

NEED FOR CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

This paper explores different explanations of the need for creativity and innovation in educational administration in the society. The need to articulate and actualize the changes in education requires professionalism in planning, organization, accurate numerical information and forecasting the future to achieve the desired need of individuals, governments and stakeholders in education. What is explored further in this paper is the vision for the application of modern theories by modern men in educational administration in order to supervise, monitor and evaluate the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme of activities as its objective is to raise the standard of education and the provision of the required manpower needs for the transformation of the global economy.

In the beginning of human development, the economy shifted from agrarian to manufacturing, while the industrial revolution was under way. As a result of this, people changed their life style, occupation and where they lived, how they made money and how they spent it.

Today we are experiencing another industrial revolution, one which is driven by a new wave of economic and technological forces. As one observer puts it, “this

workplace revolution...may be remembered as a historic event, the western equivalent of the collapse of communism”. The drastic changes; are sending a clear message to companies, industries and educational institutions of learning to either adapt to changing conditions or shut their doors. As technology and markets change, organizations face a formidable challenge to adapt to trends in the society.

However, not all organizational changes are planned, and quite intentional. But in education, we are concerned with planned curriculum development that results in changes and innovations in education.

Change is any alteration of the *status quo*, whereas innovation is a more specialized kind of change. Innovation is a new idea applied to initiating or improving a process, product, or service. (Ogunbameru, 2004). Therefore, the need for creativity and innovation in educational administration should be articulated by professionals in the field to sustain and maintain the changes in the society and the education industry.

The Impact of Society on Creativity and Innovation

The theory of functionalism views society as a system that is as a set of interconnected parts, which together form a whole. For example, if society is viewed as a system, certain survival needs can be deduced from abstract model of a system. A system is made up of interconnected parts. If a system is to survive, there must be some degree of fit, which requires an element of mutual compatibility of the parts. This is known as the functional prerequisites of society. The changes in the society or environment could be attributed to the fact that the society is dynamic in nature. There are basically three major areas in the society that are constantly changing which are:

1. Political development
2. Social development and
3. Economic development

Political Development

In recent years efforts have been intensified to move from colonialism to neo-colonialism. Mostly in the third world countries of which Nigeria is included, the military rule was a cog in the wheel of progress. The first republic came into limelight in 1979, and vanished just like it surfaced and military rule came up again.

In 1999 to date, democratically elected civilians are now at the helm of affairs throughout the country. Democracy, defined typically as a system of government by freely elected representatives of the people. That is, this system of government gives all and sundry the opportunity to be seen, heard and respected in the society. “Leadership is a basic need of mankind, but not just any leadership style will do” (Awake 2004).

Social Development

Initially, gender was a major issue in our social interactions. But today, democratic society has introduced peaceful coexistence. The 60 -40 gender balancing of the Benjin conference blueprint. The girl child is as important as the male child at the family level. In the political level there has been a degree of gender balancing in all ramifications from commissioner to ministerial appointments. The recent developments could be attributed to the fact that all human beings are equal, if given the training and opportunity to perform. This basic fact has liberated the women folk from the kitchen to the presidential villa.

Economic Development

In the society today, economic development is a collective issue, which specifies that all hands must be on deck. This is to say that, both men and women must be gainfully employed to make contribution to the development of the family financially which will encourage savings so that banks will function properly for general welfare and development.

This extensive globalization of the economy presents a strong need to change our creative thinking and be innovative in all aspects of human endeavour.

Need for Creativity and Innovation in Educational Administration

In the opinion of Achunine (2004), to improve the economic life and the society, Nigeria changed from grammar school to the 6-3-3-4 system of education for self-reliance and productivity. In other words, education is the bed rock of changes in human behavior for proper functioning. According to Anwuka, In Okeke and Uwazurike,(1997) “the purpose of education is not the eradication of illiteracy; literacy is not just a technical skill in reading, writing and numerals, rather, literacy involves fundamental concepts and values of the level of culture, which refers to the basic knowledge of what is truth and what is knowledge” The changes and innovations that have taken place in the educational system could be attributed to the dynamic nature of our school curriculum developed by experts. As Obasi (2004) puts it, “curriculum is referred to all the experiences organized or directed by the school administrators that lead to the change of behavior of the learners to match the needs and expectations of the society”, She went further to say that “ The general purpose of curriculum, its planning, development, and implementation is to design a programme of education for a society which can foster its ideas and values and lead to maximum attainment of its social, economic, political advancement and other needs”. The above statements serve as spring board that will go a long way to show that any nation that wants rapid development will focus on the educational sector with all her resources. For example, the three months toy-free kindergarten programme currently introduced in Austria, Germany and Switzerland is a welcome development by parents.

According to the proponents of the programme, such skills ought to be developed as early as possible and toy-free periods serve the purpose of promoting creativity, innovation and self-confidence in learners.

Others Are

1. Promotion of Communication skills
2. Ability to handle conflicts
3. Ability to take responsibility for one's dealings
4. Ability to identify problems and find a solution
5. Improvement in social and language skills
6. Ability to learn to adopt and learn to be creative and make friends.(Awake 2004).

All these have been identified as the aims and objectives of the programme at this level of education. Education has been described as a “contagious disease”. which is transmitted from that kindergarten level to the tertiary level, through various educational processes into more educated persons for use by the society.

Creativity and innovation in educational administration in the school enable us to manage and maintain scarce and limited resources more prudently in the school system. For example, the educational resources center where materials like teaching aids, personnel, computer, radio etc. are properly managed for the development of all the educational zones in the country. Improvement in the school system through the resources center will make allocation of the scarce material resources effective and efficient on personnel management as well.

Creativity and innovations in educational administration are obtained through research which brings about national sequence of phases by which a new idea, theory or fact is invented or discovered, developed, produced, adopted and disseminated to the user or the final consumer.

This cherished knowledge is transmitted from the professionals in the field of education to the learners and other stakeholders in education.

The ability of the school administrators to manage education finance is attributed to improvements in education in recent years.

This is done through proper orientation and increased awareness, school administrators have looked inward in revenue generation, more than ever before, rather than waiting for federal allocations. Administrators have also evolved modern strategies in managing education finances as accountability is a watch- word now in the educational sector. The strategies and techniques are:

1. Costing of items in concrete terms

2. Proper recording of income and expenditure
3. Internally generated revenue are lodged in the bank
4. All expenditures are receipted and kept in the safe cabinet under lock and key
5. Proper maintenance and early servicing of school facilities
6. Reduced wastages and misappropriation of funds

Creativity and innovation in educational administration have also taken its rightful position in the school system.

The administrator applies the universal principles in day –to –day administration of the school system according to Uwazurike (1997) which include the following:

(A) The Fundamental Principle Which Incorporates

1. Responsibility
2. Delegation
3. Communication

(B) The Humanitarian Principle

1. Democracy
2. Justice
3. Human relation

(C)The Prudential Principle

1. Economic
2. Responsibility and authority
3. Loyalty
4. Employment of staff

(D) The Principle of Change

1. Adaptability
2. Flexibility
3. Stability

(E) Bureaucratic Principle

1. Stipulated rules and regulations
2. Division of labour
3. Hierarchy of authority
4. Employment and promotion of staff
5. Impersonality in official matters
6. Documentation

Apart from delineation and categorization of these principles of educational administration and management into manageable groups, there are other modern inputs in educational administration, the open schools alternative in education and the

student union government (SUG) involved in administration of the school to represent the student's interest. There has been improvement in the allocation of both human and material resources for the achievement of educational goals. The proper utilization of school facilities brought about the success of the school within school programmes. The need for creativity and innovation in educational technology and information technology is to increase the efficiency of various resources employed in the performance of educational tasks. This is to explore opportunities, and develop potentials on how to solve educational problems through the use of ICT with a view of improving education for individual and society at large.

Implementation of Change in Education

“Change and its implementation must be managed, because change usually encompasses conflicts for the individual, the groups and the organization” Ogunbameru (2004:468). The conflict that tends to encourage resistance to change in education must be solved through appropriate techniques. The effective and efficient school administrator intervenes in the process and plans ahead of time to resolve potential problems and constructively eliminate those elements that will tend to reduce the effectiveness of the planned change “change activities that are intentional and goal oriented”. (Robbins, 1998:629).

According to Ogunbameru (2004), who highlighted four steps that a school administrator or manager requires in order to secure maximum possible effectiveness in the educational system:

- a) **Is the change necessary?** The manager or school administrator must evaluate the benefits as well as the cost involved in making the change. He cannot afford to make changes in areas where the returns are minimal, while ignoring other problem areas of greater consequence.
- b) **Is the proposed change the correct one?** In almost all situations, there are alternative changes, any one of which will accomplish the desired result. Choosing one of these requires that the manager or school administrator knows the full and true underlying nature of the problem that the change is intended to correct. Solving symptoms does not remove the problem and will probably create other problems. The impact of the change must be evaluated. Preferably this impact on the problem itself, the people or students affected, the social system, and the formal organization-must be predicted and evaluated before the change is implemented. Only in this way will resisting forces be forecasted, so that they may be reduced or eliminated. A further benefit is that the manager or school administrator can conceptually trace through the effectiveness with which the proposed change actually solves the problem at hand.

- c) **How may acceptance of the change be secured?** Those most directly affected by the change hold the key to the success of the change. Unless their anxieties are eliminated and their cooperation assured, even a sound change has very little chance of reaching its full degree of effectiveness.
- d) **What follow –up is necessary?** After the change has been implemented, the manager or school administrator must obtain information about how well the change actually has solved the problem and the degree to which it is effective. Problems that occur as a result of the change will come to his attention at this stage, with reduced effect. It is no longer in doubt that an organization or school system should be able to identify where it needs to be in the future and how to adapt to the necessary changes to get there. To understand why and how to change the organizations or the educational system, it is first necessary to understand their structures, management and behaviour.

The Importance of Change Management in Educational Administration

Change is an ever- present feature of organizational or school life, and the pace and magnitude of change have increased significantly in recent years in school administration, and management. The modification of the 6- 3 -3 4 system of education to the newly approved 9- 3- 4 education system. The Universal Primary, Education (UPE), changed to the newly approved Universal Basic Education (UBE), by the Federal Ministry of Education are changes in education called “policy somersault” (Koko, 2014). Today, most organizations and educational institutions and their employees are experiencing substantial changes in what they do and how they do it.

The teaching and learning situation of chalk board have changed to marker board or power point system. It is a known fact that educational institutions do experience severe problems, in managing change effectively. To manage change successfully, no matter how small in scale, can be complex and difficult. There are records of changes that have gone wrong, some so disastrously. Hence educational administrators need to be creative in managing innovation in our educational institutions and have good reasons to be anxious about organizational change.

How to Overcome Resistance

In the educational system, the school administrator can adopt the following steps to overcome individual resistance to change in the school environment.

These basic elements are:

1. Shape political dynamics
2. Education and communication of the work force or teachers
3. Involve employees in the change efforts
4. Reward constructive behavior
5. Create a “learning organization” (Ogunbameru, 2004:484).

Conclusion

The study has revealed the need for creating an innovation in educational administration in our educational institution of learning. The need for rational decision in social, economic and political changes should be adequately planned for general development of the society. Therefore, rational decision-making is necessary in our educational system as it helps to single out critical issues which school administrators can give appraisal and analysis. In the process of changing from one policy to another, a balance that would be effective in a given situation should be sought. Rational decisions are implication to the school administrators or managers, as it stimulates general development in education and organizational renewal.

Recommendations

1. The appointment of school administrators should be based on competence and Professionalism in Educational Administration/Management
2. The minister of education or commissioner of education must have certificate in Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), or the Professional Diploma in Education (PDE) as education is the light of all development in the society.
3. Planning and managing the Universal Basic Education (UBE), should determine the future of the nation's manpower needs with adequate control mechanism in place to check uncertainties in the policy.
4. The construction of modern classrooms without electricity should be constructed in a way enough ventilation can take place.
5. The federal, state and local governments should provide security posts in our schools as a matter of urgency to protect the leaders of tomorrow from terror attacks.

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