BOOKS/MONGRAPHS

NO.3

Improving Educational Standards in Nigeria

Perspectives, Challenges & Strategies

Editors

Timothy O. Oyetunde
Joseph S. Aliyu
Mary P. Haggai
Joseph M. Musa

Ab
380

Improving **Educational Standards** *in Nigeria*

Perspectives, Challengers & Strategies

Editors
Timothy O. Oyetunde
Joseph S. Aliyu
Mary P. Haggai
Joseph M. Musa

386

Copyright © 2010 by INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, NIGERIA.

All rights, including that of translation into other languages, reserved. Photomechanical reproduction (photocopy, micro copy) of this book or parts thereof without the special permission of the publisher is prohibited.

ISBN: 978-2949-72-8

Printed in Nigeria

In memory of
Professor Ibrahim Bulus, *mni*

PREFACE

It is axiomatic that education is critical to individual and national development. And any nation that seeks relevance in the global economy and desires to be at peace with itself and its citizens must invest massively and concretely in education. But it is not just any education. It is the quality of education offered that makes the difference. A high quality education puts a nation and individuals on the path of meaningful and steady development, while a low quality education stagnates and harms a society seriously.

The general opinion in Nigeria is that a lot still has to be done to improve the standard of education. Indeed, it is widely believed that the standard of education has fallen or is steadily on the decline and that education would seem to have lost direction. There are indeed signs that urgent measures need to be put in place to make the nation's education respond positively to the social and economic needs and aspirations of Nigerians. The present volume, therefore, should be seen for what it is, an effort at inducing reflection on critical educational issues and concerns and at offering informed suggestions for upgrading educational standards at all levels.

The bulk of the selections in this book came from a national conference on improving educational standards organized in 2008 by the Department of Arts and Social Science Education of the University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. The book is organized into six sections as follows:

Section 1: Perspectives on Educational Standards
Section 2: Standards and Tertiary Education
Section 3: Standards and Secondary Education
Section 4: Standards and Nursery/Primary Education
Section 5: Teacher Education and Standards
Section 6: Educational Standards and Related Issues

It is important to gratefully recognize the immense support given to the conference and the process of putting this book together by late Professor Ibrahim Bulus, who was the head of the Department of Arts and Social Science Education at the time the conference was held. The success of the conference was an eloquent testimony to Prof. Bulus' scholarly and professional disposition. We are therefore pleased to dedicate this important book to his memory.

The contributors to this book deserve commendation for sharing their ide
and expertise so generously and in keeping with the academic tradition. The
contributions will certainly make a difference.

Finally, we would like to thank the almighty God, the source of all perfec
knowledge and wisdom, for granting the grace to release the book. To His holy
name be the glory, adoration and praise for ever more!

CONTENTS

SECTION ONE: PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

1. **Improving educational Standards in Nigeria: Perspectives, Challenges and Strategies**
   Anthony Ali - - - - - - - - 1

2. **Educational Standards in Nigeria: The State of the Art**
   Timothy O. Oyetunde - - - - - - 30

3. **Improving Standards in Science Education in Nigeria**
   C.T.C Akinmade - - - - - - - 42

4. **Improving Educational Standards in the Arts and Sciences: Emerging Options and Possibilities**
   Joseph S. Aliyu, Mary A. Lakpini and *Hannatu M. Daudu* - - 50

5. **Current Education Reforms in Nigeria and Implications for Educational Standards**
   Habiba Suleiman - - - - - - - 63

6. **Educational Policy and Standards: A Key to a Productive Economy**
   Ishmael Ogboru - - - - - - 71

7. **Educational Standards and Current Reforms in Nigeria: The Case of Basic Education**
   Dayok Ayuba Bigwan - - - - - - 78

8. **Human Resource Development and Educational Standards**
   G. N. Onuoha Sir - - - - - - - 86

9. **Human Resource Management and Educational Standards in Nigerian Schools**
   L. Zwalchir - - - - - - - - 93

10. **Leadership and Educational Standards**
    Catherine O. Nonyelu - - - - - - 99

11. **Management and Educational Standards: The Motivational Factor**
    Bitrus Dambo Gyot - - - - - - - 105

12. **National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Universal Basic Education (UBE) and Educational Standards**

Theresa Stephen Gyang - - - - - - - 112

13. **Perception of Academic Staff of Tertiary Institutions and Unity Schools of the Current Education Reforms: Implications for Achieving Standards in Nigeria**

Adaobi G. Arinze and Mary *O. Anyebe* - - - - - 121

14. **Primary Education Policy and Standards**

Patricia O. Fagbemi - - - - - - - 129

15. **Quality Assessment as a Strategy for Improving Educational Standards in Nigeria**

Sayita Wakjissa - - - - - - - 133

16. **Strategic Human Resource Management and Standards of Education in Nigeria**

Abdul Adamu and *James Yahaya* - - - - - 140

17. **Social Studies and Educational Standards in Nigeria**

Lawal Halilu and C.C. Okam - - - - - 148

18. **Socialization of the Nigerian: Implications for Curriculum and Counselling**

C. B, Obasoro, S. T. Ogungbemi, O. H. Ogoemeka and *Toju Eyengho* - 157

21. **Teacher Education in Nigeria: Issues at Stake**

Abudulgaffar O. Tijani and *Muhammad Nasir Bn Salihu* - 165

22. **The Role of Human Resource Management in Improving the Standard of Education in Nigeria**

Sulayman Dauda Gidado - - - - - - 173

23. **Use of Curriculum Materials and Educational Standards in Nigeria**

I. A. Msheliza - - - - - - - 180

24. **You Cannot Give What You Do Not Have: Salvaging the Falling Standard of Education through Increased Proficiency in English.**

'Dili Ofuokwu - - - - - - - - 184

25. **Leadership in Educational Organisations: Standards and Challenges**

Tolutope Idowu Oke - - - - - - - 195

SECTION TWO: STANDARDS AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

26. **A Comparative Analysis of Entry Qualifications and Performance of Students in Physics in Federal College of Education, Pankshin**

Trisma Emmanuel Auta - - - - - - 202

27. **Analysis of Cognitive Characteristics of Regular and Distance Learning Undergraduate Students in Akure Metropolis**

T. E. Owoyemi - - - - - - - 206

28. **Effective Educational Administration and Standards in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria**

Obaizamomwan David Iredia - - - - - 212

29. **Effective Skill Training in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions for Enhancing Vocational Education Standards in the 21st Century**

Dennis B. Kaduhur and *Alhassan Bello* - - - - 216

30. **Building Functional Human Capacity in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Enhancing Educational Standards in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions**

Paul S. Yaduma - - - - - - - 223

31. **Improving Educational Standards in Colleges of Education in Nigeria**

M. G. Kazeem - - - - - - - 231

32. **The Effects of Entry Mode of Admission on the Performance of NCE Students in Federal College of Education, Yola, Adamawa State**

Amina Ahmed Chiroma, Asabe Mamman and Haliru *Abdu* - - 238

SECTION THREE: STANDARDS AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

33. **An Evaluation of Students' Performance in Economics Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State**

Musa J. Haruna - - - - - - 243

34. **Improving the Standard of Nigerian Secondary School Education through Adequate Use of Instructional Materials**

K. D. Gokum and *A. S. Shittu* - - - - - - 247

35. **Challenges of Effective Teaching and Learning of Physics at the Secondary School Level**

Moses M. Atadoga - - - - - - - 253

36. **Strategies for Achieving Educational Standard in Mathematics at the Secondary School Level**

M. A. Usman and Iliya Joseph Bature - - - - 260

37. **Educational Crises and Standards in Nigerian Secondary Schools**

C. E. Edemenang and Gandu Abdul - - - - - 267

38. **Integration of ICT in Teaching and Learning in Nigerian Secondary Schools**

Olaolu Damilola Olaniyan and *Smart Odunayo Olugbeko* - - 273

39. **Improving Standards in Secondary School Physics Education through Effective Service Delivery**

Mallo Yohanna Iliya and Kakmena Goteng Audu - - - 279

40. **Improving Standards in Secondary School Mathematics**

Yahaya A. Sambo - - - - - - - 288

SECTION FOUR: STANDARDS AND NURSERY/PRIMARY EDUCATION

41. **Beggars Counselling and Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Improving Standards for Transition into UBE Scheme**

Rabiu A. Kurfi- - - - - - - - 294

42. **Improving Science Standards through the Utilization of Child Centred Approaches in the Teaching and Learning of Primary Science**

Amos W. Dakur - - - - - - - 303

43. **Integration of the ACE and Conventional Primary Curriculum as a Strategy for Improving the Standard of Primary Education**

M. O. Onwochei and *D. N. Ella* - - - - - 310

44. **Standards of Early Childhood/Nursery Education and Government Policy**

Agness S. Ojile and *Grace Selzing-Musa* - - - - 315

45. **Strategies for Improving Early Childhood Educational Standards in Nigeria**

Itoro Joseph Ebong - - - - - - - 321

46. **Effectivenes of Counselling in Curbing Violent Behaviours among Primary School Pupils**

Susan Ayoade Kolawole - - - - - - 328

47. **The Place of Planning in Managing Childhood Education in Nigeria**

V. E. Okereke - - - - - - - - 334

48. **Improving the Standard of Primary Education through Adequate financing**

Timson I. Ndupuechi - - - - - - 342

49. **School Morality: A Panacea for the Declining Standards of Education in Nigeria**

C. T. Gotan and T. N. Ekwujuru - - - - 345

50. **Child Art and Improved Creativity in Nursery and Primary Schools in Nigeria**

Ikponmwosa O. Osamudiamen and Zainab H. Umar - - 355

51. **Conductive Learning Environment and Educational Standards in Primary Schools in Nasarawa State**

Alaku S. P. Orame - - - - - - - - 365

52. **Improving Educational Standards in Primary Schools through Effective Supervision**

R.W. Walu - - - - - - - - 371

53. **Girls' Enrolment and Drop-Out Rate in Primary Schools in Kaduna State**

Beatrice Ahmadu Bahago - - - - - - 379

SECTION FIVE: TEACHER EDUCATION AND STANDARDS

54. **Challenges of E-Learning for Science, Technology and Mathematics Education Teachers**

Sylvester Azubuike Anyifite - - - - - - 388

55. **Ensuring Quality Science Teacher Education and Standards in the Nigerian Education System**

Isa Shehu Usman - - - - - - - 398

56. **Improving Teachers' Testing Skills as a Viable Strategy for Achieving Educational Standards**

Georginia Chinyere Imo - - - - - - 404

57. **Teacher Education and Standards in Nigeria**

B. A. Ajegena - - - - - - - - 412

58. **Qualitative Teacher Education: A Panacea for the Improvement of Standards in Education**

Ajibola M. Ajileye - - - - - - 422

59. **Teacher Education and Standards in Nigeria: A Reflection on its Social Implications**

David Babatunde Akinola - - - - - - 429

60. **Teacher Education and Standards in Nigeria: Challenges and Strategies for Improvement**

Clement C. Okam - - - - - - - 439

SECTION SIX: EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AND RELATED ISSUES

61 **Girl-Child and Women Education in Nigeria: The Role of Language Teaching**

Jeno-Mary Enighe and *Deborah Nkechi Ella* - - - 447

62. **Improving Educational Standards in the Teaching and Learning of Political Education**

O. A. M. Johnson - - - - - - - 456

63. **Improving the Standard of Science Education in Nigeria through Science Process Skills**

Sabiru Dahiru Yusuf - - - - - - 462

64. **Improving Vocational Education Standards in Nigeria**
Yusuf Kuza and *Francis A. Angbre* - - - - - 467

65. **Improvisation and the Use of Teacher-Made Aids in the Teaching of French Language**
Victoria Ogbonna - - - - - - - 473

66. **Financing Education Sector and Human Capital Development in Nigeria: An Empirical Analysis**
Austin C. Igweike - - - - - - - 480

67. **Language Education and Standards: Challenges and Strategies**
Dauda Habu Galadi - - - - - - - 486

68. **Language Education and Standards: An Appraisal of the Adequacy and Quality of Content Area Teachers in Katsina-Ala LGA of Benue State**
T. Terver Udu - - - - - - - - 495

69. **Literacy and Mother-Tongue Teaching in Nigeria: A Situational Analysis of the Plateau State Experience**
Jeno-Mary Enighe - - - - - - - 502

70. **Teachers' Writing Assessment Practices: Implications for Improving Educational Standards**
Chimwe A. Muodumogu - - - - - - 510

71. **The Effectiveness of Two Teaching Methods in the Learning of French as a Foreign Language**
Madu M. Bassi - - - - - - - 519

72. **The Impact of Education in a Democratic Environment**
A.M. Audi - - - - - - - - 524

73. **The Impact of Educational Finance on Economic Growth in Nigeria (1980-2000)**
Rogers A. Akinseokeji and Tope R. Oziegbe-- - - - 529

74. **The Relationship between Teacher Standards in Teaching Writing and Pupils' Attainment in Writing Skills in Selected Schools in Jigawa State**
Orame P. S. Alaku - - - - - - 539

75. **The SAVI Approach and Effective Teaching and Learning**
Marliyya Mahmood - - - - - - - - 546

76. **Standards in Vocational Education: Strategies For Improvement**
R. B. Ayanniyi and Adesuwa Evelyn Ogieva- - 552

77. **Attitudinal Orientation of Special Needs Individuals and Quality Assurance in the Nigerian Educational System**
Nanbam Mary Oriade - - - - - - 560

78. **Prevalence of Early Marriage among Igala Women in Kogi State: Implications for Family Counselling**
Anne Otini Ateji - - - - - - 563

79. **Educational Policies and Standards in the Judiciary in Nigeria**
Cecilia Chinwe Nwufo - - - - - - 568

80. **Legal Education in Nigeria: Standards and Challenges**
Panshak Ephraim Haggai - - - - - - 573

81. **Primary School Teacher Effectiveness and Educational Standards**
R. I. Mashor, and P. R. Bedung - - - - - 582

82. **Has the Standard of Primary Education Fallen in Nigeria?**
Joseph Maina Musa - - - - - - - 590

83. **Improving Standards of Science and Technology Education for Sustainable Development: Educational Planning Implications**
J.N. Bature - - - - - - - - 598

84. **Christian Religious Education in Nigeria and Culture**
C. A. Etete - - - - - - - - 606

85. **Vocational Schools and the Preparation of Youths for Employment**
Augustina Izadi Anakwe and Grace Momoh - - - 615

86. **Leadership Effectiveness and Accountability: Implications for Educational Standards**
Y. Y. Sanda and L. L. Maigoro - - - - - 623

87. **Value Inculcation in the Nigerian Child**
Cyril K. Evey, Festus A. Asinde, Augustine I. Ukpabi, and Okpachi. P. Abane - 633

88. **Quality Teaching and Learning and Primary Education**
U. S. Gbari - - - - - - - - 640

89. **The Deschooling Movement**
M. G. Kazeem - - - - - - - 660

90. **Nigerian Education System and the Implementation Factor**
Aminu Musa Yabo - - - - - - - 667

91. **Teachers' Qualifications and Educational Standards in Nigerian Primary Schools**
Janet Motunrayo Eseyin - - - - - - 678

92. **The Effect of Using Instructional Conversation Method in Teaching Reading Comprehension in Selected Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna Metropolis**
Hanna Yusuf - - - - - - - - 686

93. **Inequality in Gender Enrolment: The Case of College of Education, Gindiri, Plateau State**
A. Toma Agada and N. Rebecca Bewul - - - - - - 695

94. **Assessing Readability Levels in Intensive English JSS Book 3 Using the Fry Readability Formula**
Victoria A. Shaibu - - - - - - - 703

95. **E-Learning and Educational Standards in Nigeria**
Mr. Idris Zakariyya Kiri - - - - - - 710

Improving Educational Standards in the Arts and Sciences: Emerging Options and Possibilities

.

Prof. Joseph S. Aliyu
Dr. (Mrs) Mary A. Lakpini
Mrs Hannatu M. Daudu
Institute of Education, ABU, Zaria

Standards of students have been identified to have fallen particularly across the areas of language arts, science, and library use. Accelerated steps hare been recommended for desired language proficiency, participatory learning in the science, increased use of library resources and concentrated attention to examination.

Introduction. How can the current slide in standards in the areas of arts and sciences be stemmed? For over twenty decades now, higher education in Nigeria has been buffeted by a myriad of problems. Some of these problems have emerged in the following areas: curriculum specification, learning resources, amount of time available, adequacy/inadequacy of teaching personnel, absence of conducive learning environment, attitudinal disposition of lecturers, abuse of the course credit system, and the incidence of exam malpractice. In this presentation, only very few areas will be focused on. Specifically, efforts will be made to examine the disappearance of standards and what can be done to re-connect the students with standardizing practices. The areas of arts, sciences and use of library shall receive particular attention.

The Present Problem. Many of the students at the higher institution level have found themselves unprepared for the academic challenges ascribable to the level. Four particular areas are almost completely new to these students in the specialized area of arts. These are:

Independent Reading. Relevant materials or points needed to augment what has been encountered at lectures might be present but could be easily missed. The problem here is that many students have never been adequately

trained at the pre-higher institution level, to carry small-scale projects. Such students are incompetent in working in pairs or individually. Students are unable to investigate an identified problem, collect data from unsupervised reading, and derive sufficient substance from such reading. The same students do not know how to use the various data gathering sources such as newspapers, journals, encyclopedia, maps and reports. In addition, many do not know the different between primary and secondary sources of data. Many of such students do not know how to sift opinions from facts. Most cannot detect the key words or phrases that help to confirm the fundamental viewpoint with which a great scholar could be identified. Many of them do not know how to explore the internet, watch a documentary, carry out an excursion, just to boost the volume of data considered necessary for a particular study. In approaching such reading, the students are not able to gauge the amount of time or the volume of effort to be spent on this specialized tertiary institution-related reading.

Group Discussion: The students at this level are generally ineffective when they participate in a group discussion. Many are over-protective of what could be described as "my own points' which were acquired through some private reading. Some do not even have a full grasp of the great potential of a group discussion. To such students, "putting their points on the table," is tantamount to exposing all the "ammunitions" they might require for assignments, tests and examinations. To some other students, contributing effectively during discussions is tantamount to allowing everybody else to do better than them. The most regrettable part of this attitude is the failure to realize that an unrefined or undiscussed point could simply amount to the hoarding of intellectual misconception or undetected garbage. Perhaps what is happening here is an extension of the African cultural disposition. Here the belief is that you are on your own and every person protects what he or she has.

Unproductive Listening Engagements. Many of the tertiary institution students do not engage in productive listening. While listening, such students do not bother take down novel or important points. Many expend their effort

on paying too much attention to trivial or peripheral points. Even while listening to a programme such as "the environment and the consequences of global warming", the students do not identify with the presenters, the goals of the presentation. They do not pin-point the most significant features or points of elaboration that have emerged from the presentation. They cannot accurately note the orientation and specialized input made in the contribution.

Importantly, most of these students are not capable of discerning the follow-up reading or consultation or discussion that could emanate from the experience that has just been had. The technical terms used, the format of presentation, the visual aids that have accompanied the presentations and their respective significance, could easily be lost on the casual listener. In the ideal situation, the student watching this programme is supposed to see himself as a participant partner of what has been discussed.

Before leaving this section, the following questions could be raised:

i) How many types of listeners can the tertiary students be grouped into?
ii) How have the students been able to cope with instructions given during listening activities?
iii) Are there some basic requirements concerning listening in English?

Observing the Principles of Effective Rhetoric. Many of the present day tertiary level students in Nigeria enter higher institutions totally oblivious of the fundamentals of rhetoric. Many of the students are not conversant with the basic format of rhetoric particularly that is related to academic pursuit. They underrate or totally ignore the importance of the following:

a) Careful pre-speech planning.
b) Selection of the correct register, especially lexicon.
c) Familiarization with the amount of time to be given to each section.
d) The need to bear the audience in mind.
e) The necessity to maintain continuous feedback during and after presentation.

Turn taking which is an integral part of speech, especially in the context of a dialogue, is sometimes totally ignored by participants in speech event. Often,

the use of connectors to link the different sections of speech is underestimated by current tertiary institution students.

Condition by a Welter of Language Variables. Aliyu and Adeoye, (1989) carried out a study on the "Relationship between students' perception of the clarity of examination questions and their examination performances". What emerged revealed, among others, that students' performances are often misplaced and that language variables contribute greatly to the disappointments encountered by the students. Some relevant segments of the study are quoted below. The core of the cited study centred on the following.

"The six questions used for this study were those set for the final examination in the course, "ED202: Sociology of Education" (SOE) for the Nigeria. The course (SOE) was compulsory for all Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Part II students, except for those students who were studying Physical and Health Education. The students selected for the study were B.Ed. students of Advanced Teachers' College (ATC) of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) in Kano, Nigeria, and all of these students took the 1987 sessional examination".

Factors responsible for the disparity were traced. "A close look at the 6 questions showed that Question 2, 4 and 6, with over 70% clarity rating, were perceived as "extremely clear". Further scrutiny revealed that these "popular" questions shared these features.

a. They were all discussion questions;
b. They all had two or more parts to them;
c. They all demanded some expression of personal views;
d. They all had key words intended to guide the students.

In the students' minds, no particular attention seemed to have been paid to the special requirements of each of the three questions, despite the students' stated perceived clarity, which was expected to guarantee comprehensibility".

"A further consideration of the sample of students' examination scripts indicated that even the most promising students answered only segments of the questions.

Overall the meticulous reappraisal of the students' performances in Questions 2, 4 and 6 exposed these features.

1. Their misjudgment of the clarity of the questions;
2. Their inability to distinguish substance from trivia;
3. Their insensitivity to key concepts and operative words.

An intensive survey of a sample of the students' examination script revealed different patterns of performance among students, and they mostly avoided it (only 13 students attempted it). The students' explanation that the question did not fall within the scope of the course was later confirmed by the course lecturer. The students' general performance on this question was extremely poor. Its inclusion is illustrative of one of the weaknesses of nonstandardised tests. It lacked content validity."

For the development of examination questions, examiners could use the following guidelines to evaluate the adequacy of their questions:

1. The language of the question: is it ambiguous or non ambiguous? If ambiguous, how many interpretations are possible?
2. The type of question: is the question one of discussion or argumentation? Is it two-sided or multi-sided?
3. The types of examples (if required): are the examples to be local or universal? Are they to be statistical or historical?
4. The personal view: is the presentation of a personal view optional or compulsory for the question?

Ways of Improving Students' Performance in Science.

In the following section some critical changes are recommended for bringing about improvement in science learning. Science as a subject has gained prominence in the school curriculum and in admission policies of Nigerian tertiary institutions. The importance attached to science has been triggered by the emphasis and increased awareness of the role which science and technology play in the development of the nation (Jegede, 1996). Acquiring skilled manpower in science and technology to occupy different aspects of national development has given impetus to the importance attached to science subjects (Okoro, 2000).

In Nigeria for nearly 50 years, numerous parents, teachers and even institutions have become anxious to get their wards and pupils into related areas in science not minding the capability, aptitude and the interests of the students in the sciences. This trend has had some negative effect not only on the individual students involved but also on the country. This is simply because many of those who have found their way into studying science and science-related subjects are there by default and not by natural inclination. There are students who have been forced to read science or science related courses such as engineering, medicine, pharmacy, textile science, dentistry and the like and have come out unfulfilled with their career choices. In some instances many of them have fallen by the way-side not completing the courses they had been forced to study which was meant to satisfy the parents' ego.

The level of advancement and development of a nation is measured by the extent of technological advancement. Technological advancement can not be achieved without corresponding investment in the development of science and technology. For such development to become evident in any nation, investment in science must begin from the primary school level which forms the foundation upon which other higher levels of education are built in present-day Nigeria, although the awareness of attaining scientific development is strong, many public schools and several private ones have no sufficient back-up facilities to record laudable achievement in science.

Lawal (2007) stressed that there is direct relationship between the quality of science education at the primary level and the development of science and technology. A nation with wobbling education foundation like Nigeria will find it difficult to take its rightful position among nations of the world who have invested huge fortunes in development their educational foundation. In most science classes teachers assume rightly or wrongly that when the subject matter is verbally taught with the aid of textbooks and chalkboard it will be understood by the learners who heard and read the teachers' notes. The effects of instructional strategies on the academic achievement of students at

various levels have been investigated by various scholars. The point earlier stressed is worth repeating-academic success can only be achieved through the interplay of variables which include active student participation and commensurate language proficiency.

The outcome of several studies showed that the use of activity-based methods of instruction help learners to have foundational understanding of scientific concepts of instruction (Oyedokun, 1998; Olorukooba, 2001; Lawal, 2005 and Lakpini, 2006). Teaching students using expository methods will not allow Nigeria to attain the most sought after scientific, technological development and better performance required on the part of the students. The National Policy on Education (2004) has as one of objectives the building of a strong and self-reliant nation. If this objective is to be achieved then there is a need to move from teaching factual knowledge to a situation where students are actively involved in gaining knowledge which will in turn dramatically improve the performance of students in science.

In order to improve students' performance there is a need to teach for relevance. According to Abiola (1977) science will become meaningful to the African Child if what is taught in school science has direct link with home activities. According to him, if school activities are not connected to home activities the child will have a distant view of science. Connecting school science activities to real life problems will go a long way to improving the performance of students in science. Lochhead (1990) reported in one of his studies that as many as 90% of engineering major students find it difficult to relate the preparation to real life.

A study conducted to appraise students performances over a period of four session is given below;

Table 1: Analysis of Performance of Diploma in integrated Science Education Students according to Level of Pass.

Year	Total No of Students	Level of Distinction	Pass% Credit	Merit	%Pass		Fail %Fail
99/2000	26	0	7	9	61%	10	38%
00/2001	62	0	5	-	9%	57	91%
2001/2002	83	0	10	36	55%	37	45%
2005/2006	57	1	18	6	44%	32	56%

Table 2: Analysis of Performance of Diploma in Physics Education Students according to Level of Pass.

Year	Total No of Students	Level of Distinction	Pass% Credit	Merit	Pass	%Pass		Fail %Fail
99/2000	38	0	0	3		8%	35	92%
00/2001	17	0	[illegible]	3	1	53%	8	47%
2001/2002	87	0	[illegible]	21	11	40%	52	60
2005/2006	56	0	[illegible]	8	1	34%	37	66%

From the analysis of the results of the students in both Integrated Science Education and Physics Education, it can be seen that a large percentage of the students who registered for the course performed poorly over the years. From interaction with the students, it was discovered that performance in the Diploma programme was partly determined by their interest in the course and partly due to the fact that some of them were drawn into studying science as a result of pressure from their parents. In addition to the factors mentioned above, it was also discovered from interaction with them that they held qualifications which they did not work for making it difficult for them to cope. These problems are compounded by teaching methods which are teacher-centred, neglecting the acting participation of students.

In view of the factors identified above:

1. There is a need for teaching and learning to be participatory with the students interacting actively with the teacher, introductional materials and with themselves.
2. Prompt feedback should be given to students after every assessment exercise such as tests, laboratory work, activities, reports, individual and group assignments.
3. Peer tutoring among students should be encouraged since it will produce a friendly and tension-free atmosphere which will help to arouse their interest and enhance achievement (Lakpini, 2000)
4. Students should be encouraged to participate in intra-departmental and inter-institutional debates in order to develop a sprit of healthy competition which will promote learning.

Improving Educational Standards through the use of Library Information Service. For centuries, the library has been recognized as the repository of ideas, opinions and viewpoints. It is the acclaimed field where scholarly disputations compete for attention. Such concepts can be inhaled by those who care to venture into the minds of others.

As far back as 1625, Bacon (1561 – 6126) wrote.

> *"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested." (" studies", Essays, 1625)*

These lines exemplified the primary of place accorded the area of reading a point that has been emphasized and re-echoed in this paper. True, the role of the library has witnessed some changes over the years. Yet, its contribution to all – round and specialized knowledge has remained undiminished. If anything the function of the library has become more diversified. From this joint study, the library has been identified as play complementary role to the student whether in the Arts or Science.

In journals, textbooks, files, reports and documents issues are encountered. Some are argued out while others simply chronicle achievements or findings recorded in specific field. Interestingly, most sources contain alternative references that readers could retreat to.

In libraries that are computerized and have access to the internet, there are period workshops on hoe to conduct search in the internet, students who care to learn will benefit more than those who go to the cyber-café because there is ready assistance from staff whose responsibility it to see to the satisfaction of their users.

The library in some countries has become a shadow of its past. Due to poor availability of journals, rare books and specialized resources, students need to intensify their efforts in the use of the internet as current resources. With the looming presence issue of economic depression, libraries are going through serious financial crisis hence it is almost impossible for small libraries to subscribe consistently to local journal let alone foreign ones. Bigger libraries' subscription power has reduced to only few local journals. The absence of current journals and up-to-date reference materials can adversely affect educational standard. Most journals that are found on the library shelves are out-to-date. They will make little impact in the educational pursuit of particularly science students who need current information in their field and even in the arts. Some of the journals that bare found in some libraries today include:-

- International journal of Mathematics Education 1983
- International journal of Science Education 1990.
- Journal of Teacher Education 1975
- British journal Educational Studies 1977
- British journal of Educational Technology 1985

Despite the decline in their supply, students are hardly diligent in utilizing the available materials. Many relevant studies have pointed at students' deficiencies in key foundation subjects like English, Mathematics, physics, Chemistry, Geography, Literature and History. Yet the general reading tempo has virtually disappeared.

Since most of the journals are generally obsolete students do not consult them and therefore they are just in the library gathering dust. There is no driving

force to the reading of these materials and other sources of information that are out of date.

Interest in reading is one of the key factors in reviving the standard of education. Conscious efforts should be made to provide current reading materials both print and non-print. Basics skills in the use of library resources by the library will also boost the reading interest of students. Libraries should train students to know how to enrich themselves through the use of bibliographies, indexes, abstracts and search engines in research.

Most students find it difficult to find relevant materials to assist them in their write-ups. This accounts for the low level of academic output. Students only rely on lecture notes to pass exams. Bibliographies, indexes and abstracts are good directions to resources that can produce mature academic work. Year in year out, instead of students improving in their academic performance, they are declining.

Apart from improving on class work and notes, the use of bibliographies, indeses, abstracts and internet search engines can assist students to cultivate the ability of doing citation in a scholarly manner which is an indication of sound academic achievement. As a critical element of any article or write-up, referencing or reference citation is a very essential and necessary component of literary work especially academic work. There are various styles of reference citation such as:

- American Psychology Association of America (APA)
- Keith Turabian style
- Modern Language Association of America (MLA)
- The America Medical Association (AMA)
- The Chicago style.

Each of these styles has its methods of citing reference from books.

Books, journal or magazines articles, newspaper articles, encyclospedia article and website articles.

Students should be able to use these on their own without the assistance of their supervisors.

The use of specialized reference materials such as specialized encyclopedia and specialized dictionaries can improve the level of understanding of students in their subject areas. Specialized reference materials will have a specific approach to issues because the issues will be treated in a professional point of view. There is no gain-saying that such resources can improve the educational attainment of students.

Conclusion: Improving standards in Arts, Science and Library use is a three- cornered task that can only be tackled by the student, the lecturer and the institution's administration. The major study referred to, the results cited and the condition of the libraries decribed all confirm the same reality: the declining of standards.

Language deficiency and poor classroom techniques, especially in science teaching, have made classroom activities teacher-centred. The habit of thirsting for glamour courses have increased have been worsened by the unproductive formats of group study formats. Perhaps some of these saddening happenings recommend the reinvention of the tutorial system. The students might on their part look inwards. There is no earthly reason why peer tutorial could not be given more verve.

Despite the downturn in most national economies the place of the library must not be usurped by frivolities. The few textbooks provided should be complemented with a respectable collection of journals, reports and sets of encyclopedia. Respectable newspapers could also be accommodated.

Most importantly, students, teachers and the institution must see themselves are joint collaborators in a treasured enterprise. Despite the threatened swing faced by the enterprise rescue could be garnered through re-orientation. What is needed can only be attained through manifest re-energizing to be seen in extended time on task by students, cultivation of novel interactive teaching techniques and a re-injection of worthwhile resources into the system. Unless

these steps are taken there shall be no halt to the palpable descent to the precipice of mediocrity.

References

Abiola, E.T., (1977) Understanding the African child. *West African journal of Education*. 15,63-67.

Aliyu, J.S., Adeloye, J.A., (1989). An educology of the relationship between students' perception of the clarity of examination questions and their examination performances: A Case Study of Nigerian B.Ed. Students.

Aliyu, J.S. (2006). *Upgrading English Achievement*. Wusasa-Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Company Limited.

Jegede, B.A (1996). *Fostering students' understanding of science concepts*. A special keynote paper for 37th annual conference of science teachers association of Nigeria Uyo Akwa-Ibom State.

Lakpini, M.A. (2007). A study of senior secondary school students' misconceptions in genetices and their implications for teaching and learning science. *Journal of science and mathematics education*, 3 (1), 32-43.

Lawal, T.E. (2006). "Think and Do" Activity and its Effect on the Performance of Pupils in Primary Science in Selected Primary Schools in Zaria Municipality, Nigeria. *Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 3 (1), 87-92.

Muhammad, A. Z. (2001). The gender factor in national development: The role of information and education. *The information manager*, 13(2), 53-65.

Ndagi, M.U. (2006, October-November 15). A necessary endowment, *Weekly Trust*, p.19.

November 15). A necessary endowment, Weekly Trust, p.19.

Okoro, C.A. (2000). *enhancing scientific and technological literacy through science education. Problems and the way forward*. Proceedings of the 41st annual STAN conference, pp. 360-363.

Olorukooba, S.B. (2001). The relative effects of cooperative instructional strategy and traditional method on the performance of senior secondary school chemistry students. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaira.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (1981). *National policy on education*. Lagos, Federal Government Press.