

*Wams Ojura*

# KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING MANAGEMENT (KALM):

PRINCIPLES, OPPORTUNITIES,  
APPLICATIONS AND CHALLENGES

2011

Edited by

A.O. Ayeni

Uche G. Emetarom

Eunice O. Omoregie

J.A. Undie

J.E. Okon



# Facilitating Effective Management of Classroom Learning in Nigerian Schools

<sup>1</sup>Onuka, A.O. & <sup>2</sup>Isah, E.A

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Education, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Management,  
Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan.

+234033564064 Email: [adamonuka@yahoo.com](mailto:adamonuka@yahoo.com)

+2348093755776 Email: [emmanisah2005@yahoo.com](mailto:emmanisah2005@yahoo.com)

## Abstract

Learning takes place with cooperation between teachers and learners using established norms. Certain variables have been identified as contributory to effective teaching and learning in Nigerian schools among which are; teaching materials that include knowledge generation and its utilisation, pedagogical principles that include teacher preparation, infrastructural provision and development involving school plant creation, classroom creation, class size and general management of the classroom. Classroom management has peculiar challenges in the present dispensation. The study gives an overview of knowledge creation and its management, learning principles and general theories of learning. It investigates challenges and causes of poor classroom learning to include; inadequate teacher preparation, inadequate instructional materials for effective classroom instruction in schools, uncooperative ethnic divergences on the perception of education, poverty that induces absenteeism and indiscipline in schools, unfriendly educational policies orchestrated by forces of ethnicism, nepotism, poor leadership and corruption. Other challenges include increasing dissatisfaction with the returns to education. Solutions advocated include; sensitization of stakeholders on the need to educate citizens and see education as a product that must be jointly funded by private and public sector, increase in internal and external supervision of the school system, provision of instructional materials, training and retraining of staff (Teachers) to meet present needs of the school system, class size, pupil/teacher ratios, infrastructural provision etc. Perspectives of 21<sup>st</sup> century effective classroom management are examined.

## Introduction

Education has been variously described and defined. Among those who defined and described education include scholars like Fafunwa (1974), and Osokoya (2003). A common denominator among all definitions of education is that it nourishes, enlightens and creates room for progress. In the several definitions and descriptions, some facts emerged for example; Education is either formal or informal. Formal education is that obtained from formal school while informal education is that obtained through the homes (family) and society. Informal education does not involve going to a formal school. A common factor to both formal and informal education is that learning takes place in both instances. Though learning takes place in both settings, methodology for inculcating values in both instances varies. While in formal schools the teacher stands distinct and has formal training in teaching, the informal school is not so blessed. Teachers may be well informed in the informal school, but lack the basic pedagogical techniques of inculcating such facts. In essence, the classroom serves as an essential tool to learning in the formal school system. Classrooms are created in the formal school system to accommodate pupils or students having similar characteristics for example; a mean age, level of education or schooling. The school plant is compartmentalized in that way to facilitate teaching and learning.

The functions of a classroom include that it;

1. Serves as a unit of instruction for students/pupils with similar educational goals
2. Allows for effective supervision and evaluation by both the head teacher or any person so designated
3. Enables allocation of educational resources for example teaching personnel in the school and equitable distribution of instructional materials etc
4. Enables systematic educational instruction in all subjects and prevents wastages
5. Gives the teacher and the school system the opportunity to identify talented students for further development.

Learning on its part is unique. Kassin (2009), explained that several theories have been adapted from Psychology by educators for education especially educational psychology to facilitate teaching and learning and enable teachers acquire the right perspective to inculcating knowledge. Prominent among theories identified by Kassin (2009) are those associated with behaviour modification for example, operant conditioning by Pavlov, Skinner etc. Others include those involved in looking at pupil traits - Individual differences, genetic composition of pupils and students etc.

Foley (2009) ,explained that cognitive domain include but not limited to the following;

*...cognition refers to the process of knowing, and cognitive psychology is the study of all mental activities related to acquiring, storing, and using knowledge. The domain of cognitive psychology spans the entire spectrum of conscious and unconscious mental activities: sensation and perception, learning and memory, thinking and reasoning, attention and consciousness, imagining and dreaming, decision making, and problem solving. Other topics that fascinate cognitive psychologists include creativity, intelligence, and how people learn, understand, and use language... Foley(2009:1)Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009. © 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation.*

Further equipment given to teachers include; lesson preparation and delivery methods taking cognizance of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains in education. A well qualified teacher in Nigeria is one that is appropriately armed with the pedagogical weapons to face his area of discipline and confront his level of operation but however, most teachers, pupils, students and schools face challenges and constraints to classroom learning management.

What then is classroom and learning management? McCreary (2009), described classroom management as the various strategies adopted by school managers to ensure that each learner gains maximally to enhance educational performance. Johnson and Bany (1970), described classroom management as a pattern of actions in which a teacher or instructional manager creates conditions favourable to the attainment of pre determined classroom objectives that facilitate learning. Manzur (2009), saw learning as the ability to acquire aptitudes that enhances the performances of new tasks. The process of acquiring such skills involves an understanding by the teacher of teaching methodologies. Manzur (2009), specifically explained that teachers should be equipped with knowledge of child developmental and learning psychologies and their relationship to education.

In explaining the roles of educational psychology and the domains in education, Manzur (2009) referred to the works of classical conditioning by Pavlov, Operant conditioning by Skinner and Thorndike, observational learning by Bandura. Manzur (2009), further described the importance of a teacher being skilled in factors that

determine learning which was pointed out to include age, motivation (reinforcement etc) previous experiences and intelligence.

Facilitating learning involves the adoption of certain strategies and policies in primary and secondary schools classroom management techniques. Among strategies that could be adopted are; keeping the total number of students in schools and classroom within the teachers scope and competence in terms of number, age and ability. Further to this, teacher availability and competence must be well considered especially training, availability and adequate utilisation of teaching materials, adequate environmental facilities, school climate and the adoption of sound school management principles especially in the area of school supervision and instruction delivery system. Other factors include; discipline and the environment (Arogundade, 2009). For tertiary education, learning management is a function of several factors that include availability, adequacy and effective utilisation of human resources (teachers), poor infrastructure especially in the sciences and poor funding of the system. Generally learning is a function of teacher knowledge of the student, mastery of his subject matter and ability to inculcate discipline. It is necessary to explain here that the effects of improper classroom and learning management are far reaching and most of them are here with us in Nigeria. Prominent among them are;

1. Decline in student academic achievement and performance: Improper classroom management breeds indiscipline and poor retention rate among students. The effect of such is that learning will be boring and students will loose ability of independent study. In recent years, there has been consistent decline in secondary school students academic performance in external examinations.
2. Resort to clandestine methods of passing examinations: It is well known that absence of quality teaching results in the cutting of edges to success commonly referred to as examination malpractices the impact that has been with us over the years. Okpalla (2011) decried the mass failure in the 2011 National Examination Council (NECO) conducted secondary final examinations where less than 12% passed the examination with credit in English Language and Mathematics that form basic requirement for university admission. He explained that if students are well taught, there will be improvement in their results. The result also showed a high level of examination malpractices.
3. Decline in scholarship: A drop in classroom and learning management will translate over time to decline in scholarship as independent study will be come a mirage among pupils and students. Ill equipped teachers will produce ill-equipped students. Where these are available and infrastructure is lacking, then students will become dependent almost all their days.

### Challenges and Constraints to Effective Classroom Learning and Management

Several challenges apply to the teaching learning situations in our educational system today. Such challenges cut across all levels of education in Nigeria and sub Saharan Africa and can be seen as explained below;

#### 1. Inadequate Teachers.

The problem of inadequate classroom teachers has been with Nigeria and is yet to be solved. It is clear that no nation or people can grow beyond the capacity of her teachers and despite every innovation through research and development from information communication technology (ICT), no substitute has been developed to replace the teacher (Omolewa, 2009).

(FRN 2004) was very emphatic on the training of teachers and the basic qualifications of teachers. The problem of availability of teachers cuts across all levels of Nigeria's education for example, it is noted that Nigeria requires additional thirty two thousand PHD holders to get our current universities adequately staffed but at the same time, the current levels of production by all universities is only three hundred graduates per annum which in essence implies that it will take Nigeria, over one hundred years to meet the lecturer requirement for university education at the current rate of production.

In a recent study, Babalola (2011), revealed the shortage and excesses in Nigerian Primary school teacher demand and supply as shown below;

**Table 1:** Trends in Teacher Demand and Supply in Nigerian Primary Schools from 1999-2005

Years	Number of Primary School Teachers		Excesses and Shortfalls	
	Actual Supply	Expected Demand	Shortfall	Excess
1999	43,2096	447,683	15,587	
2000	446,405	478,786	32,381	
2001	488,164	476,031		12,133
2002	491,751	495,152	3,401	
2003	591,041	642,620	51,379	
2004	597,532	534,888		62,644
2005	599,172	552,886		46,286

Source: Babalola 2011, Teacher Professionalism in a Time of global Changes Pp 4

With increasing demand for university education and quality regulation by the Nigerian Universities commission (NUC), there is gross inadequacy of lecturers and this was identified by Osokoya (2003) as the major challenge that has been and is still facing the successful implementation of the 1981 National Policy on education especially as it relates to the Junior Secondary School (JSS) aspect. Vocational subjects introduced into the JSS have virtually become ineffective due to shortage of teachers.

## 2. Inadequate infrastructure

Infrastructure has been identified as a major challenge to all aspects of the Nigerian educational system. Prominent among scholars who studied this include; Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2004), Akpochafo and Felio (2006). Both scholars studied different aspects of the infrastructural development of Nigeria and were able to project into the future using data collected from technical and secondary schools and those from technological institutions. Their study exposed the infrastructural deficiencies in Nigeria's education system. It is clear that there can be no efficient management of the classroom without adequate infrastructure. The challenge of inadequate infrastructure affects science and technology as no effective learning in science and technology can take place without laboratories. While it can be argued that the Humanities, Management sciences and Education can do without rigorous infrastructure, the same cannot be said of science and technical education.

Babalola (2010), studying the dearth of infrastructure in Africa and by extension Nigeria, dwelt extensively on a comparative scale of the damage from inadequate

electricity to teaching and learning at the university level. His comparison exposed the inadequacy of the Nigerian student to his American counterpart due to insufficient and ill exposition to ICT materials. Onuka and Emunemu (2009) in a study on managing the challenges of schooling in Oyo State, Nigeria were able to expose the dangers which Primary and secondary school students were exposed to especially in terms of poor building infrastructure. The study was able to expose that most students and teachers felt unhappy and did not feel like going to school each time they thought of the school conditions.

### 3. Poor Policy Implementation

A challenge and constraint to classroom and learning management in the Education system and in the schools is unwillingness by top management and political leaders to conform to laid down rules and procedures. Examining our tertiary education system, Okojie (2011) explains that most policies are in place but due to quick and cheap means to get political advantages those people throw such policies away. For example, universities admitting students for courses for which they are not accredited. To ensure sanity in such circumstances, the regulator must go extra mile to ensure conformity. Also, teacher pupil ratio and average class size policies are abused in schools. Isah and Fabunmi (2011) explains that one of the reasons why quality (performance) of graduates from our educational system is poor is not unconnected with large number of students teachers are constrained to cope with when such capacity is not provided for. It is practically impossible for a single teacher to manage a classroom of over seventy five students. In some universities, a single teacher could be made to handle well over three thousand students (Faculty courses) especially in public state owned universities. Such practices do not enhance effective classroom management practices.

### 4. Poor Learning Environment

Poor learning environment simply imply environments that are not conducive for effective classroom lesson delivery. Most school structures especially in rural areas are particularly poor and cannot enhance discipline especially when there are natural occurrences as rain, winds and change in climatic conditions. Under such conditions, indiscipline breeds in schools. Again inadequacy of poor facilities especially toilet facilities facilitates a relaxed atmosphere where it becomes impossible for both school administrators and classroom teachers to constrain students to adhere to school rules on movement. Another contributory factor to poor school learning environment is poor teacher welfare and harsh school environment. Other human/innate factors include; poor relationship between teacher and pupils, teacher and teacher and teacher with the school management. There are instances when moral laxity on the part of the teachers causes a breakdown in classroom management.

### 5. Insufficient Motivational Packages for Teachers In Education

Babalola (2011), described the teaching profession in sub Saharan African as most un motivating in that in the context of modern global professional practices. In the study, it was observed that modern teaching comprises of skill acquisition and dissemination, increased digital applications, increased global recognition of productivity especially in the area of knowledge transfer and dissemination, emphasis on lifelong education rather than traditional educational skills, changes in the various areas of capital resulting in social expectations from the teacher. However, modern teachers in Sub Saharan Africa and Nigeria lack the basic skills to match their counterparts in many arts of the developing

world. Teachers in Nigeria are ill equipped, ill trained and poorly paid in the sense that it is regarded as an unrewarding profession.

Social perception of teachers is poor because their take home packages are not adequate. Until recently, university teachers in Nigeria had the same problem but today the university system in terms of motivation is gradually emerging. Indicators of this emergence is discernible in the desire of most young persons to join the tertiary academic community which was not the same in the recent past, most graduates are interested in remaining in the academic community as it has become motivating to attract good quality personnel. Teachers perceived as light bearers in various communities especially in rural settings are not well paid and hence most citizens do not wish their off springs take up the job of teaching. In recent study on a survey of education students attitude towards teaching as a career, Adewuyi (2003), discovered that out of 540 subjects, only 219 representing 41% and an X of 2.37 and SD of 1.03 that tested insignificant agreed to take to teaching out of love for the profession. The poor social perception of teachers in Nigeria is evident in poor dressing style and in most times inability to meet personal needs and exigencies.

In most situations in Nigeria, teacher sacrifices are unrewarded for example, teachers fought a hard battle to implement teachers professional wages while most science teachers are not paid any science allowances. Teachers in rural areas are not paid any rural allowances. They are compelled to do what ordinarily should have been done with happiness the result is 'lack of interest' in the job.

#### 6. Poor and Inadequate Instructional Materials

The importance of instructional materials to students academic performance was well captured in Oloyede (2003). In the study that investigated resources availability, utilization and academic achievement of students in selected secondary schools in Ibadan observed that academic performance of students declined due to lack of availability of learning resources in the form of instructional materials. The study further explained that there is a significant relationship between availability and utilization of instructional materials. Efficient utilization of the resources will lead to high student academic performance. The effect of the above finding is traceable to the assertions of the World Bank in (IBRD, 2006) that indicated primary school completion rate in Nigeria to be 68%. Among reasons that account for children dropping out of school include poor learning facilities. Teachers and teaching become boring when instructional materials are not available. In Nigeria, most teachers spend their meager resources to purchase instructional materials when it is no longer coming from the authorities. To improve school enrolment in rural areas and encourage brilliant but poor students, teachers contribute their meager resources to purchase uniforms and in some cases buy books for students.

#### Strategies and Recommendations for Improving Classroom Teaching and Learning Management

To meet the goals and objectives of education as enshrined in the Nigerian National policy on Education, this study is of the opinion and recommends that the following strategies be adopted by policy makers in the Nigerian educational system:

##### 1. Increased Teacher/Lecturer Production

This study is of the opinion that adequate supply of teacher to meet education demand will reduce the pressure on existing schools and classrooms. Increased teacher production will force the pupil/teacher ration to drop and will result in effective management of the

classroom, inculcation and enforcement of classroom discipline, improvement in internal supervision and monitoring and enhanced teacher responsibility.

## 2. Improved Motivation for Teachers Welfare

Abraham Maslow's motivational hierarchy comes in handy here. Where teachers are poorly motivated, they develop a poor perception of themselves and apply such discouragement to their work. Poor motivation reduces high professional ethics due to compromise to meet physiological (survival) needs. This breeds corruption and its unwanted allies. This paper is of the opinion that apart from paying teachers professional allowances, rural teachers allowance, science teachers allowance etc should form part of teachers emoluments.

## 3. Improved Teacher Training Curriculum

Though much was provided for in the 1981 National Policy on teacher training, much still needs to be done in light of the revelations from Babalola (2010 & 2011). Nigeria's teacher training curriculum needs review, reforms and modification. Teacher education in Nigeria and in Sub Saharan Africa require the inculcation of some basic aspects of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to conform to emerging trends in globalisation. Teacher training needs inclusion of studies in Environmental literacy and climate change especially in aspects relating to mitigating the effects of global warming, coping with emergency and disaster management. Good teacher training curriculum will equip the teacher with the basic tenets of pedagogy, win pupil and society confidence.

## 4. Improving School Environment

An improvement of the school environment will make schooling and learning attractive to the learner. This paper is of the opinion that policy executors should devote adequate funds to making schools especially public schools what it should be. Classrooms should be properly furnished, laboratories well equipped and libraries well stocked with books. Also, schools should have basic protection from poachers etc by the provision of school fence to avoid intrusion by unwanted elements. The school environment apart from being inviting should cater for both the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of students, pupils and teachers. Classrooms should be provided with sufficient and adequate instructional materials to empower teachers for effective lesson delivery.

## 5. Improved and Increased Inspection

A major transformational tool for effective classroom and learning management is the expectation by teachers of inspectors. Over the years, the levels and rate of inspection in schools have been declining. Teachers will be motivated to put into use and operate their classroom management skills when they are conscious of the fact that they are expecting inspectors. Inspectors should not only come from external sources as the Ministry of Education but internal inspection like those of the head teacher, the vice principal etc.

## Summary and Conclusion

This paper investigated classroom and learning management. It took a theoretical overview of the concept of classroom management and learning citing copiously from the literature. The paper examined the basic tenets of classroom management and learning pointing out areas of strength and weaknesses in the practice of classroom and learning management in Nigeria. The paper revealed the consequences of poor classroom management styles on the nations and the individuals. The paper finally provided strategies for improving classroom management in Nigerian schools.



## References

- Adeyemi, J.K and Uko-Aviomoh, E.E (2004) Effective Technological Delivery in Nigerian Polytechnics. Need for Academic Manpower Development Policy. Educational Policy Analysis Archives Journal of Education, Vol. 12 No 4, Arizona, USA.
- Adeyemi, J.O (2003) A Survey of Education Students Attitude Towards Teaching as a Career. Ibadan Journal of Education Vol. 3, No. 1&2. A Publication of the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Pp 65-71
- Akpochafo, W.C and Fellio, W.L (2006) An Overview of Barriers to Curriculum Implementation in Nigeria. International Journal of continuing Engineering Education and Life long Learning. Vol. 16 No 6 Pp 493 - 501.
- Arogundade, B.B (2009). Classroom Management in Education. In Babalola. J.B., Ayeni, A.O (Eds) Educational Management: Theories and Tasks. Macmillan Publishing House. Nigeria. Pp 787 - 796
- Babalola, J.B (2010) Transition from Chalkboard to Digital Whiteboard: Keeping Pace with Challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Technologies in a Developing Country. Journal of Education Review Vol. 3 No 2. Serials Publication, New Delhi, India Pp161-172
- Babalola, J.B (2011) Teacher Professionalism in a Time of Global Changes. Paper Delivered in Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development, Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, Nigeria. Pp 4-8
- Fafunwa, B.A (1974) History of Western Education in Nigeria. George Allen and Unwin, London.
- Foley, M.A. (2009) "Cognitive Psychology" Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009, [DVD] Redmond, W.A. Microsoft Corporation, USA, 2008
- FRN (2004) Nigerian National Policy on Education. Federal Government Press, Lagos, Nigeria.
- Isah, E.A and Fabunmi, M (2011) Generating Information for Academic Planning in Nigerian Universities. African Journal of Educational Management Vol.14 No.1, Department of Educational Management, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Pp 1- 21
- IBRD (2006) World Development Indicators. A Publication by International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). Washington. USA
- Johnson, L.V and Bany, M.A (1970) Classroom Management and Skill Training. New York Macmillan Company.
- Kasin, S (2009) "Psychology" Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009, [DVD] Redmond, W.A. Microsoft Corporation, USA, 2008
- Manzur, J.E (2009) "Learning" Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009, [DVD] Redmond, W.A. Microsoft Corporation, USA, 2008
- McCreary, R. (2009). Classroom management definition. [http://ehow.com/about\\_5438989\\_classroom\\_management\\_definition.html](http://ehow.com/about_5438989_classroom_management_definition.html). Retrieved on 27th September, 2010.
- Okojie, J (2011) University System Review on NTA Network Late Edition Programme. <http://www.nta.org> retrieved on Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.
- Okpalla, P (2011) NECO releases Results.
- Omolewa, M.O (2009) The Role of University of Education in the Development of Africa. Paper delivered at the first anniversary celebration of the University of Education, Ikere - Ekiti; Nigeria (TUNEDIK)
- Onuka, A.O and Emunemu B.O (2009) Managing the Challenges of Schooling in Ibadan Rural Settings of Oyo State, Nigeria. African Journal of Educational Management, Vol. 12 No 2. Department of Educational Management, University of Ibadan, Nigeria Pp 169 - 189

- Osokoya, I.O (2003) 6-3-3-4 Education in Nigeria: History, Issues, Strategies and Problems. Laurel Educational Publishers, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Oloyede, D.O (2003) Resource Availability, Utilization and Academic Achievement of Students in Selected Secondary Schools in Ibadan. Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies Vol. 3 Nos 1 & 2. Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan Publication. Nigeria. Pp40-47

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY