

# REFOCUSING EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT FOR RELEVANCE AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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## **Abstract**

This paper gives in-depth explanation as to what educational management is all about. It examines the development of educational management in Nigeria. The paper takes a wholistic look at management and the school system. The importance of educational management to the nation engages the attention of this paper. It highlights some challenges in managing education in Nigeria such as political, economic, religious and geographical factors. Finally the paper discusses some suggestions which if taken would improve educational management in the country.

## **Introduction**

Educational management plays very important role in setting academic standard for different levels of education. For instance, providing policy advice in education, support for the preparation of school curricular, as well as training of education managers for various schools.

The following agencies are responsible for educational management in Nigeria. The Federal ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board, the National Primary Education Commission, the National Commission for Colleges of Education, the National Board for Technical Education, the National commission for Nomadic Education, the National Teachers Institute and the Students Loan Board.

Educational Management guarantees the attainment of positive results. However, pitfalls in educational policies can better be identified by the manager whose responsibility is to implement all educational policies

A number of problems ranging from political, economic, geographical, religious and managerial factors have been identified that militate against good educational management.

The paper proffers a number of suggestions as way of bringing forth good educational management.

## **What is Educational Management?**

Educational management is the careful and systematic harnessing of educational resources (such as Human, Material, time and finance) for effective implementation of academic plans with the school system and for the actualization of set goals. (Efoghe, 1991).

Management goes with planning because it (management) involves identifying, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material energies within integrated system designed to accomplish predetermined objectives. All these involve planning.

According to Peretomode (1995:26), educational management comprises of planning, co-ordinating, commanding, communicating, budgeting and controlling with specific activities, of recruitment, selection, orientation, staff development etc. which it carries out in order to achieve the national objective of education.

Nwankwo (1987), defined educational management as the systematic arrangement of human and material resources, programmes that are available for education and carefully using them systematically within defined guidelines or policies to achieve educational goals. While (Okeke 1985:2), put educational management as the process of bringing men and material together for effective and functional teaching and learning in schools. It is a process concerned with using methods, principles, and practices to establish, develop and execute the goals, policies, plans and procedures necessary to achieve the objectives of education (Nnamdi, S.O. 2007).

Based on the discussion of the meaning of educational management, it will be important to explain the responsibilities of educational managers as given by Efoghe, (1997), thus:

**Planning:** This aspect of the educational management involves forecasting for the future in terms of school needs, i.e. working out in broad outline the things that have to be done by the educational system.

**Organizing:** This is the setting out of the formal structure of authority and flow of work in such a way that work in the various sub-divisions, sections and branches is carefully arranged, clearly defined, and effectively co-ordinated in order to accomplish the objectives of the educational system.

**Staffing:** Staffing involves the employment of well-qualified individuals to help the school achieve its goals. That is, the function of devising of efficient and effective system of staffing recruitment, training and providing favourable conditions of work.

**Directing:** This is the continuous task of making decisions, embodying them in specific and general instructions, and settling the pace as the leader of educational system or establishment through initiation of ideas.

**Reporting:** The manager of an educational institution must possess the capability to report to whoever appointed him/her about the success/failure of his or her task in writing. In order words, periodic report of progress of work is often encouraged by the subordinates to enable them evaluate the extent of goal achievement in the school.

**Budgeting:** This particular responsibility is the hallmark of an educational manager's position, since finance and administration are inseparable. It is just like planning because it involves the forecasting of the financial needs of educational system. The school manager is expected to have an adequate knowledge of some vital budgetary processes in order to properly fit into the role expectation.

In order to play these roles successfully the educational manger should be empathetic, firm, wise, sincere and transparently honest. Above all, he should place the interest of his/her job above all other considerations.

### Difficulties/Challenges in Educational Management

The following are difficulties in managing education in Nigeria and can be best described as the "Under-dogs" of system of education.

**Political:** Successive Governments in Nigeria have come up with different system of education, which invariably influence educational management and planning. For example, the 6 - 5 - 4 system, the 6 - 3 - 3 - 4 system and the current 9-3-4 system of education and who knows what the next regime will come up with after Obasanjo's administration. The underlying factor here is that there is no enough room to plan for these systems of education, which results in unmitigated disasters. **Economic;** The economic factor also affects management of education in Nigeria. The buoyancy of the economy of a country will lead to increase funding and provision of infrastructural facilities. The recent economy recession in the country affected its management and also the planning of the educational system.

**Geographical Factor:** Managers and Administrators and even the planners are "holed up" in the nation capital and formulate policies for nation without due regard to the national diversity. The end product is that what they formulated can only be used in the cities and not in the rural areas. **Religious Factors:** The country is polarized along Muslims, Christians etc. to the extent that the beliefs of their adherents affects the national system of education. These beliefs influence planners of education. They also want not to be caught in the "religion web".

**Managerial Factor:** There are number of factors which lead to failure of educational management and planning in the country educational system as summarized below.

- a. The educational managers do not have enough contact with their sub-ordinates but island unto themselves.
- b. They spend too much time on routine details thereby neglecting planning, supervision and other managerial duties. They also failed to establish the objectives of educational system.
- c. Lack of enough experience on their part in the field of educational management. Some managers expect too much from their sub-ordinates who have little or no experience.
- d. Some failed because they allow their personal or domestic problems override their official duties.

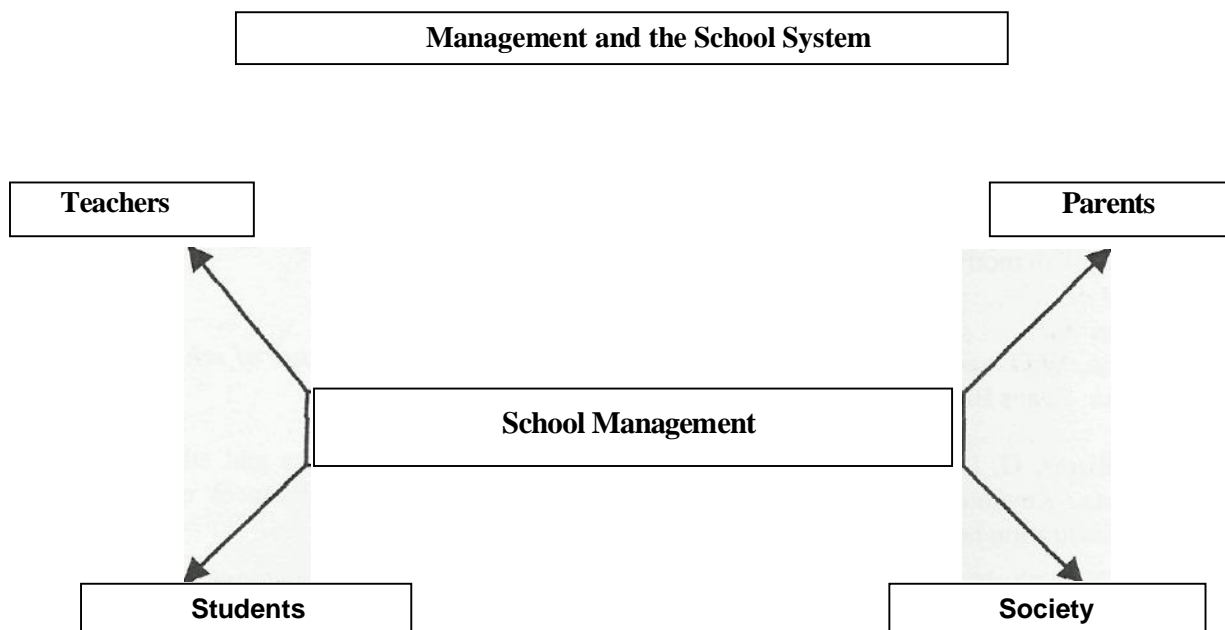
### Management and the School System

Parents and teachers today confer on how to improve the school system the same way that stakeholders through their accredited representatives dialogue with employees in business. Besides, parents, teachers, students and the society agree on issues relating to quality, but none of them argues that quality is not essential for the school system. They however, do not agree on what constitutes quality or how this quality can be effectively attained.

The task of management is to recognize diverging interests of these groups and ensure that the interests of one does not overshadow those of others. Management must constantly be aware of its credibility and integrity and must ensure that some kind of balance is achieved. Management must be progressive in handling the various "Pulls" which are the teachers, students, parents and the public. It must emphasize the positive contributions of each and ensure that no one group is tossed against the other. Since all the groups have a stake in the management of the enterprise such a policy could have

negative results for management itself. At the same time management must not go out of its way to satisfy one particular interest group. Such an action will incur the wrath of one or more groups and possibly cause crises situation within the system. Some time management is expected to place the interest of one group over those of the others. In a school system for example, it may be necessary to place the consideration of teachers and students above those of parents. Obviously, the success of the school system hinges strongly on teachers and students than on parents. Whatever the circumstances, it- is the responsibility of management to consider each situation on its own merit and ensure that relative harmony is achieved.

**The Table Below Illustrate the Management and the School System**



**Advantages of Educational Management**

Educational management guarantees the realization of positive results, that is, in achieving the aims and objectives of education, students/pupils enrolment in schools can only be made possible when there is good educational management in place,

Good educational management serves as a framework in the implementation of government policies on education.

It allows for improvement of infrastructures needed for the teaching and learning in school.

The pitfalls in our educational system can easily be identified if good educational management is in place.

Prudent management of fund meant for the educational sector and taking good care of educational facilities can be better realized with good educational management.

The school is looked at as a place where morals, societal values and ethical standards can be attained. This will only be made possible if good educational management is fairly in place.

Policymaking and programmes planning that affect education are made under the cover of educational management. The formulation of educational policies, gives rise to planning. This is followed by the interpretation and implementation of the educational plans at the various levels of society and education.

Good educational management identifies staff needs in the educational system.

Another good advantage of educational management in school programme, is that, educational manager's ultimate goal is the improvement of learning opportunities. The school managers such as the Vice - chancellor, principal or headmaster works with teachers, students and supervisors in the selection of appropriate curricular or school activities, choice of subjects, text books, work scheduling, use of teaching aid, student progress etc.

## Recommendations/Suggestions

It will be improper for this paper to enumerate the problems of educational management without suggesting way forward. The following are therefore, some recommendations/suggestions.

Consultative forum should be put in place where stakeholders in our educational system could meet on regular basis to share views in our educational management.

For our educational managers to be effective in the job they do, incentives should be encouraged for those who perform well, and sanction to be meted out to those not doing the job.

A monitoring team of experts on educational matters, should be set up, for the purpose of going round to monitor educational managers. In this way no one will shirk its responsibility.

Regular workshop should be organized for educational managers to up date them with current trends in educational management for the realization of educational goals.

## Conclusion

In conclusion therefore, educational management as an important tool in the development of education should be given utmost attention by the government. Excellent management of education devoid of selfish motive will take education to greater height in this country.

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