

FUNCTIONAL EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRACY

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Abstract

Education is the process of training man to fulfill the purpose of his creation by exercising all the faculties to the fullest extent as a member of the society (Aristotle). Education is not just about training, but an investment that requires good management. This reinforces the concept of educational management as a tool that inspires better democracy and equitable democratic values. Man as a social being, structured on interactive reactions require for its existence the realities of democratic management. The need for care, for protection and growth upholds the acceptable statement that I 'am' because the other 'is'. The instrumental and circumstantial evidence of this truth for the growth of each other impels democratic educational management. In management, education is democratized.

Lead words: Education, Management, Challenges, and Democracy.

Introduction

Concept of Educational Management

Educational management is a concept consisting of two distinct ideologies, education and management.

Education has been defined by the Oxford advanced learners dictionary as the process of giving and receiving systematic instructions and learning, especially at a school or university. Wikipedia further defines it as a purposeful activity directed at achieving certain aims, such as transmitting knowledge or fostering skills and character traits.

Fafunwa (1974) defined education as what each generation gives to its younger ones, which makes them to develop attitudes, abilities, skills and other behaviors which are of positive value to the society in which they live. This position reflects the sociological perspective and man is a social being. Education, is a social service, provided world-wide with multiple objectives in mind. The objectives vary from the acquisition of basic skills required for a more rapid growth of the economy and the basic knowledge for the individual to function effectively in the society. (AA Boyi, 2013).

Education is an activity aimed at causing a significant change in an individual. Education is a pedagogical activity; the teacher and the student, but also, education goes down beyond just the teacher and student, to the parents and facilities (environmental factor) and the school management (school executive body). A child, where both the extraneous and school factors blend tends to behave well in school and society. Education has an inclusive agenda that demands management.

However, it is very difficult to give a precise definition of the term 'management'. Different scholars from different disciplines view and interpret management from their own angles. The economists consider management as a resource like land, labor, capital and organization. The bureaucrats look upon it as a system of authority to achieve business goals. The sociologists consider

managers as a part of the class elite in the society. The term 'management' has been used in different senses. Sometimes it refers to the process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating and controlling, at other times it is used to describe it as a function of managing people. It is also referred to as a body of knowledge, a practice and discipline. There are some who describe management as a technique of leadership and decision-making while some others have analyzed management as an economic resource, a factor of production or a system of authority.

Management is not only important, but it is imperatively required, because every organization must be managed, guided or supervised in order to function efficiently and successfully. The absence of management in any organization may lead to not only the derailment of the organization's goals, but also the collapse of law and order. In this context, Ogunsaju (2009) said that management becomes a critical job in any organized society, particularly when complicated tasks must be completed and two or more individuals are engaged.

Many variables are engaged in education management, as education defines, transforms, propagates and promotes human development. This is more so when it is infused into the various aspects of livelihood in an ever fast moving technological exposure and rendition. The inception of digital devices has nudged education to new frontiers needing social, ethical, professional and management re-engineering. It requires a new democratic management praxis to meet the target of production. Education is a co-operative process and demands a democratic management system in pursuance of its ethical values. Its management is an integrating process by which authorized individuals create, maintain and operate an organization in the selection and accomplishment of its goals. In education management, things are done through others through coordination of all resources in planning, organizing, directing and control to attain objectives.

Management is the coordination and administration of tasks to achieve a goal (Indeed.com). It is a process of organizing and controlling a particular group of people for the purpose of reaching a goal. Managerial activities involve patience, leadership skills and efficiency. A good management breeds a good team. (Nedam Azad, Glen Anderson, Jenelle L. Sobotta, 2017).

Educational management is an applied field of management. One can therefore deduce that educational management refers to the application of theory and practice of management to the field of education or educational Institutions. Educational administration is a process of acquiring and allocating resources for the achievement of predetermined educational goals (Ibrahim A. Ali, Mazin S. Abdalla Mohamed, 2017).

In any educational setting, there is always a management that oversees the affairs of the school activities. Educational management is a purposeful activity that is aimed at organizing, setting and controlling the activities that goes on in a school setting.

Wikipedia defines it as the administration of the education system in which a group combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategize, and implement structures to execute an education system. As earlier stated, a good educational management breed good students.

Every management is expected to be functional, organized and service oriented and the educational setting shouldn't be different. A school comprises of different individuals from different races, social class, age grade and understanding in their individual and cultural differences. The success of the school administrators in a sense depends on the implementation of democratic principles in management (Ramazan Yirci, 2012)

An effective school management should be able to inspire the students into becoming the best they can and bringing out the potentials in them. Just like reinforcement causes reactions, so does the actions of the school management inspire the student's activeness, development and growth in all ramifications.

Concept of Democracy

The definition of democracy, defined by Abraham Lincoln, is suitable in its usage. According to his definition, democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. The entire definition of democracy revolves around, “the people” and this explains the fact, that a democratic system, considers the needs and opinions of the people. In a normal democratic system, the activities of the government are determined by the people’s choice. Democracy has won for itself a household name across the length and breadth of all liberal and not so liberal societies across the world today (Canice Erunke, 2012).

Democracy in education is an activity that concerns every individual, including the students. And the power to change the society lies in the youths; youths are the future of tomorrow. When the youths are properly organized, nurtured and coordinated by the management, there is a greater tendency for their active participation in electoral processes. (Nwaogu G.A.I, 2015)

How does Democracy relate to education and school setting?

Lately in some countries, particularly Nigeria, there has been an ongoing strike which was inspired by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). This strike and its heat has had devastating effects on the parties that suffer its severity (parents, students and university workers). Democracy in the school setting involves the different students’ clubs/formation, the Parent-Teacher forum, the Senate, Governing Council etc. In such forums, issues and challenges are discussed and decisions taken for school maintenance, sustenance and development. They are democratic settings where views are expressed, criticisms taken and procedures set out. Outside of school environment, government executives organize at different levels of policy making, monitoring and evaluation. The federal government management of its own education policies has had both positive and negative effect on the education system and on society. The Academic Staff Union of University’s 8 months strike is a pointer to the need for a democratic principles and practice by all education leaders.

Effects of Education Management on the Attitude of Students and Staff

A child who attends schools in a setting where there is no provision of the needed infrastructures, support and atmosphere to foster a proper teaching and learning activity, it would be impossible for that child to see change as anything vital. The staff who works in a democratic school setting do their work as patriotic and committed teachers working as a team. They meet their obligations with less stress. They, like the students work with motivation to bring out the best with the resources available to them. They work as a corporate body achieving both efficiency and effectiveness. Discipline is appreciable and loyalty is real. Children learn from what they see, experience and hear. Imagine asking a child who has been under the heat of the academic strike to vote for a leader, such wouldn’t go down well with the student who feels a great grudge for governmental bodies who have left them in such state. Judging from another aspect, it can serve as a great platform for the students to see a need to vote the right leader into power, hence exercising their electoral franchise; in this way attests that the challenge has motivated them to take a befitting step.

Democracy is a form of government that empowers the people to exercise political control, limits the power of the head of state, provides for the separation of powers between governmental entities and ensures the protection of natural rights and civil liberties. (Robert Longley, 2021).

In every day usage, Democracy should be what it is defined as; the government of the people, by the people and for the people. An effective democratic system is dependent creating structural mindset of the populace, to work towards ensuring that the system upholds the principles of democracy.

We also get to discover that in some academic settings, there are barely trainings on the act of voting and exercise of franchise, because most of the teachers who are meant to train the students on this, bear grudges against the government for not catering for their needs and they refuse to partake in

electoral activities. Most times, this originates from the mindset that all government officials are the same. What then is the need to vote a new leader? Questions many of them would ask.

Still in the educational management of these schools, it is significant to note that most of these public school management cadre are the major perpetrators of corruption and they practice it openly. This creates wrong impressions in the students who learn from these vices and begin to practice, thereby becoming tyrants to political activities.

Effective Teachers' Motivation in Democratic Management

Teacher's motivation is another key pointer to the execution of an effective democratic system. When a teacher is not properly paid or efficiently catered for, the teacher feels neglected by the government and it would be difficult for such teacher to participate in any democratic political activity, be it in education system or societal political arena.

Motivation stimulates, inspires and induces the employees to perform to their best capacity. It is a process whereby needs instigates behavior directed towards the goals that can satisfy those needs. (Joe Kelly, 2017)

Recent statistics show that teachers are one of the lowliest paid professions in Nigeria. Most of them find it difficult to meet up with their basic needs and this may account as non-functional education management, as a major party in the pedagogical activity is improperly treated.

Poor education management and its effect on democracy

Education management is a system that demands persistence, dedication and expertise. A functional education management should place the need of both the students and staff at high esteem. The government should also be able to meet up to the demands of the educational sector to ensure that proper teaching and learning is done.

A functional education management is one that meets up to the standard of sound pedagogy and management.

Dilapidated schools with destroyed buildings and no hope of restructuring by the government ruling them is reflective of poor management. The commercialization of education has challenging issues of certificate racketeering, out of context curriculum, high school fees, etc.

Students of poorly administered schools are more often found to be devoid of ethical principles of democracy and of positive functional productivity.

The challenges of our nation's democracy which affects education can be shortlisted under these four problems:

- Corruption
- Inequality of the masses
- Structure of the society as observed in Economic hardship
- Inefficiency of the ruling authorities, displayed in poor decision making environment, method of taking decision and inadequate number of alternatives.

These four issues are the major banes of democracy in our nation and we see majority of them playing out at the educational sector both at the policy and implementation levels of management.

Corruption has been a major problem to tackle. The increasing cases of corrupt practices in our nation over the past few years is significantly numbing and undemocratic. Corruption is the father of all these other problems, as other vices originate from its inception. In the educational sector, we see corruption practiced at the different levels of learning. It starts from the approval of schools that have no merit, gratifying education officers, dodging tax payments, buying of question papers and certificates.

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A student who is undeserving of a particular grade or score, gets it without much stress and the much deserving student suffers in silence, probably as a result of refusal to pay for grades. This is an opening path to other corrupt practices that would take place in the future. When a child is given this undeserving position on a regular basis, he or she finds it difficult to work hard towards achieving anything and as such breeds laziness and attitude of coerciveness.

The effect is this; such children end up graduating from school, find their way into a befitting job with either a result gotten from sorting or even sorting him or herself up to that job position. As a result, corruption multiplies because they turn out to be incompetent workers due to lack of basic skill requirements for such job and do little or nothing to develop themselves because they believe that everything revolves around money and what money can buy. Eventually, the same individual would end up not appreciating the dignity of hard work and its deserving results. If such individual gets his or her way into a political position, it is a practical loss for the nation, as the practice continues to get worse with each passing day. Corruption indeed kills hard work and provides a fertile ground for breeding more corruption.

What is meant by functional education?

Functional is a term that is used to refer to something that is active. It was defined by Cambridge dictionary as, working in the expected or necessary way.

According to Idowu (1999), functional education is the total process of bringing up individuals to develop their potentials (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) to the fullest and consequently be able to contribute maximally to the development of the society. Therefore, a functional education management is one which organization works in an expected manner, in line with the needs of the members.

Arogundade (2011) adds that functional education seeks to prepare people, especially youth, to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers who will contribute to economic development and sustainable communities.

For an educational management to be referred to as functional, it entails that the body must have fulfilled its responsibilities, i.e. ensuring to cater for the needs of the students and members of staff. The management should be able to impact the lives of the students positively, thereby inspiring their growth and all round development.

The commercialization of schools and some education policies of inequality are inimical to growth for instance, difficulty in paying school fees. Most parents cannot pay the tuition fees of private schools due to economic hardship. These private schools are better equipped with better facilities for easy and proper learning than public schools managed by the federal and state governments.

The country is under financial debt burden with a corresponding attrition rate in the society, taking most providers out of work. The situation propagates economic hardships, coupled with galloping inflation rates. Proper accommodation for families is unattainable, transport facilities difficult to access, food and feeding well is a luxury. All these are amalgamated in IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camp mandated by the obnoxious insecurity of lives and property in Nigeria. Such families cannot and do not get access to good education. All these discourage so many people from actively participating in the political activities of the country.

According to Anho (2013), entrepreneurial education is capable of building good human and personal relationships thereby addressing personal and social challenges. The idea of personal and social challenges can be addressed with basic functional and entrepreneurship education. Managers and administrators with such education will allow their personality to radiate joy and goodness in their endeavors. It is in the light of this that some states in the country have established some training schools to be able to produce more man power in different areas to improve the economy of the country for example there is a motor machine school established in Enugu where many apprentices are enrolled to

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be trained in that area. Elsewhere in Plateau state a secondary school called BUTECHS is established to train students who are at the post basic level indifferent skills like carpentry, sciences and technology so as to improve manpower and increase potentials in the younger generation so that by the time they complete their studies they can use those skills to be self-reliant. The students on completion, will not only be self-reliant but will also contribute to the sustainable economic growth of the nation. The functionality of the education management is able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the government and it would serve as a mild motivation for the members of staff and students to ensure such is carried on.

The Effect of School Politics on Democracy

In government, there is the presence of the legislature, executive and judiciary, which are referred to as the three arms of the government. Same way in a school setting, there is the presence of the institution's legislative arm; senate and management board, the executive board; the administrators, student representatives and governing council, and the judiciary; the disciplinary committee, etc.

If these arms of government in the education setting functions properly, the students would feel a sense of acceptance, belonging and comfort, thereby believing that the government in charge is truly of, for and by the people as their rights are protected. This gives them the tendency to believe in democracy and strive towards electing a suitable government that would treat them same way the educational management treats them. With this, education management has inspired the members to work positively.

Education is the genesis of every sector of the society. Other career profession take off from education .Education is the bedrock of socioeconomic and political development of any nation. Developed countries like China, Japan, Russia and United States of America among others have achieved various break through due to their commitment to ensuring a functional system in their countries. All of these nations have been able to overcome several developmental challenges like poverty, unemployment, ignorance which are harmful to human existence and whose presence could lead to other social vices like; insecurity, crisis, conflicts and wars among other social ills. One of the enduring legacies that any society can give to its younger generation is education (whether is formal or informal). It is a means by which the norms and values of a given society are transmitted to its younger ones. From time immemorial, every activities or program aimed at equipping the younger generation with skills and knowledge are considered necessary for them to function effectively and contribute to the overall development of the society

Doctors and other professionals alike had to go to a school to acquire the knowledge which enabled them become the masters of their various fields and politicians are not left out too. We therefore discover that when there is the absence of proper education management, these professionals become nonchalant in their various fields and even go the extent of supporting corrupt practices.

A politician must have undergone an academic training; whether secondary or tertiary education, before venturing into politics. If this politician found himself in a disorganized school setting with non-functional education management, he is likely to come out of the school without proper grounding and he or she finds it impossible to lead effectively, after all he learnt it from the school. But when these students come out from an institution where the needed infrastructures for effective teaching and learning is put in place, the student after graduation would find it easy to reciprocate such good deeds and be of proper service to the nation .National growth is at a high decline because majority of the youths feel begrudged by the government for failing in their governmental responsibilities and duties.

Again, a functional education management is dependent on the proficiency of the school management. As we know, you cannot give what you do not have. So, it would be greatly impossible for an incompetent team to run the affairs of an educational management effectively. Therefore, the

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awareness of the government is needed to help train the students properly. The students should be sensitized on the importance of exercising one's electoral franchise and it is the responsibility of the school management to train them towards leadership.

Practice they say makes perfect. The school management should be able to appoint leaders from amongst the students and it should be a thing of merit, equity and fairness. The school electoral processes should be done in a way that the entire students and members of staff are accountable for their choice of leaders. This way, they get the view of democracy as vital and fair.

School election processes for both students and staffs should be conducted openly and it should be a people-based thing. This done, the students can be assured of the voting transparency and it motivates them to vote at both real political levels, since their votes actually count.

Another major problem we face in many Democratic nations, is the neglect of the masses' opinion and plight. The masses are left to suffer silently after they vote their leaders into power. This is also common in most school settings. Public opinion boxes should be constructed and inculcated into the school settings, this way students and staffs can drop their opinions on issues relating to them. Democracy is the system of government used in many African nations, but we can duly testify to the inefficiency of the system. The economic hardship and social inequality has made our nation, to look more like an autocratic nation with dominative leaders.

The government properly empower the students through education management in areas of entrepreneurial enlightenment and innovative trainings to help them become job creators or opportunity providers rather than job seekers, democratic management injected into the system would enhance democratic principles into the nation.

Majority of the electoral vices done are usually perpetrated by young individuals who were paid to carry out the hideous acts. This is because most of them lack jobs and remain idle, this offers them the opportunity to get involved in such outrageous acts, to make a living for themselves.

Conclusion

It can be testified that all these and many more Challenges of democracy in our country, is as a result of non-functional education management.

Students should be properly groomed to be patriotic and not destructive to their nation. Students should be taught the act of innovation and self-discovery through critical and creative thinking, thereby, inspiring them to showcase and live out their potentials.

The educational system should be of utmost concern to the government and the needs of the students and members of staffs should not in any way be neglected.

The recent ASUU strike has affected both students and workers in the university system and they harbor great distrust against the government in position. They are forced to believe that every government is the same, both in leadership and provision of economic needs. This in turn would make these students antipathetic towards governmental management of affairs in any sector of society.

Majority of the electoral vices done are usually perpetrated by young individuals who were paid to carry out the hideous acts. This is so because most of them lack jobs and remain idle, this offers them the opportunity to get involved in such outrageous acts, to make a living for themselves. Functional education is a catalyst for reducing the high rate of poverty in Nigeria as it will produce graduates who are entrepreneurs and self-dependent and ready to practice what they have learned in the school. These entrepreneurs will also become employers of labor. More jobs will be created and income will be generated. The end result is that many will be lifted from their problems of unemployment and poverty.

When the educational system is functional, it will bring about accelerated growth in the economy.

When graduate of the post basic education can practice what they learnt in school without waiting for government jobs, more jobs will be created and income enhanced and students would be properly

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groomed to be patriotic and not destructive to their nation. Students should be taught the act of innovation and self-discovery, thereby, inspiring them to showcase and live out their potentials.

Recommendations

1. Education shouldn't be seen as an optional activity, rather as a platform of functional prestige because of its necessity and input to democracy. The government at all levels should show its commitment and political-will to ensuring functional education through its funding, policy making, supervision and monitoring of educational projects and programs.

2. Government should properly inspect the activities of each educational facility, be it public or private, to ensure that the students' needs are properly met. Students should be empowered by the government, that way they feel a great sense of obligation towards political activities, for the measure you give is the measure you receive. What the government offers the students would determine their participation and support to the things related to their electoral activities.

3. Every professional has to go through the school to receive the necessary training to become one. Politicians aren't exempted from the list of professions that requires adequate training. Students in departments or students offering courses related to political activities, should be guided and taught the right skills of leading the people, to avoid making similar mistakes as the past politicians did. Poor enlightenment of students is a major deterrent to the effectiveness of democracy in our nation. Communication skills ought to be manifest in the curriculum. In other words, build in entrepreneur skills in the curriculum.

Students are young individuals and the future of the nation relies on them.

Students should be properly trained

Because education is the key

Education is vital

Education is fulfilling

Education is impactful

And so, education should be handled strictly on democratic ethics of inclusiveness and trust.

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