (often known as planning, organizing, leading, motivating, and controlling), the university stakeholders can focus more on removing obstacles, providing material and emotional support, taking care of the management details that make any journey easier, sharing in the comradeship of the march and in the celebration when the journey is completed, and identifying a new, worthwhile destination for the next march. The march takes care of itself (Aluede, Idogho & Imonikhe, 2012).

One important thing to keep in mind is the fact that the university is an instructional institution for capacity building of the individual and the entire economy at large thus; all effective university must have this as a quality. And even though shared decision making attributes are present, there are certain personalised responsibilities designated at various levels within and outside the university. These responsibilities take place for promoting trust and building relationships in an effort to ultimately achieve university effectiveness and should be first and foremost in our nation's priority list. University administrators can influence the working patterns of the university by arranging physical space and free time to promote norms of collegiality and experimentation (Nwokocha, 2019). Effective collaboration is not always easy. It brings with it a measure of difficulty and even of discomfort on some occasions. Effective collaborations operate in the world of ideas, examining existing practices critically, seeking better alternatives and working hard together at bringing about improvements and assessing their worth. This is believed to be one of the key challenges for collaborative working and professional development in Nigeria (Ekowo & Palmer, 2016). Effective collaborative management involves establishment of group goals, as well as individual accountability and it will create a successful inter personal communication which will lead to building of trust and promotion of team spirit. In addition the possible ways of improving collaboration for quality assurance in education are:

1. **Rebuilding Monitoring in University Management:** It refers to the process of collecting data at intervals about ongoing projects or programme within the university system. The aim is to constantly assess the level of performance with a view of finding out how far set

objectives are being met. When monitoring is regularly carried out with a view of rebuilding trust in educational management for effective university education in Nigeria, there will be regular assessment of performances of all the university education stakeholders which will aid in the identification of areas of less performance to improve performance and areas of good performance for the sustenance of the good performance.

2. **Rebuilding Evaluation in University Management:** Evaluation helps to build an educational programme, assess its achievements and improve upon its effectiveness. It serves as an in-built monitor within the programme to review the progress in learning from time to time. It also provides valuable feedback on the design and the implementation of the programme. Therefore, this is a formal process which carried out within a university system. It is based on available data which are used to form conclusions and then decisions in university educational management. It could be formative or summative. The aim of evaluation in educational university management quality assurance strategy in the university is to see how the system can be assisted to improve on the present level of performance.
3. **Rebuilding Supervision in University Management:** Supervision involve inspection, but it goes beyond inspection and includes attempt at bringing about improvement in the quality of every process in the university. Rebuilding supervision in university management includes staff, policy formation and policy implementation as essential parts of the supervision in University management process. It is a way of advising, guiding, refreshing, encouraging and stimulating staff, policy formation and policy implementation for effectiveness in the management of the university.
4. **Rebuilding Inspection in University Management:** Inspection in the university normally involves an assessment of available facilities and resources in an institution with a view to establishing how far a particular institution has met prescribed standards, it is more of an assessment rather than an improvement induced exercise.
5. **Rebuilding Quality control in University Management:** The issue of quality control cannot be over-emphasized in the University for rebuilding trust in educational management for effective university education in Nigeria. It is one of the strategies for establishing quality assurance in the inferior education system at all levels. Quality control in the university should be of concern to the country at large as it is a drive towards scientific and technological development of the developing countries in the Sub-Saharan countries especially Nigeria. For this to be successfully carried out, there is need to examine the qualification of university administrators, level of stakeholders' participation, the adequacy of the curriculum, availability of equipment in the required number as well as the proper use of the processes involved in the various skills to ensure that the finished products of the university are of high standard.
6. **Rebuilding Access and equity in University Management:** The trend of students transiting from the junior secondary school to other levels of education has not been encouraging as it has been falling short of the expectations in regards to quality and accessibility to university education. Therefore, the issue at the university level of education presents a situation that calls for concerns in terms of variation in access at the



Universities. The global expansion of higher education continues apace. Nigeria have now entered an era of universal higher education. Despite high overall growth, many groups nevertheless remain under-represented. Most notably, university access is typically limited for people who are financially disadvantaged, have a disability, hail from certain ethnic groups, are Indigenous, and/or live in rural areas. Unequal access raises issues both of social justice and of economic productivity. Nigeria is unable to broaden access to under-represented groups who could be suffering negative social, democratic, and economic consequences limitation. Despite this imperative, Nigeria has endeavoured to maintain a higher education system that is reflective of their broader population. University education is often perceived as a positive force for social mobility, yet it can also serve to consolidate on established structures of class, gender, and ethnicity. Equity remains a contested concept. Proponents of formal equality argue that meritocratic in university education is possible where formal, legal barriers of discrimination are removed. An opposing view holds that structural inequity is so deep that the removal of formal university barriers is necessary but insufficient to deliver fairness. By this view, equity requires more proactive measures to promote access and success for the under-represented groups. Conflicting views of student equity are often represented in affirmative action debates. Many countries provide compensation, bonus points, or other forms of preferential access to support identified disadvantaged groups. But in Nigeria it is contrary and not the case. While attempts to broaden access are made on equity grounds, the importance of student and university administrative diversity is also vital. Diversity may include ethnicity, gender, age, religion, and other geo-demographic characteristics. Advocates of student and university administrative diversity highlight that increased quality of learning where the student group holds a wide range of views informed by different backgrounds. This idea of “inclusive excellence” is informed by broader economic arguments of productive diversity. Alongside growing student and university administrative diversity in university education has been a focus on how universities manage that diversity. The campus climate have explored how different student groups experience and identify with their university and the strengths that different groups can bring to higher education.

### **Core Values for Rebuilding Trust in Educational Management for Effective University Education in Nigeria**

Honesty and trust are central to integrity. The outstanding signs of integrity include: keeping your words, keeping your commitments, paying attention to your environment, staying focused, surrounding yourself with honest people, taking responsibility, and above all, respect for your employees. The quality of integrity is of great significance and has great impact in character transformation, personality refining and promotion of authentic moral values in Nigeria universities. University administrators with integrity will apply it strategically in their administration, through committed inculcation of this quality in their subordinates and will not allow them in any way to violate the due procedures, or tolerate any kind of deviations that will hinder the success and effective performance of the university system. It is equally integrity that will facilitate the issue of mutual trust in the school system. The development and manifestation of trust precedes integrity and increases the confidence of University stakeholders which is geared

towards commendable productive performance and advancements of the university. Integrity is in contrast with selfishness, but it is synonymous with incorruptibility, kindness, decisiveness and uprightness. Individuals who have integrity are ethically and morally driven, to the extent that they effortlessly exhibit the ability to attract quality and talented professionals in the university (Ololube, 2017)

There are factors that researchers and school systems point when describing quality schools and features of schools that have improved in University effectiveness. According to Ololube(2017), such features include commitment to success for all, flexibility and responsiveness, shared vision, climate of challenging and stimulating learning and administration, strong and fair disciplinary climate.

Adegbesan (2010) posits that much research has demonstrated that retention and quality of education depends primarily on the way universities are managed, more than the abundance of available resources. The capacity of universities to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the quality of leadership provided. Concerted efforts to improve university leadership are one of the most promising points of intervention to raise retention, quality and efficiency of university education across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Over the past decade, researchers have identified factors/characteristics of effective leaders and have pointed out values such as honesty, integrity, trust, care and compassion. The search for authenticity, integrity and trust in and among members within institutions is very much a reality. Leaders should strive to leave a legacy, to put smiles on the faces of the people they work and interact with, to positively move their organizations forward, to become agents of development in the digital economy. Over the years it has been pointed out that authenticity in leadership calls for a radical shift away from much of the traditional, conventional wisdom about leadership. Honesty, integrity, trustworthiness and compassion require fairness in leader's dealings with staff. Leaders need to stick to the guiding law as regards promotion.

### **Leadership Competence in University Education**

The quality of University leadership is said to be critical in the management of the university and achievement of goals. Greater responsibilities are even bestowed on university leadership by the demands of autonomy, globalization and knowledge-based economy. Amidst these expectations a highly qualified leadership should be chosen. In fashioning out leadership requirements and qualities, consideration should be given to theoretical propositions of what qualities make an effective leadership, and to the vision and mission of the institution (Obi, 2017). Once effective leadership established, it will constitute a standard of minimum qualities necessary for selection of a Vice-Chancellor and the evaluation of his or her performance.

More importantly, there are several studies dealing with organizational effectiveness with leadership qualities and characteristics that matter being isolated but very few on higher educational leadership qualities and institutional outcome or effectiveness. The following trends can be discerned. First, personality characteristics – age, emotional stability, extroversion and dependability – are frequently mentioned as qualities of leadership and are found to be positively related to organizational effectiveness (Nwokocha, 2019). Characteristics like experience on the job, communication ability, knowledge and qualification for the job, tend to affect the quality of

leadership. While additional qualification beyond first degree may not make a difference in leadership quality in non-academic institution or organizations, it is important for a higher educational leader to obtain a higher degree, especially where it is a prerequisite for promotion to higher rank – professorship.

Administrative and leadership skills and behaviours, interpersonal relations, management of self, administration and communication are important to effective leadership and organizational effectiveness. There is no doubt, the tasks are enormous, but as a manager, a leader is expected to get the tasks done through individuals as well as committees ground within and without the institution. A leader should therefore possess the qualities that will make the led to follow willingly. The leadership of the new university should aspire to possess good academic credentials that are impeccable and who can match his peers anywhere in the world. Today's vice-chancellor must be tested academically and professionally. A sound knowledge of his specialization should be inspiring to colleagues. In addition he must be of a sound character. This brings to the fore the fact that while institutions can themselves be leaders of some sort among their peers, the individuals that drive the process in an organization are the leaders of such organizations.

Leadership are at every level of the organizations directing one thing or the other or ensuring the smooth process of one area of the organization or the other. It is in this context that university leadership and stakeholders should re-examine those who constitute the leadership of university education. Despite the effects of leadership quality and University education outcome and effectiveness, most developing countries in Africa and Asia appear uncritical about the selection of University institutional leadership. For instance, selection of leaders for higher education institution in most countries in the regions is often characterized by intrigues, manoeuvrings and even crises with acrimony and most often the process is challenged. Ajayiand, (2011) had highlighted the following tasks which must be done by university education managers in order to have effective university education in Nigeria. These include:

1. Measurement and standardization of academic attainments;
2. Evaluation of quality of work during supervision;
3. Use of competent teachers and administrative supervisory personnel;
4. Dissemination of information to teachers, students, administrators and stakeholders;
5. Use of educational technologies with a view to increasing the efficiency of teaching;
6. New research and development to invigorate all educational activities;
7. Guidance and counselling;
8. Providing learners with suitable employment information;
9. Efficient management of all resources available.

## Conclusion

This paper revealed that to rebuild trust in the University education in Nigeria, all the stakeholders of the University embrace change and continually work with each other to achieve predetermined university institutional goals. University stakeholders who deliberately enhance intellectual growth of both staff and students and who create a culture of learning make it easy for their



institutions to uphold high standards predicated on effectiveness, quality and sustainability. An effective university education in Nigeria will have a positive impact on service quality on the individuals and by extension on the country. This will thus impact on the competitive advantage which, in turn, will lead to the long-term sustainability of the institution and the economy at large. The paper also emphasized the need for an effective national quality assurance agency in making sure institutions are supported in the global quest for effectiveness. When university stakeholders are provided the needed framework for effective functioning of any university and related institutions to the university, competence of university administrators will be under estimated especially in this time of fast pacing growth of science and technological advancements. Effectiveness will therefore imply that the university stakeholders are able to use the resources within their reach to achieve university set goals within a specified period of time for rebuilding trust in educational management for effective university education in Nigeria.

### **Suggestions**

Based on this paper, the following suggestions have been made:

1. University education should be made globally competitive by imbibing regular training and retraining of staff to cope with modern trends.
2. University administrators and stakeholders should see themselves as chief marketing officers of their institutions in which the people within and outside would always refer to. There is therefore need to carry on with utmost sense of effectiveness and responsibility since they are the icons of the universities.
3. University administrators should from time to time enhance their competences which may include their skills, attitudes, knowledge and experience through seminars, workshops and conferences.

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