

MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Schools are established centres for teaching and learning and should be efficiently and effectively managed. Secondary education has been neglected for so long in this country; no nation can be successfully built without proper management of the secondary educational system. Based on this premise, this paper identified problems of secondary education to include poor funding, ill-motivated teaching personnel, overstretched facilities due to population upsurge etc., its objectives and as a way forward for resolving the lapses, four recommendations were made.

Introduction

Education, the world over has remained the catalyst and key to rapid socio-economic development of any society. It is one of the means through which knowledge and skills are acquired for the effective improvement of competence for creating better job opportunities.

It is worthy to note that nations that have tremendous levels of economic development and well-being are those who have been properly managing their educational policies, designing focused curricular and invested heavily in their implementation and follow-up management strategies to ensure the realization of its set goals.

Schools are established centres for teaching and learning and should be efficiently and effectively managed. That

many of our students at all levels of the educational system are not learning and achieving enough is reflective of the inadequacies, improper management and attitudes experienced within the system.

Secondary education in Nigeria has suffered neglect in the hands of various state governments. Due to the long period of neglect, the system has been bedeviled in the area of low material for the labour market, improper administration and management and has created a negative impact in the entire economy. Even though it is a form of education that holds the greatest guarantee for economical survival and provision of some semi-skilled labour for the economy, a good number of Nigerian citizens end their education at this level. Obanya (2000)

opined that secondary education is the backbone of education in Nigeria.

The provision and management of education involves more than just mandating it as a new government policy. Some fundamental issues which should not be overlooked when such a system is to be established include funding, personnel, curriculum, appointment of qualified professionals and facilities as these could have far reaching effect in the areas of school operations so as to enhance progress, growth and survival in this modern world.

To enhance progress, growth and survival in this present modern world, there is the need for education. The educated individuals in the society have become the central resource for national development. The supply of such individuals has become the measure of a country's economic and political potentials.

Concept of Management

Scholars have advanced different definition of management, but for the purpose of this paper, the following definitions are considered:

Management is the system which an establishment uses in enabling its human and material resources to achieve the set goals and objectives of the establishment. It therefore, entails responsibilities for effective and economic planning regularities in fulfillment of set objectives (Babatunde, 1986).

Management is the art of getting things done through and with other people. It involves planning and administration of

all the activities and programmes of an organization (Agu, 2003). Furthermore, management is the planning, organization and utilization of available resources (human and material) for the enhancement of objectives (Anyago, 2009)

Asaya (2005) defines management as a set of functions and activities to be used in the organization and utilization of resources in a fair affirmative and efficient manner for the benefit of the organization, the individual and the society at large.

Therefore, management is the primary force within the organization that coordinates the activities of the sub-system and relates it to its environment. Educational management is the setting of educational objectives for using available resources and identifying the activities to be performed (Asaya 2005). It is therefore concerned with planning, organizing and policy implementation.

National Development

Okoro (1999) sees national development as a progressive transformation of economic, social and political structure of a society from a relatively less complex, less efficient and more desirable forms while Bamgbose (1991), went further to state that national development is the full realization of human potential and maximum utilization of the nation's resources for the benefit of all.

In this direction, the basic determining factors of national development in any nation include:

- * The economic conditions
- * The educational provision, and

* The political state of affairs.

Among these factors, the most essential since the use of any resources, political or economic and the effectiveness of these resources depend on the human factors. For these human factors to be developed, education is very essential. The role of secondary education in national development cannot be over-emphasized; hence, effective management is required.

Secondary Education in Nigeria

Secondary education as the name implies is a form of education given to children who have successfully completed their primary education. It serves as a link between the primary and tertiary levels of education.

It is given to children between the age range of 11 and 18 years in a variety of post-primary institutions including the teacher training colleges, etc. Before independence and up to 1987 secondary school education lasted for five (5) years which ranges from class one (1) to class five (5) and after completion, successful candidates are enrolled into the university or other intermediate tertiary institutions.

However, the need for self-reliance or individual job creation and to provide some skilled labour for the economy for sustainable national development through scientific and technological development necessitated the development of a new national policy on education which ushered in the present system of secondary education in Nigeria.

It is popularly known and referred to as the 9-3-4 system. Secondary education is currently divided into two

levels, the junior and senior secondary school levels each lasting for 3 years.

The junior secondary level is based on both academic and pre-vocational curriculum.

It makes provision for the development of skills and acquisition of further knowledge. This may explain why Taiwo (1986) affirmed that secondary education is of great importance to the nation because it is a source of mid-level manpower production that is necessary to sustain and improve the economy.

The second level is referred to as senior secondary school, this last for 3 years. At this level, the curriculum, is more comprehensive in nature and helps to broaden the pupils' outlook. Technical and commercial courses are involved to make school leavers easily employable so as to enhance the growth and development of the Nigerian economy.

Objectives of Secondary Education

The objectives of secondary education are as follows:-

1. To foster Nigerian unity with emphasis on the common ties that unites us in our diversity.
2. To inspire its students with a desire for achievement and self improvement both at school and in later life.
3. To diversify its curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and roles possessed by or open to students after their secondary school courses.
4. To provide an increasing number of primary school pupils with the

- opportunity for education or higher training irrespective of sex, or social, religious and ethnic background. The broad aim of secondary education is to prepare students for useful living within society and for higher education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).
5. To equip students to live effectively in modern age of science and technology.
 6. To raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour and live as good citizens.
 7. Develop and project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as world's cultural heritage. (National Policy on Education, 2004)

An analysis of the above objectives of secondary education reveals that the gateway to dependable source of manpower development for specialized skilled labour production at the tertiary level will promote job creation and improve the total well being of the secondary school leaver.

In the management of secondary education in Nigeria, the Federal Government has identified the roles to be performed in order to achieve a number of objectives at the secondary level of education. They include:

- i. The provision of effective administrative and management control system for the maintenance and improvement of secondary education.

- ii. The provision of adequate financial support for secondary schools where the parents are being compelled to pay school fees. The Federal Government still subsidizes the fees and provides supporting grants to states to maintain secondary school infrastructures.
- iii. Ensuring quality control through regular inspection and continuous supervision of instructional and other educational services in secondary schools.
- iv. Ensuring adequate and effective planning for secondary education in Nigeria.
- v. Organization of conferences, seminars and workshops on educational issues by the Federal Government so as to improve the management and organization of secondary schools in Nigeria (Aigboje, 2005)

Secondary education is an essential ingredient towards national development and job creation. The achievement of the overall objectives of secondary education is a function of management

Secondary Education and National Development

Secondary education in Nigeria provides the recipient with the basic knowledge and practical skills needed for entry into the world of work as employee or as self-employed. It provides skills that are necessary for agricultural and

economic development thus building a self-reliant nation.

It is quite obvious that the Nigerian economy is fast growing and therefore there is the need for a geometrical increase in the quantity and quality of skilled work force and experts in various fields of human endeavour. The needed quantity and quality of skilled work force can only be gotten through secondary education because it is the foundation for higher manpower being trained in tertiary institutions. It is the form of education that holds the greatest guarantee for economic survival in Nigeria.

Graduates of secondary education who engage in business as a form of self-employed do make valuable contributions to the national income. This helps to improve the economic development of the nation. Those who create job opportunities for themselves directly fight the war against unemployment and indolence.

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Discernable Lapses in Secondary Education in Nigeria

*** Inadequate Funding**

Funding is a central factor to efficient and effective secondary educational system. It has been found that virtually all the problems of the secondary education are attributed to inadequate funding. For instance, the

problem of inadequate /or dilapidated structures, facilities and equipment for learning and students welfare as well as staff remuneration are linked to inadequate funding.

Durosaro (2000) asserted that inadequate funding of education in Nigeria has been the major problem confronting the successful implementation of all educational programmes. With this trend, it is now at variance with the provisions of the National Policy on education (2004) which stated that education and training facilities shall continue to be expanded in response to societal needs and made progressively accessible to afford the individual a far more diversified and flexible choice.

Our educational system needs adequate funding for it to succeed in the scheme of things. Adeyemi and Ajayi (2006) stressed that adequacy of inputs to education in-terms of human and physical resources is largely a function of finance. There is over utilization of the physical facilities yet they are poorly maintained. In the view of Bell-Gam (2004) observed that inadequate funding has resulted to:

- * compromised standards,
- * loss of confidence in the system by the general public and,
- * products of the system lack of confidence in themselves.

All these have multiple effects on the nation's economy.

It is a fact that no amount of money will be enough for education, but the problem is the growing culture of financial misappropriation. Sometimes,

when money is provided for specific projects, such money is diverted to private pockets of those involved in the management activities. Above all, Imogie (2007), observed that late releases of funds, inconsistency in timing of releases of funds and miss-management/misapplication of funds released militates against the provisions of quality of secondary education in Nigeria.

Regular funding is required to procure teaching and learning materials.

* **Ill-Motivated Personnel**

The effectiveness of teaching and non-teaching personnel in secondary schools has steadily declined due to poor remuneration and working conditions resulting in low moral of such personnel. These act as disincentive. The result of this situation is lack of commitment as teaching and non-teaching personnel in secondary schools chase alternative sources of income. (Imogie 2007)

Moreover, the poor treatment of teaching and non-teaching personnel in secondary schools through long delay in payment of salaries and in implementing newly approved salary structures, whenever there is one has further complicated the goal achievement problem of the system.

As a result, many teachers would be unable to complete their scheme of work before final examination. Students are not adequately prepared for examination to cover lost ground. This in most cases result in students and teachers embarking on examination malpractice.

The effect will be that the school will be producing half-baked citizens who cannot contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation.

* **Inadequate Supervision**

There has been serious cases of poor management, poor administration, poor governance and leadership in the secondary school system. The government has failed to give adequate professional support to public schools in the areas of supervision of teachers and head teachers and other supporting staff of the secondary school system for effective management of the secondary school system.

* **Appointment**

Competent graduates in educational institution of learning are not given the opportunity to articulate policies, administer and supervise the different aspects of secondary education programmes. Such opportunities are given to non-professionals because of political considerations. This condition affects the progress, proper implementation and effective management of the educational system.

* **Over-Stretched Facilities Due To Population Upsurge**

The increasing demand for education has led to a great expansion in the education industry, a bloated students' population without a corresponding increase in required facilities in schools.

Isah (2008) opined that despite the astronomical rise in students' intake, the

government is yet to rehabilitate collapsed infrastructure or develop new structures thereby, making learning hazardous. This certainly has affected the existing facilities, as many students use limited resources and the result has been breakdown of the facilities and they are hardly replaced or maintained.

* **Students/Parents Problems**

There is poor attitude to education amongst students, low motivation from parents and teachers as well as an ineffective work habit to studies by secondary students. Moreover, parents are not interested in what their children do at school because of their craze for material wealth.

Conclusion

Secondary education is an essential level of education that acts not only as a link between the primary and higher institution, but also provides some semi-skilled labour, which to an extent guarantees economic survival of the nation. There is the need to provide the necessary machinery and proper management for the success of its programmes by all stakeholders. The government is encouraged to improve funding and conditions of service of teaching and non-teaching personnel as well as make facilities/equipments available at the secondary school level of Nigeria education system if its contribution to national development is to be achieved.

Recommendations

On the basis of the above, the following recommendations are proffered towards solving the problems of management of secondary education:

- * The three tiers of government - the federal, state, and local governments should invest adequately in the educational sector. Until government invests massively in education we cannot achieve our national goals. Private institutions, philanthropic organizations and multi-national organizations should play supportive roles in funding and equipping of students with needed facilities, equipments and technological resources in our society for sustainable national development.
- * Professionals in education should be made to oversee and manage the education system as this will bridge the gap between planning and implementing national development programmes.
- * Teaching profession should be made more attractive by enhancing the terms and conditions of service of teachers, prompt payment of salaries and high level of motivation among workers at the secondary level.
- * The government should not end up making policies without implementing them. All the beautiful plans, proposals and policies on secondary education should be implemented to achieve the desired aims and objectives in national advancement.

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