

The Role of Bureaucracy Management in Technical Vocational Education and Training Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract:- In the inception, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) was more of informal and non-formal education. Later, it was planned based on bureaucracies which is a system based on logic, order and the legitimate use of formal authority. Hierarchy of offices and authority exist in vocational and technical schools, colleges and vocational and technical educations and the practice is more pronounced in the ministries as compared to the educational settings. A close look at Nigeria's vocational and technical institutions today reveals basically a bureaucratic organization. There is hierarchy of authority system based on super-ordinate-subordinate relationship, division of labour, a body of rules and impersonal procedures governing work and strict emphasis on institutional goals. The element of bureaucracy is characterized by the following components: division of labour, impersonal orientation, hierarchy of authority, rules and regulations and career orientation. Bureaucracy has its benefits and also, its shortcomings. However, this paper examined the role of bureaucracy on vocation and technical education. It states the role bureaucracy management as on vocational and technical education with respect to the characteristics of bureaucracy management principles. Therefore, it's conclude that Max weber principle of management reflect the planning, developing and provision of necessary control measure in the successful running of vocational and technical education programmes.

Keywords:- Role, Bureaucracy, Management, Technical Vocational Education and Training, Institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Technical and vocational education is used broadly to refer to the educational process, which in addition to general education, involves the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge which relate to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (Ekpenyong, 2005). Vocational and technical education used as a twinterm is geared towards occupations which required manipulation and application of technical skills. Akaninwor (2004) defines vocational education as a type of education or training designed for preparing the individual to earn a living (to be self-reliant). Osuala (2004) opined that any education which is necessary for effective employment in an occupation is vocational. He further explained that vocational education assumes that a

choice of occupation is selected and that appropriate training is needed to enable an individual enter or advance in his chosen occupation. Technical education, on the other hand, is more science-oriented with emphasis on the application of scientific and mathematics principle as applied in engineering trades such aselectronic, electrical, mechanical, building/construction and automobile. Technical Education involves the use of knowledge of science, materials and energy to solve problems and improve daily lives and our environment while vocational education may be referred to as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills.

The National Policy on Education (2014) defines vocational education as "that form of education which is obtainable at the technical colleges. This is equivalent to the senior secondary education but designed to prepare individuals to acquire practical skills, basic scientific knowledge and attitude required as a craftsmen and a technician at sub-professional level. The Policy also enumerated the objectives of vocational and technical education in Nigeria as follows: -

- To provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce particularly at sub-professional grades;
- To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commerce and economic development;
- To provide people who can apply specific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man;
- To give an introduction of professional studies in engineering and other technologies;
- To give training and impact the skill leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant and
- To enable our young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.
- In attempt to discuss the role of bureaucracy management in vocational and technical education, bureaucracy refers to a specific form of social organization for administrative purposes. It possesses a formal structure characterized by clearly defined pattern of activities in which every series of action is functionally related (Ukeje, Okorie and Nwaghara 1992:58). The first scholar to systematically describe the characteristics of bureaucracy and its role in

the industrial societies of Western Europe was Max Weber, a German sociologist.

In Weber's view, one of the primary considerations in the societies was to rationalize social and economic objectives with the greatest possible efficiency. He conceived bureaucracy as a theory of organization best suited to the needs of large and complex enterprises that perform services for a large number of clients. His concept of bureaucracy was an attempt to minimize the frustrations and irrationality of large organizations in which the relationships between management and workers were based on traditions of class privilege.

In his analysis of organization Bureaucracy as conceived by Weber is supposed to be an "ideal type" which describes relationships and other factors that exist when people work together to achieve common goals. In the era of twenty first century, as bureaucracy is synonym to red tapes, highly rigid and impersonal structure, it should have phased out long ago. However, in vocational institute/centres, technical colleges and university of technology in which the objectives of vocational and technical education are been carried out, the explicit definition of a hierarchical system aids in the foundation of an orderly method of managing staff. It is very clear whom the higher authorities are to take orders from and lower officers know their functions in the school are to obey the instructions of the higher authorities called superior. The teachers and staff who can be categories as lower officers are prepared and willing to be bound to the decisions of their superiors in all aspects of the school tasks (Hanson, 2001). In view of the above, this paper examines the utilization of bureaucracy principles in the management of vocational and technical education in the country since bureaucracy is seen as a managerial tool which enhances carefulness, precision and effectiveness which are the hallmarks of public administration. Most of what are classified as bureaucratic bottlenecks are human weaknesses and failures wrongly emanating from effective application of the principles of bureaucracy.

II. ROLE OF BUREAUCRACY MANAGEMENT ON VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Every organizational structure based on strict, rational and logical laws of order is said to be exhibiting bureaucratic tendencies. According to Peretomode (1991) in Oku et. al., (2008:63), Weber sees the pure bureaucratic organization as having a set of characteristics that contribute to a hypothetically rational, disciplined, precise, stable, reliable and effective organization. Vocational and technical education as a formal, informal and non-formal organization depends on bureaucracy. The bureaucratic model adopted in the administration of vocational and technical education can also be characterized by some key features of Weber's ideal type bureaucracy. Therefore, this paper bases its finding on the role of bureaucracy in vocational and technical education on the characteristics identified by Peretomode (1991):

- Division of labour: Tasks are divided among the various ranks in vocational and technical education. Official duties regarding vocational/non vocational, technical/non-

technical are carried out by the higher officer (TVET Principals) and the lower officers (TVET Teachers) in the school system. It involves grouping tasks in logical form as it is observed in the division of school programmes into Departments such as science, vocational, technology, arts, social science, law, medicine and assigning teaching staffs to various department based on specialization.

- Hierarchy of Authority: In TVET school settings, positions of authority are hierarchically organized and clearly defined. Authority is delegated from the TVET Administrators (School Head) who are at the top of the pyramid in a typical school organizational chart to the subordinates. The delegations of authority create a chain of command which is a formal channel that defines the lines of authority from the top to the bottom of the organization.
- Rules and Regulations: The National Policy on Education are rules and regulations, guideline formally established by the Federal Government as a way of controlling the behaviour of TVET staff, students and also guide the administrators in taking and implementing decisions in. In the technical colleges, teachers and students are provided with manuals and handbooks containing guidelines on how to behave and consequences to misbehavior.
- Impersonal Orientation: TVET teachers are expected to relate with their students and among themselves without any emotional attachment in carrying out their official assignments. A conscious application of impersonal practice helps the TVET staffs in implementing rules and regulations. It calls for justice, equality and fair play on the part of TVET administrators in dealing with the subordinates.
- Record Keeping: This is one of the statutory functions in TVET. School records such as written statements about the activities and the resources in the school and kept for future references. Information with regards TVET staff, student's facilities, materials including subjects/courses available in a school and time allotted to each are recorded appropriately. Written records serve very useful purposes when they are honestly, accurately and faithfully kept.

III. ORGANIZATION OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Technical and vocational education is organized at two levels in Nigeria, Federal and State government levels. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) are saddled with the responsibility for conducting technical and vocational education. The NBTE is an agency of the Federal Government established in May, 1972 to advise government and coordinate all aspects of Technical and vocational education in Technical Colleges and making recommendations to enhance the programme.

A. National Board for Technical Education

The NBTE is administered through a governing board which is responsible for formulating broad policies that are meant to guide management on the smooth running of the organization. The Board is organized under two main directorates, namely programme directorates which is responsible for curriculum development, institutional

licensing and programme evaluation through periodic accreditation exercises. The Planning Directorate is responsible for the physical development of all federal polytechnics and technical colleges, and other related functions. From the above, it is depicted that that bureaucracy was strictly use in the structuring of NBTE. Hence, bureaucracy plays significant role in NBTE. The organization structure of the NBTE is therefore shown below:

• *Hierarchical Structures of TVET Institutions in Nigeria*

A well-defined hierarchy is applied in vocational and technical education to establish a clear chain of command either in the industry or the classroom settings. This plays

an expedient role in organizing a structure which ensures clear control and discipline in the TVET activities. Hence, vocational and technical education is that aspect of education that develops the individual skill, knowledge and attitude towards industrial and academic proficiency.

A close analysis of the structure of TVET institutions in Nigeria depicts relative common structures. At the secondary level, the structures of technical colleges are based on the patterns specified by the government. However, some basic differences may be observed in terms of their sizes depending on the tallness or flatness of structure. These chains of command are depicted below:

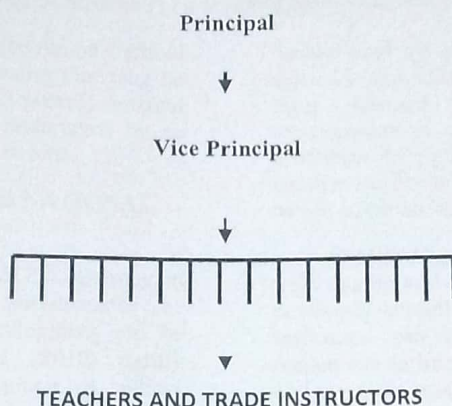


Fig. 1: Structure of a Secondary School

Fig.1 above depicts a typical vocational training center of about 200 students. In larger centres, the structure could naturally be increased to accommodate other job positions e.g. additional vice principals and heads of department.

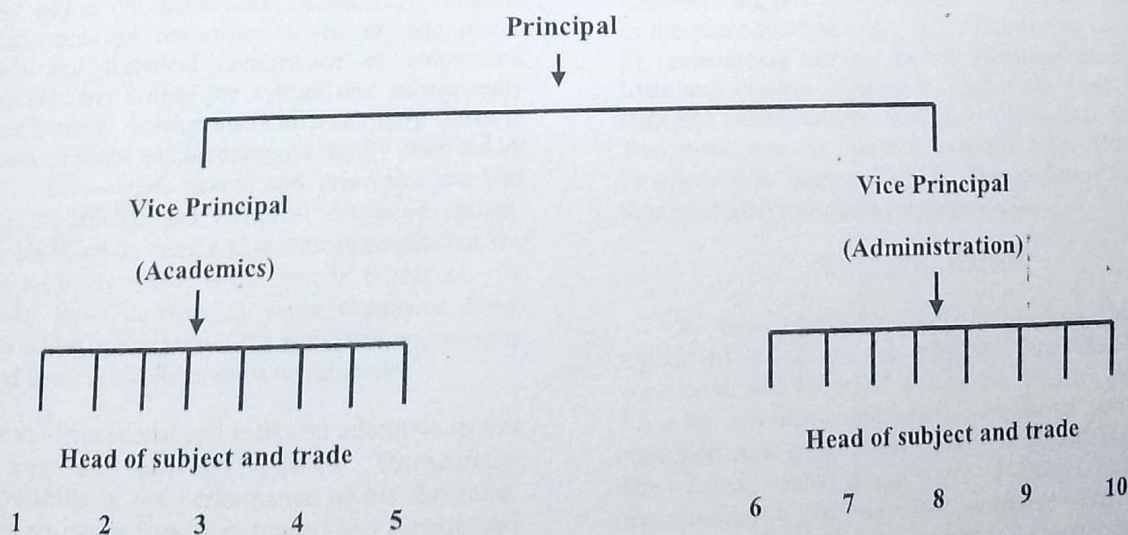


Fig. 2: Structure of a Technical College

This is a typical structure of a technical college. Heads of general subjects and trades could equally be designated heads of sections or departments. In this case, the structure could be modified to four, five, or six such heads.

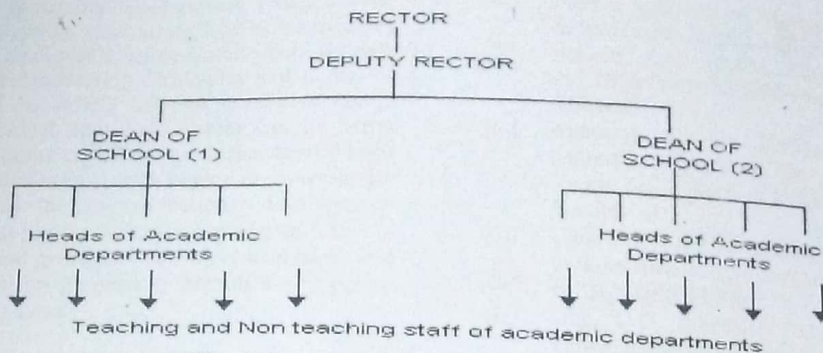


Fig. 3: Structure of a Medium Sized Polytechnic

The NBTE directs that polytechnics be run on a school system basis. This explains the commonality that may be found in all Nigerian polytechnics. However, internal modification of the structure could be undertaken by an institution provided the official structure remains.

IV. SKILLS OF BUREAUCRACY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The indispensability of the skills of bureaucracy in vocational and technical education system cannot be disputed as no meaningful national development can be achieved without it. As (Umoh et. al., 2010) rightly observed, the specialized skills of bureaucrat in policy-making exert enormous influence when performing bureaucratic administrative functions. Bureaucrats are trained in policy-making processes as the foundation of good governance; good policies that emanate from these bureaucrats contribute very significantly to national development. Vocational and technical education is a perfect example of a typical bureaucratic organization with its complexity and hierarchical structure which manifest as a Department within the institutions. Bureaucracy enhances equity and justice as rewards are based on educational qualification and technical competence of employees. This creates harmony within the system and subsequently brings about national development which can only thrive in an atmosphere of peace and harmony. As rightly observed by Duru (2001), bureaucratic norms and principles are part and parcel of vocational and technical education system. Employment is based on merit and technical competence, the principle of hierarchy which is inherent in bureaucracy is observed, order flows downwards while obedience flows upwards the ladder of hierarchy. The method of operation is based on laid-down rules which must be followed.

The head of vocational and technical education in this instances, may not have the requisite bureaucratic-administrative skills in the performance of his functions. This calls for assistance from well trained and experienced bureaucrats who have been exposed to the rudiments of administration over the years and are well equipped and better placed to offer time-tested advice to the administrative head of vocational and technical education. Remuneration is according to rank and qualification. There is tenure of office for all TVET staffs. These create stability which is sine-qua-non to national development. One of the

fundamental goals of a vocational and technical education system is to contribute tonational development through high level relevant manpower training. This involves development of skills of the employees to enable them contribute to national development. This goes further to confirm the position that no development can take place in a nation in which its citizens are not developed.

Contributing to this observation, Ujo (1995) outlined right quality and quantity of staffs as essential features of a developed administrative institutions. According to him, no institution can carry out its functions if workers are inadequate to implement the National policy on Education. On the right quality of staff, he stated that it is not just having staff but having the right quality of staff. Therefore, the staff with relevant specialization must be obtained. A good vocational and technical education must ensure that its employees are trained to meet the challenges posed by knowledge especially in this era of computers and information communication technology (I.C.T.). This is the only way they would be highly equipped and better positioned to contribute to national development. Corroborating this view, Nnadozie (1990) saw development as the capacity of members of the society to actualize them by participating actively in the social engineering of their lives and destiny. That is to say, they must draw their strengths and aspirations from their socio-economic milieu. The people must be free and confident to set their goals and be involved in their realization. This can only be achieved through effective and efficient bureaucracy.

V. CONCLUSION

It was concluded that bureaucracy has played significant roles in the planning and developing of vocational and technical education. It also showed that Nigerian institute/institutions for vocational and technical education to a great extent, is a bureaucratic organization. The paper went ahead and highlight bureaucratic organizational structure in vocational and technical education. Although bureaucracy is expected to promote efficiency and equity through proper appraisal of competency and the practice of division of labour based on vocational and technical specialization. Formal rules and regulations enhance the public adherence to the National Policy on Education and the little or no occurrence of insubordination to superiors.

To contribute to national development, vocational and technical education system must strengthen its bureaucracy by developing its employee's bureaucratic skills through adequate training and retraining. Principles and norms of bureaucracy should be strictly adhered to. By so doing, vocational and technical education system can be better placed to make enormous contributions to the development of the nation. The bureaucracy as the engine or power-house of government holds the key to national development. Hence, it plays salient roles in the implementation of National Policy of Education and giving advices to political heads and TVET administrators for the need to formulate new policy and to review existing ones.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- To avoid unnecessary red-tape which is inherent in bureaucracy, employees in vocational and technical education system should be trained and retrained in the use of modern scientific tools to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of their assigned responsibilities. It is by so doing that they can contribute to national development and meet up with global standard.
- Nepotism and favoritism should not be used as a yardstick in recruitment of staffs into the vocational and technical education system. The bureaucratic principle of appointment on merits should always be adhered to. It is only qualified persons capable of performing the TVET functions qualitatively that can contribute to TVET growth and the nation's growth at large.
- Impersonal abstract rules based upon rational decisions for staffs of vocational and technical education system should be obeyed for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.
- Wrong attitudes of staffs of vocational and technical education system are erroneously attributed to bureaucracy. Lapses on the part of TVET stakeholders within the vocational and technical education system should not be blamed on bureaucracy which main goal is to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Rather, such stakeholder should be blamed and disciplined accordingly by the authority of the TVET institutions based on laid down rules and regulations of the public service.
- Political appointees as heads of the vocational and technical education system who lack administrative experience should always seek the advice of experienced administrative staffs who have accumulated enough knowledge through many years of service.

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