

## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP: A VIABLE TOOL FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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### **Abstract**

*It has become imperative that excellent educational management must be strengthened and repositioned through effective leadership at the various sectors of educational system, in such a way that will engender and stimulate effective role and goals of education in the society. Developing an excellent educational system implies a direct and indirect development and of the qualities of leadership in educational management. This paper attempts to clarify how effective leadership can enhance and animate educational management, through which there can be smooth running of excellent planning, supervision and organization in the educational system. Albeit, details and analysis of some qualities and features on effective leadership as a viable tool for excellent educational management are reviewed in this paper. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of leadership as a viable tool for educational management.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Education, Management and Educational Management

### **Introduction**

Globally, education performs a unique role in the development and growth of a society. The administration of a sustainable educational system is the primary concern of a nation. Consequently, the improvement associated with a society and her people on powerful indexes as economy, politics, science and technology, morality and national development rests distinctively on the management of quality education. Thus, competent leadership is a viable tool towards effective management of education in ways that will adequately prepare young adults to becoming veritable agents of transformation in all the phases of life, thereby bringing about an integral development in the various areas of the society, with no exemption to educational system. This is because leadership has a vital role to play in creating the conditions for success at all levels of education and training systems

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through effective management. As part of the functions and goals of an effective leader, management is one of the most important activities, through which a leader accomplishes aims that could not be achieved individually. One of such areas is the educational sector. The onus lies on effective leadership to adequately manage quality education by; setting directions, aims of objectives of educational organizations or institutions; planning for the progress of educational programmes; organizing available resources, people, time, material for proper educational system; controlling the implementing process in education and settling the improved standards on educational system.

However, the lack of excellent and visionary leaders in government can lead to educational paralysis. Some of the hitches bad leadership can bring to the educational system of a country are unnecessary slowdown in academic progress (ASUU Strike), poor educational infrastructure, politicization of education and the recruitment of unqualified lecturers and teachers. All these are case studies and the aftermath of lack of effective leadership in educational sector. From this flow of thought, this paper will delve into a comprehensive analysis of effective leadership and its consequence on the achievement of sustainable and quality educational management.

### **Leadership**

The concept of “leadership” has diverse meaning and understanding to different people, since a definition commonly depends on the perceptions, natures, philosophies, values and professions of those who define it. However, in its most basic form, leadership is defined as the art of moving others to want to struggle for shared aspirations. Therefore, a leader is an individual who possesses the ability to encourage, motivate and/or influence others.

Fundamentally, the goal of effective leadership is to influence changes and the role of a leader is to create the systems and organizations needed for elevation into a whole new level or change in some basic ways in order to take advantage of creative opportunities. Furthermore, various scholars have given their opinions on what leadership entails, thus, some of these definitions will be explored below.

Keith Davis defined leadership as the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically towards their objectives, as a way of extracting cooperation and willingness of the individuals and groups to attain the organizational objectives. Taking a stance from another perspective, George R. Terry explains that leadership is a relationship in which one person influences others to work together willingly on related tasks to attain what the leader desires. Likewise, Koontz and O'Donnell, clarifies that leadership is the process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of group goals. Similarly, Chester I. Bernard simplifies the definition of leadership as the

quality of the behavior of the individual whereby they guide people on their activities in organized work. In a more captivating perspective, Gary Yukl (2006) defined leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. In the same vein, Peter Northouse (2010) defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. From these definitions several constituents that are central to the phenomenon of leadership can be alluded. Some of them are as follows:

- (a) Leadership is a process.
- (b) Leadership involves influencing others.
- (c) Leadership happens within the context of a group.
- (d) Leadership involves goal attainment.
- (e) The goals of leadership are shared by leaders and their followers.

Accordingly, the very act of defining leadership as a process suggests that leadership is not a characteristic or trait with which only a few certain people are endowed at birth, but is involved in imitation and inculcation. Also, defining leadership as a process means that leadership is a transactional event that happens between leaders and their followers. Observing leadership as a process means that leaders affect and are affected by their followers either positively or negatively. Leadership, which has the ability to influence, inspires subordinates and peers in a work or organizational context. Without influence, it is impossible to be a leader.

Leadership includes the achievement of goals. Therefore, leadership is about directing a group of people toward the accomplishment of a task or the reaching of an endpoint through various ethically based means. Leaders direct their energies and the energies of their followers to the achievement of a thing together. Thus, leadership occurs in, as well as affects, contexts where people are moving in the direction of a goal.

The fundamentality of leadership is in the possession of power, which is interconnected to it but different from it. It is connected to leadership because it is an integral part of the ability to influence others, since power has the potential or capacity to influence others to bring about desired outcomes. Furthermore, while there are different kinds of power, in organizations, we consider two kinds of power, which are position power and personal power. The former, (Daft, 2005), is that power that comes from holding a particular office, position, or rank in an organization. While the latter, (Yukl, 2006) is the capacity to influence others from being viewed as knowledgeable and likable by followers. It is power that derives from the interpersonal relationships that leaders develop with followers. Also, power can be two-faced. One face is the use of power within an

organization to achieve one's personal goals to the detriment of others in the organization. The other face is that power that works to achieve the collective goals of all members of the organization, sometimes even at the expense of the leader's personal goals.

From the foregoing, it is important to know that leadership involves influencing task objectives and strategies, influencing commitment and compliance in task behavior to achieve these objectives, influencing group maintenance and identification and influencing the culture of an organization for its greater good.

It is important to note that, it is one thing to be a leader and it is another thing to be an effective leader. Hence, this paper will analyze some of the qualities that an effective leader must possess for operational and effective leadership:

#### **An Effective Leader must be visionary**

A leader must be able to focus on moving beyond the status quo and ushering in new projects, acquisitions, or initiatives. Such leadership entails having great ideas and a vision for how to move forward in a new and innovative way. Leaders, who have great visions, have a clear sense of where they want to go and how they intend to get there. Visionary leaders see the big picture, and then create a strategic plan for achieving their goals.

#### **An Effective Leader must have a good sense of Decision making**

Decision-making is a leadership skill that is used to assess a situation and determine how an organization may progress. The goal of leadership involves the ability to establish the process by which decisions are made through decision-making strategies by an effective leader, in order to facilitate goal execution in an organization. This comes with having confidence in their leadership skills and in their personal abilities. If a decision turns out to be wrong, learn from it and move on.

#### **An Effective Leader should possess a Team-building skill**

A good leader creates productive teams that draw the best from people. Leaders effectively coach teams in collaboration, consensus building, and conflict resolution. They also acquire how to improve teambuilding skills, avoid preconceived answers to every question, and concentrate on appreciating different points of view during discussions rather than just trying to prove points. Consequently, the willingness to include others is the key to successful teambuilding.

**Effective Leaders display integrity and help others succeed:**

Good leaders empower others to achieve their full potential, thereby benefiting the organization. They boost others and mentor individuals to assume leadership roles. Leaders must be trustworthy before others who follow them. Hence, the qualities that establish trust are competence, constancy, caring, candor, and congruity, which define a leader as authentic and reliable.

**An Effective Leader must be a learner:**

It is worth-noting that a leader cannot lead without knowledge and a desire to learn, and must continue learning in order to maintain a position of leadership. Learning leaders are those who prioritize teaching and learning at the top of their priority, promote the culture of continuous learning. Effective leaders must have a desire to continually learn and grow and are open to new ideas, learn how to expand their knowledge and maintain a broad focus.

**Education**

The etymology of the word Education is derived from Latin words “*educere*”, “*educare*”, and “*educatum*” which mean “to learn”, “to know” and “to lead out”. The concept of education and its content is expected to affect or condition the social behavior of the person being educated, as one who learns, knows and leads out. Also, from this understanding, it can be deduced that education is a life-long process which is always used to imply a positive state of mind.

Just like any other concept, education has been defined by different scholars of various epochs in history and some of them will be explored. According to Bamisaiye (1989), Education is “a cumulative process of development of intellectual abilities, skills and attitudes, all of which form our various outlooks and dispositions to action in life generally”. It is seen as the perfect essence of learning which makes us permanently able and disposed to benefit ourselves and other members of the society in the use we make of such learning. Schooling may lead to negative behavior, knowledge can be negatively used, learning too can also be negative, but education must be positive.

Furthermore, it is a known fact that not all learning can be defined as education. Farrant (1982) identified three characteristics that distinguish true education from such things as role learning, purely mechanical training, indoctrination or brainwashing. According to him, true education:

- i. Deals with knowledge that is recognizably worthwhile and capable of achieving a voluntary and committed response from the learner.
- ii. Leads to a quality of understanding that gives rise to new mental perspectives in the learner.
- iii. Uses methods that encourage the exercise of judgment by the learner and the use of his critical faculties.

As a matter of fact, from the foregoing, education can be regarded as the society's cultural reproductive system. Through it, the society reproduces itself, passing on its main characteristics to the next generation, although the process becomes complicated as time goes on due to the influence of philosophical, economic, political and social forces acting on the mechanism. On the long run, each generation is different from where it sprang, yet it has been responsible for keeping the society alive. Education is a gradual process which brings positive changes in the human life and behavior. We can also define education as a process of acquiring knowledge through study or imparting the knowledge by way of instructions or some other practical procedure. Education also means helping people to learn how to do things and encouraging them to think about what they learn. It is also important for educators to teach ways to find and use information. Through education, the knowledge of society, country, and of the world is passed on from generation to generation. In democracies, through education, children and adults are supposed to learn how to be active and effective citizens.

### **Management**

*Management is a distinct process consisting of planning, organizing, activating and controlling to determine and accomplish the objectives by the use of people and resources.”- G.R. Terry*

Like other concepts in education, the term management means different things to different people. Nonetheless, the term is from the verb “manage”, which means taking care of something, or giving responsibility to someone to be taken care of. It could also mean putting someone in charge of something or somebody. Essentially, management is an important element in every organization. It is the element that coordinates organizational activities and plans for the future. Also, management is the life-giving element of any organization.

Definitions proposed by some of the management specialists include: Henri Fayol's definition of management as conduct of affairs of business, moving towards its objective through a continuous process of improvement and optimization of resources. Also, Koontz opined that management is the process of designing and maintaining an

environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims. From another perspective, Mary Parker Follett states that management is the art of getting things done through people. George R. Terry also suggested that management is a process consisting of planning, organizing, actuating and controlling, performed to determine and accomplish the objectives by use of people and resources. Finally, Lawrence A. Appley says that management is guiding human and physical resources into a dynamic, hard-hitting organization until that attains its objectives to the satisfaction of those served and with a high degree of morale and sense of attainment on the part of those rendering the service.

From these various insightful definitions, management can simply be noted as human maintenance and actions towards perfection of all things. The importance of management cannot be discarded as such, it includes;

**Achieving Group Goals:** management helps to arrange the factors of production, assembles and organizes the resources, integrates the resources in effective manner to achieve goals. It directs group efforts towards achievement of pre-determined goals. By defining objective of organization clearly, there would be no wastage of time, money and effort. Management converts disorganized resources of men, machines, money etc. into useful enterprise. These resources are coordinated, directed and controlled in such a manner that enterprise work towards attainment of goals.

**Optimum Utilization of Resources:** through management, physical & human resources are utilized productively. This leads to efficacy in management. Hence, management provides maximum utilization of scarce resources by selecting its best possible alternate use in industry from out of various uses. It makes use of experts, professional and these services leads to use of their skills, knowledge, and proper utilization and avoids wastage.

**Establishes Sound Organization:** management helps to inaugurate sound organizational structure which is in tune with objective of organization and for fulfillment of this, it establishes effective authority & responsibility relationship i.e. who is accountable to whom, who can give instructions to whom, who are superiors & who are subordinates. Accordingly, management fills up various positions with right persons, having right skills, training and qualification.

**Essential for Prosperity of Society:** Competent management leads to better economical production which helps in turn to increase the welfare of people. Good management makes a difficult task easier by avoiding wastage of scarce resource. It improves standard of living. It increases the profit which is beneficial to business and society will get maximum output at minimum cost by creating employment opportunities which generate

income in hands. Organization comes with new products and researches beneficial for society.

### **Educational Management**

Having given clarification to the concepts of education and management, one can easily state that educational management is the planning, structuring and effective running of educational system. There is no single accepted definition of educational management as its development observed in several disciplines or fields like business, industry, political science, economics, administration and law. So, while defining the meaning of the term educational management it can be said that, educational management is a complex human enterprise in which different resources are brought together and made available to achieve and to accomplish the desire and expected goals or objectives of adequate and proper education/learning.

Educational 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.

The basis of the development of educational management as a field of study began in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century and its development in the United Kingdom came as late as the 1960's. Educational management, as the name implies, has a bear on educational organizations or institutions, such that it is a field which is concerned with the operation of educational organizations. It is the process of planning, organizing and directing activities in a school, effectively utilizing human and material resources, in order to accomplish the school's objectives. It is not a field limited to school principals. All parties involved in education should gain insight in Educational Management as it is vital to help schools function successfully and effectively realize their goals.

Furthermore, the basic necessities of educational management involve the human resources, which comprise the entire staff, both the teaching and non- teaching staff, clerks, researchers and other elements such as students, parents, members of the community, members of the managing or governing body and departmental officials in an educational institution; material resources, which is a basic requirement for every organization or institution requires in concrete terms for its essentials. Buildings, playgrounds, equipment's, furniture's, machineries and stationeries are required for various practical purposes. Libraries, laboratories, auditorium and so on are part and parcel of an educational institution for organizing different curricular and co-curricular programmes; and ideological factors, which bring growth to the world of education.



All these create feelings, belongingness, involvement and self-satisfaction among the personnel for working and implementing the programmes in educational institutions. At last, it can be said educational management will be meaningful if there will be a great deal of co-ordination and inter-relation among these three resources. The cause is that all these three resources are interdependent and immensely contribute to holistic development of every educational institution as a whole.

### **Effective Leadership: a Viable Tool for Excellent Educational Management**

Effective leadership plays an important role in educational settings and can meet the societal needs and find solutions to unexpected issues and challenges in each society; consequently, effective leadership is the main contributing factor on educational performance. It is because of a good leader who can create and train more leaders and quality teachers to achieve the mission and vision of the educational organizations. Excellent leadership in education is functional as it involves the effort to achieve the best. It is fact that excellent school system in which excellent education is provided can be created with excellent leaders.

Furthermore, the relevance of effective leadership for excellent educational system, following the National Standards of Excellence for Head Teachers (NSoEfH, 2015), has it that excellent leadership which impacts quality educational management system;

1. Should ensure that the educational systems, organization and processes are well-considered, efficient and relevant to aims, and preserve the principles of transparency, honesty and sincerity.
2. Should provide a safe, quiet and well-organized environment for all the students and employees and focus on protecting the students and improving their model behaviors in the school and in the community.
3. Should establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and take measures so as to be able to manage the performance of all the employees; identify those with poor performance and make efforts to eliminate poor performance, and support the employees to improve and evaluate excellent practices.
4. Should establish a strong governance system, understand the role of the administration board and actively support the board in presenting its functions effectively, and fulfill his executive tasks, initially determining school strategy, by taking the student, employee and financial performance into consideration.

5. Should make strategic financial planning taking into account the curriculum in order to ensure that all available resources are allocated in the most appropriate way for the sustainability of student success and school activities.
6. Should create and convey the educational vision in an effective way, empower all the students and employees excellently and encourage towards leadership.
7. Should demonstrate positive attitudes and optimistic behaviors towards the students, employees, parents, governors and members of the local community, and develop good relationships.
8. Should be an example leader for the people around him with his leadership behaviors, expertise and skills like integrity, creativity, flexibility and clarity.
9. Should aim to maintain broad continuous professional development in order to understand and know the current education and schools in the local, national and international perspective.
10. Should work with a political and economic understanding so as to transform the local and national policies into the context of the school within a clear set of principles that focuses on the educational vision.

## **Conclusion**

Education is an essential process in human development, through which leaders are trained to train future leaders. This can only be done through effective management. Leadership and management must go hand in hand. Although they are not the same thing, but they are necessarily linked, and complementary. Any effort to separate the two is likely to cause more problems than it solves. Thus, this study was undertaken to find out the effectiveness of good leadership on educational management, which entails students' performance as well as overall improvement, since it is suggested that an effective educational leadership is related to student's performance and achievement of the school. An effective educational leadership and development of educational system play an important role to students' improvement and school education system. Most importantly, it is highlighted that educational leadership is a core to develop a quality teacher for the effective school and improvement. Moreover, for the educational leadership model, distributed and moral leadership is more approachable and need to be implemented in schools in educational systems for progressive transformation towards better educational outcomes.

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