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**CUTIVE LEARNING: EARLY EXPERIENCES AT THE  
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION,  
NIGERIA.**

**BY**

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The paper gives a theoretical background to experiential learning and its importance in profession development of executives in the education sector. The paper also describes the introduction of experiential and action learning approach as a novel strategic paradigm at the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, Nigeria with active support from the world Bank, Partnership for Child Development and other members of the UNAIDS Inter Agency Task Team .The Institute is charged with the responsibility of developing critical mass of educational planners and managers for the effective and efficient planning and management of the education system through capacity building, continuous training, research and consultancy. The paper recounts the Institute's journey between 2003-2006 during which several successful executives training using the experiential learning approach were held. Evaluation data from participants are presented and lesson learned described. The paper also explores future avenues of development for the Institute.

**Key words:** Leadership, Experiential learning, Executive professional development, Evaluation, Action learning, Training.

## **Introduction**

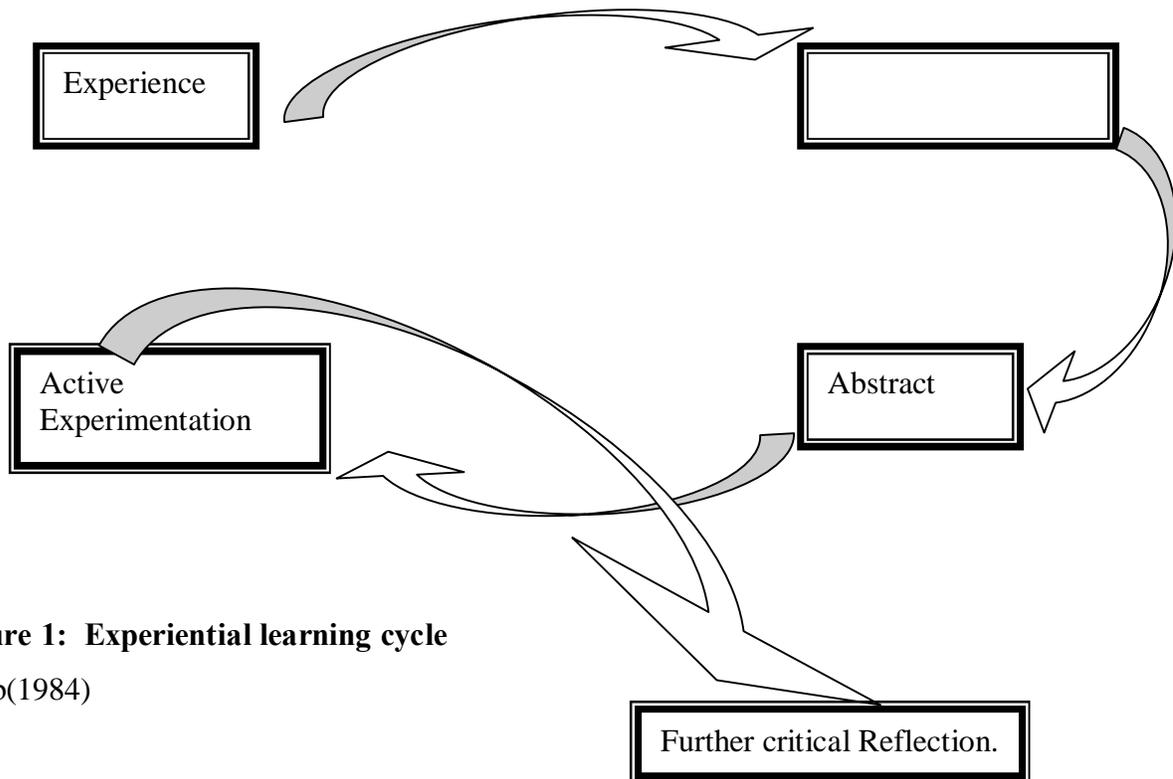
Experiential learning has been long recognized as an important aspect of business education (Dunbar and Bird, 1992); Fulmer and Keys, 1998 ) perhaps utilized mostly by behaviourally oriented management courses such as organizational behaviour, experiential learning has taken the principal form of in-class exercises. Some evidence indicates that most effective means of training in cross-cultural management is a combination of cognitive and experientially based approach. (Harrison, 1992). Experientially-based training and development on the other hand describes a wide variety of activities finding their way into mainstream human resources courses, management education classes, and organization learning schemes. This approach to training and development utilizes adventurous educational experiences to bring about positive change in individual, groups and organization.

Experientially-based training development for executives provides challenging and novel activities coupled with unusual opportunities for shared reflection. In this way, the approach creates learning environments within a supportive atmosphere, which, in turn bring about learning outcomes beyond those of the typical lectures or simulations, practitioners and theorist from diverse disciplines such as management science, psychology, sociology, engineering, political science, anthropology, and higher education embrace its practical effectiveness. (Marquardt, 2000). Experiential training has been used for numerous purposes including strategic development, knowledge management, organizational, development, human resources, executive coaching and team dynamics.

**framework**

Experiential learning can be described as the process by which the experience of the learner is reflected upon, and from this emerge new insights and learning. Experiential learning according to Albert (1970) is a learning model, which begins with experience followed by reflection, discussion, analysis and evaluation of the experience. David Kolb developed the most established mode of experiential learning. In his model the process begins with the experience (concrete experience) followed by reflection (reflective observation). The reflection is then assimilated into theory (abstract conceptualization) and finally these new (or reformulated hypotheses) are tested in new situations (active experimentation). The model is a recurring cycle within which the learner tests new concepts and modifies them. (Kolb, 1984)

The theoretical work done on experiential learning has established it as a method of learning which is useful to both educators and learners. The methodology helps to develop learner's capacities to reflect on experience through active experimentation and further reflection.



**Figure 1: Experiential learning cycle**  
Kolb(1984)

Kolb's theory. Roger, for example points out that "learning, choice and decision making, and it is not at all clear where these element fit into the learning circles" (Roger, 1996). Reynolds (1997) reported that in management education Kolb's theory is "extremely influential and is rarely seen as problematic. But they do describe a number of issues

The issues are as follows:

- Kolb's theory locates itself in cognitive psychology tradition, and overlooks or mechanically explains and thus divorce people from social, historical and cultural aspects of self, thing and action.
- The idea of a manager reflecting like a scientist in isolation on events is like an "intellectual Robinson Crusoe". The social interactions of a person are very important to the development of self, thought and learning.
- Progressing sequentially through the cycle is questioned: "learning can be considered as a process of argumentation in which thinking, reflecting, experiencing and action are different aspect of the same process. It is practical argumentation with oneself and in collaboration with oneself and in collaboration with others that actually form the basis for learning".

Much of the literature on experiential learning as Jarvis (1995) observed "is actually about learning from primary experience that is learning through sense experiences". He continues "unfortunately it had tended to exclude the idea of secondary experience entirely". Jarvis also draws attention to the different uses of the term citing Weil and McGills (1998) categorization of experiential learning into four villages.

Village one is concerned particularly with assessing and accrediting learning from life and work experience.

Village two focuses on experiential learning as a basis for bringing change in the structure.

Village three emphasizes experiential learning as a basis for group consciousness raising.

Village four is concerned about personal growth and self-awareness.

This approach tends to return a focus on primary experience (and do not really problematize the notion of experience itself) Jarvis (1995).

Carl Rogers built on the work of Kolb. The whole conceptual framework of his work rest on his profound experience that human beings become increasingly trustworthy once they feel at a deep level that their subjective experience is both respected and progressively understood. This belief was

tion of the core conditions for facilitative (counseling and  
ness, acceptance and empathy).

According to Carl Rogers, the qualities and attitudes that facilitative learning are as follows:

- **Realness in the facilitator of learning.** Perhaps the most basic of these essential attitudes is realness or genuineness. When the facilitator is a real person, being what he/she is, entering into a relationship with the learner without presenting a façade, he/she is much likely to be effective.
- **Prizing, acceptance, trust.** There is another attitude that stands out in those who are successful in facilitating learning. It is prizing the learner, prizing his/her feelings, his/her opinions, and his/her persons, it is an acceptance of the learner as a separate person, having worth in his/her own right. This is also describing prizing of the learner as an imperfect human being with many feelings, many potentialities.
- **Empathetic understanding.** A further element that establishes a climate for self-initiated experiential is emphatic understanding. When the teacher has the ability to understand the student's reactions from the inside, has a sensitive awareness of the process of the education and learning seems to the student, then again the likelihood of significant learning is increased (Students feel deeply appreciative) when they are simply understood or not evaluated, not judged, and simply understood from their own point of view, not the teachers.

Rogierian version of experiential learning can be traced back to the famous dictum of Confucius around 450 BC:

**“Tell me, and I will forget, show me, and I may remember, involve me, and I will understand”.**

Barret Lennard (1998) offered several hypothesized principles: these included:

- We cannot teach another person directly, we can only facilitate learning.
- The structure and organization of the self appears to become more rigid under threat; to relax its boundaries when completely free from threat.
- The educational situation which most effectively promote significant learning is one in which (1) threat to the self of the learner is reduced a minimum, and (2) differentiated perception of the field of experience is facilitated.

Carl Rogers has provided educators with some fascinating and important questions with regard to the way of being with participants and the process they might employ. An experientially-based

to learn in an interactive way can be very enriching experience  
er and Giles (1999) cited in Teranishi (2007) found that student  
participating in experiential learning (service learning) reported increased self-efficacy, a desire to  
include service in their career plans, increased ability to work with others, feeling of being connected  
to their communities. Gardner and Korth (1997) used Experiential learning team to design a course in  
group dynamics, group development, and group effectiveness. They taught student learning teams to  
use the experiential learning cycle to improve the transfer of learning. They concluded that "The use  
of learning groups in conjunction with experiential learning model enhances the learning process,  
reinforces the link between theory and practice, and facilitates the transfer of learning to the  
workplace" (p. 5). Sugarman (1985) noted that Kolb's model of learning has had a significant impact  
on training and development. Experientially-based learning has proven to be a powerful tool, which  
increases significant, relevant and long-lasting learning in relatively short period. Its uniqueness is in  
its wide-ranging application to both individual and organizational learning.

### **Experientially-based Executive learning**

Experientially-based Executive learning describes a wide variety of activities finding their way  
into mainstream human resources courses, management education programmes and organizational  
learning schemes. This training utilizes adventurous educational experiences. It drew a lot of  
inspiration from the Rogerian tradition of experiential as it provided challenging and novel activities  
coupled with unusual opportunities for share reflection. In this way, the approach creates learning  
environment within a supportive atmosphere, which in turn bring about learning outcomes beyond  
those of typical lectures or simulations. Since the approach can be realistic than simulation, and since  
it proves extremely useful in executive professional development where an attitude of rigid  
conservative thinking exist.

### **Components of experiential-based executive learning**

There are a number of components specific to experientially-base executive learning, place it  
apart from more traditional and conventional forms of training and development programme.

- Experientially-based executive learning is experiential. While working under hands on  
condition, people learn by doing. The adventure activities utilize perceived risk and yet use  
quite safe.
- Experientially-based executive learning is dramatic. The excitement and emotional nature of  
these activities focus attention and sharpen minds as people remember what they learn.

learning encourages risk taking: The experience allow  
y on new roles and make mistakes that are naturally perceived  
rather than actual. Each participant taking the risk pushes others towards the comfort zones.  
The executive programmes therefore allows participants to experience the methods and  
dynamism of facilitation that encourages change, by actually taking part in the facilitation  
process in training setting.

- Experientially-based executive learning is metaphoric. Adventures are a microcosm of the requirements needed for changes taking place in the work world. The behaviour demonstrated by individuals and groups during these activities are parallel representations of the way they act and what happens in the office. As such, new learning (skills coping strategies and bonding among personnel, team branding) can be analogously applied toward future efforts on the job).
- Experientially-based executive learning develops relationship quickly. Participants are interacting in close proximity whilst working on new an unfamiliar challenges, efforts and collaboration that are required to meet these challenges develop relationship amongst participant better in a single day within than over an entire year. The executive training programmes provide opportunity for experience sharing, networking, team building and show-casing of best and promising practices that can be replicated elsewhere.

Several unique characteristics of experientially-based executive learning are the importance placed on the setting or natural environment, the use of experiential learning methodology, the importance of effective instruction, and debriefing through feedback reflection tagged feedback dialogue in the executive training programme in NIEPA. Experientially-based executive learning is therefore holistic, involving all the senses and accommodating variety of learning styles with clear and simple goals providing immediate feedback and performance regardless of success or setback. It offers concrete experiences that are task oriented, just like work and are intriguing, so that everyone desires to get involved. The activities are new, fun and invigorating; they provide opportunities to experiment with new behaviours and skills in a safe environment, which encourages risk taking.

### **Experiential executive learning: The NIEPA Nigeria Experience**

The National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) was set up in 1992 by the joint collaboration by the Federal Ministry of Education and UNESCO IIEP Paris as a sub-regional staff college with the main operational mandate and mission of developing a critical mass

management of the education system, through capacity building, information dissemination and resource centre services. The Institute's clients are Federal and State Ministries of Education and their parastatals as well as institutions of higher learning, while its target audience are Executives at all levels of the education system and middle level planners and managers.

The initial approach to training by the Institute was through lecturing and simulation method. However there was a paradigm shift since 2003 when the Institute was integrated into the British Department for International Development and World Bank IDA project focusing on Basic Education in Nigeria. Under this programme the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration was supported as a national resource for UBE and training centre for education personnel and benefit from institutional strengthening activities. DFID and the World Bank see NIEPA as the most appropriate potential training resources for capacity development under Universal Basic Education Programme, including planning for HIV/AIDS, institutionalizing the DFID/World Bank funded initiatives that has so far relied on ad hoc workshop.

The project provided technical support to NIEPA, including two International consultants, to strengthen its capacity to offer high quality, cost effective courses, including equivalent of two full-time consultant advisers covering the areas of Education/course/institutional planning distance education. The Inter Agency task Team for Education provided technical support for the Accelerating the Education sector Response Initiatives in Nigeria. The purpose of the consultancy was on course design and facilitation as well as providing technical support for the institute in the training of HIV/AIDS officers who were mostly Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors.

. This was done through an action learning approach and the outcomes are as follows:

- NIEPA staff aware of the range, scope and flexibility of current approaches to course design and facilitation and suitability to the current context of Nigerian education and capacity development.
- An analysis of current staff capacity building needs in course design and facilitation.
- Course modules for the training of executives based on experiential learning.

Greater insight to the way advanced institutions in the world develop materials and courses for professional development.

- Further development of a set of principles for facilitating professional learning and practice.
- Increased capacity for facilitating and acknowledging as individuals and as a group.

n and analysis as an individual and as an institution. (CUBE,

### **Facilitating Experiential Learning: A paradigm shift in NIEPA, Nigeria**

The capacity strengthening of the staff of the Research and Training unit gave them the confidence and competence to facilitate professional development of Educational managers and planners using the experiential learning approach. There were series of training for Directors and Deputy Directors, Project Managers, Universal Basic Education Coordinators as well as planners and other managers of Basic Education at the Federal and State levels. Before the commencement of the training for education executives, facilitators from the Institute conducted training needs assessment in which a diagnostic interview to assess the client's need was done. It is on the basis of this diagnostic interview that training packages were designed.

**Experiential Learning approach:** The training approach in the NIEPA Executive training is through the experiential learning which focuses the learning on the experiences of the executives with the resource person facilitating their professional development. The training is highly participatory and actively engaged all participants in all learning sessions, including discussion, problem-solving exercise using the collaborative problem solving tools and action planning sheet, team project and skills practice session. This allows the participants to draw from the experiences of others, clarify content, practice skills and explore how they will apply new skills in their jobs;. It also enables participants in the executive training programme to develop action plan for transferring learning.

### **Education Management course enrolled for between 2003 – 2006**

The following is one of the executive training programmes conducted for education executives in collaboration with Partnership for Child Development, UK & IATT

**Course:** Education sector strategic response to HIV/AIDS in Nigeria

**Target Audience:** Director and Deputy Director in Federal and State Ministries of Education and their parastatals

**Duration:** One Week

**Time Frame:** June 2003 ó October 2006

**Output:** 230 Directors and Deputy Directors from the Federal and thirty four State Ministries of Education trained in HIV/AIDS programming

Executive training were the prioritization of the components of the education sector response to HIV/AIDS in Nigeria included the following:

- **Development of Management Capacity:** strengthened the Federal Ministry and State Ministries of Education to respond appropriate to HIV/AIDS issues.
- **Planning and Impact Mitigation:** Accelerate the collection, analysis and dissemination of data, through district level of Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the inclusion of HIV/AIDS specific indicators and stronger partnership with National Action committee on HIV/AIDS and State Action Committee on AIDS.
- **Prevention:** Implement the Family Life and HIV/AIDS Education (FLHE) curriculum at the primary levels through the development and dissemination of teaching and learning materials together with a proposed strategy for the in-service teacher training in an experiential learning approach and accelerating the establishment of Anti-AIDS Clubs in secondary schools taking into consideration the lesson learned from promising approaches being piloted in a number of states.
- **Ensuring education access for orphans and vulnerable children:** Identified and removed barriers to primary and secondary education for orphans and vulnerable children, and ensure closer collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Youth.
- **Policy:** Developed in conjunction with the Ministry of labour and other stakeholders and national policy on HIV/AIDS in the education sector and support dissemination, adoption and adaptation at state level, including the development of workplace policy informed by the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS.
- **The training of the executives was experiential:** There were plenary presentations as well as thematic group discussions where participants from each state were distributed into four thematic groups. These were:
  - Planning and impact mitigation
  - Prevention
  - Education access to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC); and
  - Policy development, including workplace policies

Group works were led by facilitators and the group works included tasks to assess the current situation regarding responses to thematic areas, reflected past identification of achievement and

of gaps in policy and implementation and the development of  
completed within ninety (90) days. This is done through a  
participatory and experiential approach.

### **Evaluation of Experiential Executive training**

Each executive training programme in the Institute has an evaluation component. During the executive training programme the facilitator administer several types of evaluations. In NIEPA the facilitator used three monitoring and evaluation instruments to assess the impact of training on the participants, all of which also enabled participants to reflection on their own learning.

1. The daily feedback and a reflection on it the following morning which gives a day today formative feedback, enabling the facilitator to meet challenges as they arose and make necessary changes in the following day's programme, and suggested areas for future training and development.
2. An exercise where participants reviewed the workshop programme against the aims and objectives of the workshop, in order to identify which activities had serve to meet or practically met, the aim and objectives. This also gave participants the chance to put items in 'The Freezer' for consideration by the designer of the next executive training programme.
3. The course evaluation forms, which gave the facilitator/ participants' view on the range of issues. The course evaluations also give the learners an opportunity to provide feedback on how well the course was conducted; whether course materials were appropriate and how well the course content met their performance needs.

The paper is however only focusing on end of course evaluation by the participants in the Executive training programmes as this gives detail views of the entire programme.

**Evaluation of Executive training with the use of course evaluation questionnaires:** The questionnaires were designed to help get the response of the participants on the useful of the training to their job

It focuses on:

- Relevance of the activities in the executive training to their country needs.
- Relevance of the activity to their current work/ functions as directors.
- Improvement in their appreciation of the importance of the issues.



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and experiential approach in providing opportunities to discuss

- Activities help in enabling them to identify the most suitable solution to their needs.
- Increase in strength of their partnership with others involved in the issues.
- Extent to which they gained ideas that will enhance their ability to implement their strategic plan.

### **Analysis of Data**

The following are analysis of data of HIV/AIDS and Education Seminar for Directors at the Federal and State Ministries of Education and their parastatals between June2003 and October 2006

## Participants Response to Executive Training Programme

**Table 1**

S/N	Question	FME Director Training June 2003 Average response Range (1-5).	State Directors Training June 2003 Average response Range (1-5).	State Directors April 2004 Average response Range (1-5).	State Director Training June 2005 Average response Range (1-5).	State Directors October 2006 Average response Range (1-5).
1	Relevance of the activity to your country/state need	4.9	4.5	4.9	4.7	4.7
2	Relevance of the activity to your current work	4.1	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.6
3	Improvement in your appreciation of the importance of the issue	4.1	4.5	4.8	4.1	4.1
4	Effectiveness of the thematic group and experiential learning in providing opportunities to discuss issues further	4.5	4.7	4.4	4.1	4.1
5	Activities help in enabling you to identify the most suitable solution to your needs	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
6	Increase in strength of your partnership with others involve in the issue	3.9	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.4
7	Extent to which you gained ideas that will enhance your ability to implement plan	4.1	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.3
8	Overall usefulness of the activity	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6

responses of the Federal Ministry of Education Directors as regards activities to their country and state needs is similar to the State Director response for the training received in April 2004. The result analysis revealed that 4.9% out of 5% which implies that the training received is relevance to their country and State needs. There also exists a marginal difference between the State Director responses on the relevance of the training activity received between June 2003, June 2005 and October 2005. The result revealed 4.5, 4.7 and 4.7% respectively. The above analysis of item No. 1 depicts the fact that training need assessment must tends toward bridging identified deviation within any given organization. (Osborne, 1996)

From item 2 analysis, the response of the Federal Ministry of Education Directors as regards the relevance of the activity of the programme to their current work was 4.1% while the responses of State Directors was consistently 4.6% in training received in June 2003, June 2005 and October 2006. There was also a marginal difference in their responses for training received in April 2004 which was 4.5. This in addition showed the importance of the training being designed in meeting the needs of clients.

In the analysis of item 3, the response of Directors at the Federal Ministry of Education as regards to improvement in their appreciation of the importance of the HIV/AIDS issue was 4.1% which was also similar to the responses of the Directors at the State Ministries of Education in the training received in June 2005 and October 2006. There was, however, a marginal difference in the responses of the Director who received training in June 2003 and April 2004. The analysis also showed the impact of the training in the improvement of the Director's appreciation of the importance of HIV/AIDS issues in the education sector in their Ministries and parastatals. The experiential learning approach in the training had a great impact in their Director's understanding of the HIV/AIDS issues based on their responses as participants were able to share experiences and also reflect on their learning.

The analysis of item 4, also showed the response of the Directors at the Federal Ministry of Education as regards the effectiveness of the thematic group and experiential learning in providing opportunities to share the issues further was 4.5 which was also similar with the response of the State Directors on training received in June 2003 and October, 2006 which are 4.5 respectively. On the other hand, State Director response in June 2003 was 4.7 while in April 2004 the response of the Director on the item(4) was 4.4. This also showed that in all the training received from June 2003 to October 2005. There is just a marginal difference between the response of the FME Directors which

Directors which was consistently 4.1% on training received in 2004,

This analysis also depicts the importance of experiential learning in helping trainees find solution to most of their needs. This agrees with Carlson et al (1976) that teams that were assisted by trained facilitator or had team members who could facilitate were able to improve the learning process by moving the team through each stage of the cycle in sequence. Although he pointed out that the cycle of learning may seem like a natural progression for team through intuition and does not necessarily means that the team will have to be engaged in the cycle.

The analysis above also indicated that as regards increase in strength of the participants partnership with others involved in the issues, the response of the Directors at the state levels in June 2003 was similar to the State Directors trained in June 2005 and October 2006. The result analysis revealed 4.4% consistently in the 3 years while the response of the FME Directors in the June 2003 training was 3.9. The response of the State Directors on the State Director received in June 2003 was 4.2% that participant appreciated the importance of experiential and participatory nature of the training through group work and the use of facilitator in facilitating the discussion at the thematic group. This agrees with Kolb (1984) views that testing of new concepts in new environments through concrete experiments is important in the cycle of learning .Also the importance of collective learning cannot be overemphasized. Thus the impact of experiential approach has help to develop the capacity of the Directors in understanding the thematic focus of the seminar such as planning and management HIV/AIDS preventive education orphans and vulnerable children access to qualitative education and policy issues in HIV/AIDS and Education.

From the analysis item 5, the Federal Ministry of Education Directors response as regards whether the training has helped them to identify the most suitable solutions to their needs was 3.8 while the responses of the Directors at the state Ministries of Education was consistently 4.1% has really developed the capacity of the executives to be able to implement their country and states HIV/AIDS and Education strategic plan. This agrees with Kayes (2004) views that team learning issues are best in experiential learning approach by creating a conversational space that allows team members to develop and refine the team is purpose by following experiential process. In the early stages according to the authors, it is essential for the team to develop a climate of trust and safety that encourages members to converse openly about their experience on the team including their personal goals and perception of the team's purpose (concrete experience) and that only then can the team

together (reflective observation), synthesize them into a shared team goal (abstract conceptualization) and action to define and implement specific goals (active experimentation). The experiential approach of the training tends to stimulate a rich and purpose discussion which metamorphosed into different strategies that will help them to implement their state plans.

The analysis also agrees with Kolb (1984) that in experiential learning teams, the process of learning from experience shapes and actualizes development potentialities and Mills (1967) who described experiential team learning as a reconfiguring of a group's purpose to achieve a continually greater and more complex purpose.

The Analysis of the extent to which the Directors gained ideas that will enhance their ability to implement plan showed the variations in the response of the Directors. The FME Director response 4.1% for training received in 2003 was 4.6 and 4.5 for training received by another State Directors in June 2005 and October 2006 training where their response were 4.3% respectively. One of the focuses of the training was to build on existing education sector HIV/AIDS intervention in order to accelerate a comprehensive and strategic response at both Federal and State Government levels.

This also corroborates the views of Kayes (2004) that the interaction between the learning cycles creates opportunities for discovery, exploration, experimentation, practice, application, strategizing and improvement. The overall rating showed that there is a high degree of customer satisfaction as reflected in the table above. The rating of the state Directors was 4.6 % for all the trainings in 2003,2004,2005 and 2006 while the ratings of Directors Federal Ministry of Education was 4.4% for training received in June 2003.

#### **Lesson learned from the experientially based Executive learning.**

There are a lot of lesson learnt from the workshop for directors of the Federal and State Ministries of Education and their parastatals through the experiential approach. This shows that experiential learning is one of the most effective methods of professional development of educational executives especially for developing fact knowledge needed to perform in the workplace. Other highlights of the lesson learnt are as follows:

- A training course that is largely activity-based, with measured in-put from the facilitators and maximum in-put from the participants, leads to not only knowledge building but also initiates the development of new skills and attitudes.

vely on a personal and professional level, if they have the  
hemselves and feel that their contributions are valued, respected  
and responded to. The training developed a climate of trust and safety thereby encouraging  
the executives to converse openly about their experiences thus enabling others to learn  
from promising and best practices which enhance professional growth. The team members  
also have a kind of psychological safety that it is safe even if the team members make  
mistakes or express views that differ from majority opinion as there are ground rules  
stating that team members should have respect for the opinions of every member of the  
team.

- The experientially-based executive learning revealed that group activities and team building activities reflected the dynamic nature of team activities has great appeal in that it gives all team members a more equal opportunity to contribute and more equal opportunity to be valued.
- The Executives from different department of their ministries can engage constructively in personal and professional dialogue which is essential if Universal Basic Education is to be achieved.
- The Executives on these courses were committed to their work and very willing to make the work of providing leadership more effective and more efficient.
- Participants and facilitators were very ready to rise to the challenge of processing their experience, adapting to new situations and working together toward solutions.
- The Executive training programme covered a great number of interlocking areas and it is likely that many of the topics will need to be returned to in order to explore them in greater depth and in the light of experience.
- The development of the capacity of NIEPA facilitator for reflection and analysis through action learning at the formative stage empowered the facilitators to be able to view learning, help people learn and to assure quality of facilitation and learning.
- Experientially-based executive learning provide opportunity for executives to carry out their main tasks, solve their own problems, and define (and achieve) their particular goals, understand what their development needs are, in a wider context and cope with this.

## e Institute

...tting edge world class centre of excellence in capacity building of Education executives and has tried to ensure customer satisfaction in its training approach. There is however need for further development in line with the principles of total quality management that to ensure quality at all times. The organization and its management should as a matter of policy provide continuous professional development of staff and make the Institute to be a learning organization.

The Institute needs to invest in the further capacity building of the Facilitators in other areas of facilitation especially reflection-on-action which is still an area that needs further capacity strengthening.

Another area of capacity development in the Institute is developing the capacity of the Research and Training staff to do organizational assessment. This will enable the professional staff to do a SWOT analysis of the Institute in relation to its vision and mission on yearly basis so that areas of strength could be sustained while areas of weakness and threats are worked on.

The Institute professional staff also need to be trained in advocacy so that they will be able to make advocacy visit to political cadres in the education sector in Nigeria on the importance of capacity building of educational executives and the impact these could have in enhancing the organization capacity of Ministries of Education and the overall impact it could have achieving Universal Basic Education in Nigeria.

## Conclusion

In this paper we have presented the theoretical framework for experiential learning and the various adaptation and improvements by various practitioners. We have also provided evaluation data from participants from course participants who participated on executive training programmes from our experience of working with experiential learning in management development. We have identified from the data, some of the ways in which core facets of experiential learning, concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation can be source of professional learning and development. Although evaluation is just focusing on 5 executive training programmes it has demonstrated the possibilities that experientially-based executive learning can contribute to executive professional development. The paper also presents lesson learned from these five successful executive training programmes and concludes that the Institute as a learning

sis provide professional development for its staff so that the  
ge centre of excellence Management Institute.

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