Educational Management and Application of Character in Organisational Leadership in Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study examined educational management and application of character in organizational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State. The concept of educational management, character in organization, organisational leadership and secondary school were addressed. Also discussed are how to use educational management in secondary schools for character display, the process of reengineering organizational leadership, some challenges facing organizational character and it was concluded that adequate character in organizational leadership is vital for progress. Then these were recommended that those to be recommended to the position of leadership should be people who have grown through the ranks to becoming leaders, it is necessary that government officials' interference be drastically reduced in the appointment of person into position of secondary school management, the government should put the required mechanism in place to end corruption in the secondary school service system to uphold higher values, educational managers should be made to through legislation adopt proven research findings in their operation and educational managers in secondary school system should ensure purposeful leadership in their operations such that encourage novelty.

Keywords: Educational management, character, leadership, school

Introduction

Educational management is a process and an art whereby school administrators manage human and material resources together in order to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in school management. According to Kashyap (n.d.) educational management is a complicated enterprise that man is involved in which pulls together resources of various kinds in order to achieve planned goals. This conveys that educational management is of various facets and must put into consideration adjoining factors and forces in order for it to achieve its targets. There are indications that certain principles and fundamental social structures must be in place for it to work effectively. Human interrelationships are crucial in its success, disciplined planning and execution are also necessary. Thus, a concept that is found in the midst of other concepts for its full application to occur; a process one would say demand character for adequate functionality.

Character is a term that could be viewed from both the positive or negative point of view. Character represents aspects of value or behaviour exhibited in conduct, attitudes or habits by a person. It shows how a person thinks and acts or not act. Character seems to define a person more suitably than anything else. TWINKI (2023) sees character as an aggregate of various qualities that comes together in form of thought, feelings, personality and choices which a person makes. It is depicted in what makes up a whole human being. This trait typifies who a person is within and without and much more importantly come to display in any human interrelationship, thereby presenting a negative character. Teacher Vision (TV, 2022) perceived that the character. possessed by a person is dependent on the person's values, moral standing and belief system. These characteristics is what would determine how a person responds to issues when a situation arise for honesty, bravery, compassion, leadership, courage, independence, responsibility, self control, humility among others. For Okoroma (2018) character is an idea that governs human life and living for effectiveness at what they do. It was further said that the main characteristics of character include integrity, humility, fidelity, simplicity etc. The aforementioned features represent the desires for organisational leadership for advancement to take place in any environment otherwise a moribund situation is envisaged soonest. Therefore, any organisation that seeks progress must encourage the workers to exercise full capacity in terms of character for success to be guaranteed. It means that character is expedient for adequate leadership success particularly in an educational setting like the secondary school. Character that is positive is good and desired in every educational management effort for improved leadership in such an organisation.

Leadership could be viewed as a process of leading others to be leaders, that is, it is a designed that creates a favourable atmosphere for the leadership and the followership. School leadership is a process where a given set of individuals who are saddled with the responsibility of running the school do their best interest as they ought to. UNESCO (2021) sees school leadership as person(s) who are responsible for entrenching the culture and organization needed for effective teaching and also ensuring that the learners are able to learn as optimally as possible. It went ahead to say that research findings have shown that schools which provide good management practices produce better results in their leadership roles. Therefore, there is a relationship among educational management, character and organisational leadership. Some of the management roles which could result in better leadership output may include goal-setting, teacher assessment, resource management as well as teacher development and deployment (UNESCO, 2018). These features the researchers think are needed by them for an effective secondary school system in Rivers State.

Secondary education is the next level of education just immediately after a pupil has completed primary school (Akor and Pepple, 2020). It affords an individual the privilege of learning for skill and intellectual development both of which prepares a person either for the world of work life or for higher education or both. For (FRN, 2016), one of the objectives of secondary education is to "inspire learners to desire self-improvement and achievement or excellence but there would remain an illusion if the educational management in place displays less of qualitative

leadership deficient in human and other resource management, thereby, leaving the secondary school system leaver to be without adequate skills to function in the society or be able to pursue further studies and to ask if this is justifiable in the eyes of character, therefore, the need to examine the state of affairs of educational management and application of character in organisational leadership of secondary schools in Rivers State.

Concept of Educational Management

 Educational management is an aspect of educational process and practice that deals with how schools are administered for the purposes of meeting educational goals, dreams and aspirations. Just Great Database (n.d.) sees educational management as an act of social control and supports the pursuit of targeted organisational pedagogical advancement. It entails the intellectual, cultural, spiritual, social and economic development of the society. According to Kela and Bajaj (2022) educational management is concerned with administering the school system with the help of highly qualified persons and material resources. It engages in supervision, planning, strategizing and implementing laid down intentions. This practice teaches all forms of institutional arrangement in pursuit of educating people. Different types of educational management exist. Four of these types are found in practice all around, and they are: centralised and decentralised, external and internal, authoritarian/autocratic and democratic as well as creative management ((JGBD, n.d.). There are some fundamental skills that a person needs to be able to successfully administer a particular level of education. For instance, an individual would require leadership, problem solving, communication and interpersonal skills to adequately and effectively as well as efficiently administer a secondary school (Learn.org 20021). Some of the courses which may prepare a person to take up such responsibilities could include: Education economics, education legislation, public policy and education management of educational organisations and evaluation of educational systems. Thus, it is encouraged that people should be trained up to this level in order to pursue careers in the field and available to do what is expected in order to attain desired educational goals and objectives. Though, it must be put succinctly here that going through in positions to benefit from being in school but imbibing the character desired of someone in that level of education would be more required.

Concept of Organizational Character

Character defines the level of consistency a person maintains overtime in an organisation, as well as what an organisation is known with. It declares the behaviour exhibited by an organization and that which it is known with; It declares the behaviour exhibited by an organisation (employees and management). Levison (2023) perceives character to mean the degree of consistency in the behaviour of a person or organisation. This may mean the extent to which what an organisation promises to be able to achieve or do is possible and visible to the observer. Sajwani (2021) says that character is possessing courage to accomplish what you had said you would accomplish in order for organizational advancement and progress. This imperative considers leadership and the people in an organization as key to the entire process. Thus, the

extent of character displayed by an organisation is the level that the leadership and employees are ready and willing to go to give value to their clients/customers.

Organisational character is an ethic that an organisation is ready and willing to sustain in order to obtain desired output from its operations. Adoney Associates (AA, n.d.) believes that any organisation that maintains available character in its operations could thrive in complicated settings and environments termed challenging. It then means that organisational character though may have been documented in the core value and mission statements of an organisation, such entity and its leadership must be deliberate in the way to carry out its responsibilities in a way to ensure that what is intended and desired. That is, character must be part of the make-up of the organisation such that the society in which it is situated are aware of. Furthermore, (AA, 2021) says that some features distinguish character from other virtues; these are: purpose, values and principles.

Purpose: This is the particular reason an organisation is pushing to achieve its target. This most times goes towards addressing a particular societal need. It has to be clear and focus driven.

Values: It is an indication of virtues an organization believes to be vital to its existence. It determines what an organisation chooses to do or not. It is something that would be clear to the public the organisation cherishes and upholds. If it believes in collaboration, thus interdisciplinary attitude would be seen in its operations.

Principles: This indicates what an organisation stands for which more often could be observed over a period of time from how it runs it business. It concerns what happens between an organisation and it neighbours. It also aligns with the character of the organisation. It is what keeps an organisation competitive, though may not be open to the observers' eyes but it stands there beckoning upon when the chips are down. It is what the leadership brings to the fore when there are alternatives to choose from.

Concept of Organizational Leadership

Leadership is a concept that defines influence usually by impulsion. A drive towards using other people's competence through motivation to achieving set goals. Boyles (2023) defines organisational leadership as the ability to bring about change by the development and communication of vision to others. It could be seen as the ability to run an organisation with the right attitude and skill.

Some of the Expectations of Organizational Leadership Goals Include:

1.   To inspire and motivate employees
2.   Lead the organisation towards the future
3.   Look out for and respond to any challenge
4.   Pursue opportunities that presents itself or perceived
5.   Handle crisis well and resolve them quietly as well as ensure they do not return. Other elements that bring about the full functionality or organisational leadership include:

planning, time management, understanding values and goals, managing and motivation of others in the team, solving problems and coordination to boost team work and encouraging preparation (PLNU, 2023). It is expected that an organisational leadership possess the following characteristics among others:

i. Problem solving and decision making
ii. Clear communication and good listening
iii. Inclusivity and fostering safe environment for workers
iv. Goal driven
v. Respect and courtesy
vi. Creativity in managing team's ability

These are some of the building blocks that set organisational leadership apart from other kinds of leadership and the secondary school system of education stands as an organisational structure that should have this kind of leadership structure running its affairs with the right kind of character in order to achieve set goals.

Concept of Secondary School

Secondary school is a level of education attainable just after completing primary school. It is meant to achieve either of two purposes or both of intellectual development for higher education or in preparation for the world of work. According to Definitions (n.d.) secondary school is seen as that educational level that follows elementary education and usually given to specific age and for a period of 6 years. This tends to describe a level of education that its responsibility is to build a person up for the challenges associated with the academic vigour that may be required for higher education learning or whatever level of skills that may be necessary to pursue work life. Some of the specific goals for secondary school education in Nigeria and indirectly Rivers State are among others:

1. Offer diversified cancellation to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles provide trained manpower in the applied science technology and commerce at sub-professional graduates.
2. Inspire students with the desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence.
3. Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of other, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under broad national goals and live as good citizens.
4. Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

All these specific goals stated here and those not stated are good. But goals seem to be much more apt with regards to the discourse underway. The reason is that both goals capture the pursuit of character and leadership required for success in any setting.

How to Use the Educational Management of Secondary Schools for Character Displays in Rivers State

There are features that would be required for great character displays in Nigeria secondary school, particularly, in Rivers State which discourse is on. They may include:

1.   Being visionary and ensure that other workers are motivated enough to reach the set goals.
2.   Ensure instructional delivery is done without lip-service and its properly coordinated for actual learning to be recorded in the learner.
3.   Ensure leadership where every employee feels that he/she is a part of a team.
4.   Ensure good partnership between school and community to allow a win-with situation for better ends.
5.   Develop collaborative support system among staff where interdisciplinary culture overrides every other independent structure.

To achieve the above feat, it is necessary that the educational manager at the helm of affairs pursues what is right and proper in terms of leadership in order to encourage cohesion among the various facets of the secondary school system and to administer it for goal-getting. Therefore, a re-engineering process of leadership is encouraged. Some of the attempts that can facilitate it are:

Leadership Re-engineering Process

1.   Purposeful Leadership: It is expedient that the educational leadership acts on purpose. There should be a reason for every action or inaction. It must pursue the achievement of set standard that would present the schools as unique in their own rites.
2.   Value: There must be predetermined value system and this should not be tampered with any point in time, otherwise what had sustained the system is what would destroy the system. Such value for teamwork, time management and staff welfare should be standardised and pursued all the time.
3.   Principles: Principle is the core of any organisation that wants to survive any of such that does not align with desired principles of discipline, commitment, courtesy among with this collapse all such principles should be passed down from one generation of leadership to another.

Some things pose as challenges to the achieving character lades of organisational leadership considering that the society terms to be currently polarised with defective attitudes and lifestyles. Among them are:

1.   Corruption
2.   Desire for foreign ideas instead of contextualizing local ideas.
3.   Inadequate application of research findings to national/societal problems.
4.   Trans-generational weakness in the service rendering system
5.   Political interferences in the appointment of educational management leadership.

To resolve some of these difficult challenges it would require that adequate these steps below be taken

1.   Adequate legislation to deal with individuals with corrupt tendencies of their actions.
2.   Local resources (human and material) should be used in solving problems confronting the society.
3.   Research finding should be given a place and school managers encouraged to read and proffer solutions to problems through it.
4.   Workers could be transferred without their prior-knowledge, this will reduce trans-generational weakness in services rendered.
5.   Politicians should interfere less in the affair to reduce the challenge of unqualified persons coming to positions of authority in the secondary school management system.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that in educational management, character is a sine qua non for a progressive organisational system coupled with effective leadership in order to achieve desired results. But evidence abound of some challenges that would want to stall good character displays yet they are manageable and could even be eliminated with conscientious patriotism and astute pressure. So the secondary school system in Rivers State would be at an advantage if the suggestions and steps marshalled out here are taken to address the defined problem.

Recommendations

The following are the suggestions supporting the study:

1.   Those to be recommended to the position of leadership should be people who have grown through the ranks to becoming leaders.
2.   It is necessary that government officials' interference be drastically reduced in the appointment of person into position of secondary school management
3.   The government should put the required mechanism in place to end corruption in the secondary school service system to uphold higher values
4.   Educational managers should be made to through legislation adopt proven research findings in their operation
5.   Educational managers in secondary school system should ensure purposeful leadership in their operations such that encourage novelty.

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