

Capacity Building Growth of Education Managers in Nigeria: Implications for National Development

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Abstract

The focus of this article is basically on capacity-building growth of education managers in Nigeria and implications for national development. Specifically, it pin-pointed the concept of nation-building; the challenges of nation-building and school organisations; the human capital development approach for functional and viable nation-building. Furthermore, it touches the challenge of human capital development in schools; the digital technology way of functional and viable schools; and the nine “plays” to spark innovation in nation building of functionality and viability in education sector. The paper concluded that education sector management for functional and viable educational growth and development through manpower; and digital world adaptation which may surfaced through the nine “plays” to spark innovation in nation-building. It was recommended that, managers of education in schools and colleges in Nigeria should conduct adequate manpower planning to attract the required employees at specific timeframe and give them employment where needed in education sector and that school leadership should generate modalities to generate alternative mode of funding for the employment of more teachers where government could not assist with statutory approval among others.

Keywords: Capacity, Curriculum, Education, Managers, National

Introduction

Education is an important means of growth and development of any nation. Education in its formal form provides the needed human capital for a country’s growth and progress. Education sector curriculum planners are continually ought to put this at the back of their minds. Practical curriculum template to meet up with this development is indispensable. In most cases, it may equip the citizens with the necessary skills to function effectively and contribute to the nation’s development through functional and viable educational practice (Chimaka, 2014). Whoever controls the education system also controls the destiny of the nation

and he who controls the education of the young controls the future of the nation. This development will surely enhance functionality and viable education in a positive or negative way for nation building in the sector. Formal education brings about empowerment likely through manpower development, and information technology in the education of the younger generation. Relevant curriculum process planning and management may be the key to achieve this feat anyway.

If functionality and viable education is promoted, the citizens in the long run may have to participate more actively in politics in their country, improve in their economic development and productivity, understand and appreciate more their cultures and cultural heritages and increase their chances of reducing poverty. Functional educational practices are the best channel of enhancing meaningful political, economic development and higher productivity for enhanced nation building through educational administration and management of resources in schools.

Nation-building in the other side is a term used world-wide by school administrators, politicians, international organizations, and in news and scholarly publications, and yet it has not been possible to give it a single definition (Oyewole & Adegoke, 2018). This is probably the reason why the United Nations, though involved in many nation-building activities, is still reluctant to use the term “nation-building”, and preferring to categorize its missions under the heading of peace keeping operations (Oyewole & Adegoke, 2018). Nation-building in the context of this paper is the intervention in the affairs of education sector for the purpose of changing the practice for the best enhancement of standards and goal achievement in the system – the manpower and information communication technology roadmap options.

The Concept of Nation Building

The concept of nation building involves the process of building institutions which symbolize the political entity – Institutions that put in place the structure of nation’s economy administration; the judiciary, educational sector administration among others. Onward political entity building may be difficult without functional and viable education process via the effective national policy on education framework setting up how the administration of school organisations are to be administered and managed across all levels of educational institutions. The operations of school organisations are expected to have a formidable human resources/workforce that will lead to attainment of school objectives effectively and efficiently. This could be attained through proper manpower planning and development. Educational management information systems for the promotion of framework policy guidelines to administer the system. However, nation-building is about building a common sense of purpose, a sense of shared destiny, a collective imagination of belongingness for the promotion of functional educational institutions (Gambari, 2021).

As a result, tangible and intangible threads that hold education sector together through viable educational process gives it a sense of purpose. Even in these days of globalization and

rapid international flows of people and ideas, having a viable nation remains synonymous towards achieving modernity in the education sector. It is about building the institutions and values which sustain the collective community schools in this modern dispensation.

The Challenges of Nation Building and School Administration

Life is full of challenges and functional education is the weapon for successful nation building that cannot be overemphasised but if properly manage may be turned into opportunity for the progress of the system. Gambari (2021) identifies the following challenges as cogent ones that eventually affect functional education and viable nation building process.

1. The Challenge of History: the lack of consolidation of Nigeria around commonly shared values and positions in the education of the past and impact on present. This means that this challenge of divisive historical legacy continues to undermine our efforts at nation-building in the education sector. Take for instance before the advent of western education, there has been a formidable traditional educational practices that made citizens to become self-employed individuals in farming, weaving, blacksmithing, hunting and the rest.
2. Today, challenge of history as noticed by Bashar and Yasin. (2020) had wiped away vital value of traditional education that favours vocational education, intellectual training, moral development values among others. Reading, writing, and arithmetic's (3Rs) fundamental pedagogy of teaching and learning as handed over to Africa, including Nigeria by the European task masters at the beginning of western education cannot lead the primary school systems anywhere. In the work of Egbebi (2019), the colonial imperialist on their arrival on the coast of Africa, most especially Nigeria taught us ABCE, EFG etc and neglect the *modus operandi* of traditional education in retrospect. Practically, the traditional education favour the following cardinal objectives: development of latent physical skills of the child; development of character of the pupil; respect for elders; intellectual training; vocational training and development; community participation; and cultural heritage (Fafunwa, 1991). The subsequent national education policies drafted and redrafted in theory will promotes hands on learning, but during implementation neglect the prescribed mode of teaching and learning as stipulated in the policy. This development posted a fundamental challenge to nation building pedagogy. Example of this is the curriculum of 6-3-3-4 programme and that was later refashioned to 9-3-4 systems of education failed to be implemented to terms due to varying challenges ranging from funds; personnel, infrastructural facilities; and curriculum implementation saga by teachers and other stakeholders.
3. The Challenge of Socio-Economic Inequalities: Not to enjoy these socio-economic rights means that the people involved are marginalized from national life. Socio-economic status of people differs across boards. This can be categorised into low-level,

middle-level and higher level in status. Some parents can assist their children to attend high-fee paying schools, while others cannot (Egbebi, 2016).

4. **The Constitutional Challenge:** Some people advocate the concept of federalism but act differently in a unitary fashion by brushing aside all the divisions of powers between different levels of our federation, principles for sharing power at the different levels of government usually affect functional and viable educational growth and development. West, East, North and South are still having difficulties with the constitutions of the federal republic of Nigeria in her exclusive list that favours one state than the other. The constitution allows money to be generated from Nigeria Port Authority in Lagos and the money realised to be spent in Kano or Kaduna State. The quota system and federal character brings about certain disparities in the education effective service delivery across the 36 States in Nigeria including the federal capital territory.
5. **The Challenge of Building Institutions for Democracy and Development:** setting the rules; hiring persons with the technical expertise and moral competence to interpret the rules or implement the goals of the organisations; and ensuring that the institutions inspire public confidence by being transparent, fair and consistent. The major obstacle militating against building institutions for democracy and development in Nigeria has to do with inadequate funding. It is known by all that the exchange rate of dollar to naira is nothing to write home about at present. Nigeria currency is always falling for other currencies of the world most especially dollars – N758 to 1 dollar as at 5th July, 2023.

The Human Capital Development Approach for Functional and Viable Nation Building

To attain effective and efficient administration and building institutions for democracy and development of education sector, worthwhile recruitment process of human resource is the key. Human capital development signifies and corresponds to the development of series of stock of knowledge or characteristics the workers have either innate or acquired that contribute to their productivity in a work place (Oyewole & Adegoke, 2018). There is need for formidable human resource of workers which requires good people to work for institution's goal. In the opinion of Dike (2012), economic prosperity and progress in school organisation depends on the stock of its physical and human capital as well as digital adaptation and transformation of the systems. Formal education is considered instrumental to improving the productive capacity of an individual worker in schools. In the opinion of Kent & Facer (2004), public secondary schools in Nigeria suffer from substandard leadership (human resource), infrastructural decay, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate technological tools, and lots more. They further recommended that, qualified principals and teachers (human resources), be provided for the schools, provide intensive training for both the principals and teachers, build more classroom structures.

The Problem of Human Capital Development in Schools

Human Capital Development consists of numerous activities, including: (i) equal employment opportunity (ii) job analysis (iii) human resource planning (iv) employee recruitment, selection, motivation, and orientation (v) performance evaluation and compensation (vi) training and development (vii) labour relations (viii) safety, health, and wellness. In the bid to improve infrastructure, teaching and learning in schools, the Lagos State Government in 2009 got the sum of 90 million US dollars facility from the World Bank for a project called “Eko” (Babarinde., Olujuwon., Abegunrin., & Jimoh, 2019). The overall development objective of the Lagos Eko Project is to improve the quality of public junior and senior secondary education in Lagos State. The Project is to assist the State to improve the performance of secondary school teachers and simultaneously the students’ achievement. The project was developed based on the premise that better results will be achieved when power is given to schools, as they understand the needs of the school and are able to implement effective and collaborative school management principles of planning, organising, motivation, directing, controlling and budgeting.

Teachers’ Professional Development Program (TPDP) forms an integral part of the Lagos State “Eko” Secondary Education Programme then. The teacher is the medium through which instruction is communicated to the students and are key in the implementation of the curriculum. Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, (2014) says “no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers” In view of this, the Eko project has made adequate provision for Teachers’ Professional Development. Due to the advancement in knowledge and technological development globally, there is the need for teachers to be equipped and updated with knowledge, skill and strategies of modern times. It has been observed that, it has not been easy to get the right supply of teachers, most especially in sciences in our schools and also right quantity and quality teachers to man the educational institutions at all levels of educational institutions are not enough (Adeyemo, 2013).

Most governors in States of the federation in Nigeria for funding issues seems have failed to employ professional teachers in their respective schools over the last five seven years on the average and thus left many schools having challenge of staffing in the various subjects. Oyo, Ogun and Kaduna States did their own recruitment in the recent time. Recruitment and selection is an important factor for success in every organization as a result of having the right staff, in the right place doing the best job, and in the right discipline which help to improve and sustains school organizational performance (Babarinde., Olujuwon., Abegunrin., & Jimoh, 2019). However, it was observed that the underfunding, corruption, examination malpractices among others has really affected human capital development across all schools in Nigeria and the economic success of many nations of the world referred to as Asian Tigers has been attributed to the priority given to human resources development (Ifejika, 2017).

The Digital Technology Way of Functional and Viable Education

Digital technologies have a profound impact on economies and societies and are changing the method of work, communication, and engagement in social activities. More so, it bring about innovation by the application of technology in teaching and learning process. ICT is considered a powerful tool for educational change and reform. A number of previous studies have shown that an appropriate use of ICT can raise educational quality and connect learning to real-life situations thus enhancing functionality and viable education sector (Lowther, et al. 2008; Weert & Tatnall 2005). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) includes computers, the internet, and electronic delivery systems such as radios, televisions, and projectors among others, and is widely used in today's education field. Watts-Taffe, Gwinn, & Horn, (2003) and Kent & Facer (2004) indicated that school is an important environment in which students participate in a wide range of computer activities, while the home serves as a complementary site for regular engagement in a narrower set of computer activities.

Increasingly, ICT is being applied successfully in instruction, learning, and assessment. The innovative capacity of technology is very much conditioned by the level of digital skills of the working force. No wonder there is a very strong correlation between education and skills in the use of digital technologies in various spheres of life and the role of education and skills in promoting innovation is critical. The steep increase in the use of digital devices and the internet with increasing levels of education shows that education matters in the uptake of digital technologies (Ifejika, 2017). This has huge implications for the role of education systems in equipping individuals with the skills needed to benefit from new technology and in the long run promote functionality and viability in the system. Education is sometimes perceived as a sector which is resistant to change, while at the same time it faces a crisis of productivity and efficiency.

The Nine “Plays” to Spark Innovation in Nation Building of functionality and viability in Education Sector

Education sector management is expected to be transformed and promoted for functional and viable educational growth and development through manpower; and digital world adaptation. According to World Economic Forum, (2016), for manpower; and digital world adaptation to function well, the nine “plays” to spark innovation are readily available. The world summit resolved with the following verdicts to bring in innovation that may lead to functional and viable innovation for nation building through education

1. Provide a compelling vision of the future: Educational leaders need to present a persuasive vision of how the future can be better. Systems stay stable because they serve some stakeholders well, but often not students. Leaders need to demonstrate that the current situation cannot endure and provide an alternate vision of the system regarding who is to benefit. A compelling vision can align internal and external stakeholders around the need for change. It can also stimulate public demand for a more effective education system that meets the needs of all.

2. Set ambitious goals that force innovation: Setting ambitious goals, particularly nearly impossible ones, forces the entire system to innovate and drive toward those goals. Ambitious goals should be paired with enough flexibility to create room for new innovation. Compelling goals can align internal and external stakeholders around the importance of change, stimulate public demand for innovation and dramatically accelerate system progress.
3. Create choice and competition: Choice and competition can create pressure for schools to perform better. Choice can be created at many levels – students and parents can choose schools, or educators can have greater choice in where to work. Better choice, however, depends on the availability of quality options and quality information on those options. Creating options can improve outcomes, but, when dealing with markets, special care should be taken to ensure that equity is not sacrificed for the sake of efficiency.
4. Pick many winners: When launching competitions, or new service models, pick more than one winner. Supporting multiple ideas or approaches at once spurs all providers to continue to improve and compete – whether you are testing new technology tools or new school models. Systems that reward a single “winner” discourage further improvement and learning, and tend toward stagnation. As seen with challenge prizes, the goal should be to use funding or recognition to stimulate a wave of innovation, generating new ideas, patents and market participation.
5. Benchmark and track progress: High-quality data at the school and district level allows leaders – and everyone – to see progress towards the goals. It can also be used by leaders as a discussion point with principals and staff to identify and troubleshoot problems. No matter the quality and clarity of the data, the data only provides an imperfect representation of something even more important: the real world learning outcomes that matter to citizens.
6. Evaluate and share the performance of new innovation: Innovations need to actually work. For education systems to encourage quality, there needs to be transparent information on how effective new innovations and technologies are – do they work, over what time period, and based on what criteria? Schools and education systems should invest in quality performance and impact evaluations of new innovations and broadly share the results.
7. Combine greater accountability and autonomy: Devolving authority to the school level can remove barriers to innovation and allow school leaders the flexibility to explore new approaches. Increased autonomy needs to be paired with increased accountability, in which school leaders are accountable for the choices and results they deliver. This accountability requires greater transparency and clear performance metrics. Schools need both data and feedback, ministries need to assess the

effectiveness of new approaches, and the general public deserves accurate information on school performance.

8. Invest in and empower agents of change: New agents of change require support to make their ideas real and effective. System leaders need to provide leadership development, coaching and mentorship and other support systems enabling innovators to succeed. These innovators can be both inside or outside the system; teachers and administrators may be sources of innovation inside while new charter school/ academy operators or social entrepreneurs may operate outside the system. Talent development needs to be carefully coordinated with policy, programmes and local communities' needs.
9. Reward successes and productive failure: Public and private recognition makes it easier for existing innovators to take risks and encourage the emergence of new actors. Rewards also highlight models of success, giving them greater exposure and increasing the likelihood of expansion.

Conclusion

The capacity building growth of education managers, curriculum planners, and implications for national development of education sector management given consideration to manpower development cannot be underestimated for the purpose of advancement of functionality and viable systems of education. It was concluded that, there is need for formidable human resource of workers which requires good people to work for institution's goal. Formal education is considered instrumental to improving the productive capacity of an individual worker in schools. More so, education sector management is expected to be transformed and promoted functional and viable educational growth and development through manpower; and digital world adaptation which may surfaced through the Nine "Plays" to Spark Innovation in nation building tools.

Recommendations

The paper recommended as suggestions for promoting functionality and viable education service delivery for nation building in the sector.

1. Managers of education in schools and colleges in Nigeria should conduct adequate manpower planning to attract the required employees at specific timeframe and give them employment where needed in education sector.
2. School leadership should devices modalities to generate alternative mode of funding for the employment of more teachers where government could not assist with statutory approvals.
3. Stakeholders in school organisation should ensure that the nine play-pack innovation package should be adapted to promote functionality and viable educational practice for effective and efficient nation building in the sector.
4. ICT facilities should be provided in schools and also, training of all and sundry in the school population should be organised for and implemented.

5. The associated challenges of history of education as well as constitutional elements in the exclusive list disparities in the distribution of effective education service delivery should be re-visited through national policy of education implementation and political undertone that had affected the system adversely.

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