

IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.

BY

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Abstract

This study was designed to identify strategies for improving the management practices of technical education Administrators towards a sustainable technological development. A 25 item questionnaire was developed and used to collect data from 64 respondents consisting of 10 administrators and 54 teachers randomly sampled from technical education institutions in Niger State. The data was analyzed using mean and grand mean statistics. The analysis shows that technical education administrators do not imbibe standard facilities and personnel management practices. It was therefore recommended among others that technical education administrators should adopt management practices that would lead to prudent utilization of available human and material resources as well as influencing the productivity of the personnel involved in technical education programme for a sustainable technology development in Nigeria.

Introduction:

The success of an educational system depends to large extent on the effective management of available human and material resources. In technical education, human resources include teachers, students and schools heads, while material resources refers to textbooks, equipments, tools, workshops and other school buildings (Onwuakpa and Nweke, 2000). The major purpose of any technical education programme as stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) is the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. For this goal to be

achieved, technical education institutions need to be properly managed.

In literature, the concepts of management and administration seems to be synonymous. For instance, Aromolaran(2000) conceptualized management as the ability of a manager to plan, manage finance, personnel and facilities in order to achieve organizational goals. On the other hand, Ndu, Ocho and Okeke(1997) noted that administration concern itself with decision making, planning, organizing, communicating, coordinating and evaluating inputs for the purpose of achieving set objectives. Writing on administration and management, Ukeja,

Akabogu and Ndu(1992) stated that good management or administration has a common task, namely: the establishment of a conducive environment of effective group effort so that individuals within the organization will contribute to group objectives with the least costs. It implies that all administrators are managers.

Relating administration to education, Ezeocha(1990) in Ogwo(1996) opined that educational administration is the coordination of peoples efforts towards the achievement of educational goals. Administration in technical education refers to the act of controlling and directing of technical programmes (Olaitan et al.,1999). It is noted from the foregoing that administration is a process by which goals are achieved through collective and co-operative human effort. It therefore mean that administrators of technical education institutions have a responsibility of coordinating various activities in order to achieve the identified goals of technical education.

Technical education is basically education for work. According to the National Policy on Education(2004), technical education is that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. The main goals of technical education as outlined in the National Policy on Education include the following:

- Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical level.
- Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agriculture, commerce and economic development
- Give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.

It is evident from the above stated goals that technical education is aimed at technological development of the nation. However, it goes without saying that this much needed development cannot be achieved amidst inadequacies associated with the management of technical education programmes. In spite of the great importance attached to technical education in Nigeria, Achunine(1998) noted that technical education institutions personnel have not been properly managed. In the same vein, Ogonor and Sanni (2001) observed that school facilities have not been adequately managed to bring out the desired learning outcome. These irregularities may lead to staff inefficiency and waste of scarce human and material resources. Consequently, technological development of the nation would be negatively affected. It is in view of the importance of effective management of technical education programmes that it becomes necessary to identify strategies for improving the management practices of technical education administrators towards a sustainable technological development.

Purpose of The Study

The purpose of the study was to determine strategies for improving the management practices of technical education administrators towards a sustainable technological development. Specifically, the study investigated:

- i. The personnel management practices adopted by administrators of technical education institutions.
- ii. The facilities management practices adopted by technical education administrators
- iii. The strategies for improving the management practices of administrators.

Research Questions

To guide the study, the following research questions were raised:

- i. What are the personnel management practices adopted by administrators of technical education institutions?
- ii. What are the facilities management practices adopted by technical education institutions administrators?
- iii. What are the strategies for improving the management practices of administrators?

Methodology

A 25 item structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The population of the study comprised of all the technical education administrators and teachers of

technical institutions in Niger State. A total of 64 respondents consisting of 10 administrators and 54 teachers were randomly sampled and used for the study. The data obtained for the study was analyzed using mean and grand mean. A four point scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree was used to analyze the responses from the questionnaire items. Items whose mean scores are 2.50 and above was considered agreed, while those with mean score below 2.50 were regarded as disagreed.

Research Question 1

What are the personnel management practices adopted by administrators of technical education institutions?

Table 1: Mean responses of administrators and teachers on the personnel management practices adopted by administrators of technical education institutions.

$N_1=10, N_2=54$

S/NO	ITEMS	X_1	X_2	X_G	REMARKS
1	Members of staff are always involved in decision making	2.15	1.89	2.02	Disagree
2	Members of staff are usually commended for their hard work	2.90	1.09	2.00	Disagree
3	Staff members are usually recommended for in-service training	2.53	1.92	2.23	Disagree
4	Staff are usually recommended for promotion whenever they are due	2.05	2.23	2.14	Disagree
5	Teachers always respond positively to any circular issued by administrators	1.06	2.44	1.75	Disagree
6	Staff room is adequately furnished	2.11	2.54	2.33	Disagree
7	Administrators usually participate in recruitment of staff	3.59	2.77	3.18	Agree
8	Administrators are usually involved in staff evaluation	2.91	3.03	2.97	Agree
9	There is cordial relationship between administrators and subordinates	2.30	2.13	2.22	Disagree

$N_1 = 10$ (Administrators), $N_2 = 54$ (Teachers), $X_1 =$ Mean of administrator, $X_2 =$ Mean of Teacher, $X_G =$ Grand mean

As seen in the table above, the mean ratings of the responses of administrators and teachers ranges from 1.75 to 3.18. All the

items, except numbers 7 & 8 ranked below the cut-off point. This is an indication that

items 7 & 8 are the personnel management practices adopted by administrators.

What are the facilities management practices adopted by technical education institution administrators?

Research Question 2

Table 2 : Mean responses of administrators and teachers on the facilities management practices adopted by technical education administrators. $N_1=10, N_2=54$

S/NO	ITEMS	X ₁	X ₂	XG	REMARKS
10	There is adequate furniture in all class, offices and workshops	1.67	2.60	2.14	Disagree
11	Facilities/equipment are properly maintained	2.98	1.89	2.44	Disagree
12	Students are involved in equipment maintenance	2.81	3.05	2.93	Agree
13	All school facilities records are properly kept	3.50	3.11	3.31	Agree
14	School workshops are cleaned on daily basis	2.01	2.33	2.17	Disagree
15	Consumable materials for practical are always provided	2.21	1.40	1.81	Disagree
16	All safety devices needed in workshop are available	2.22	2.10	2.16	Disagree
17	The community is allowed to use school facilities	2.57	2.61	2.59	Agree

Table 2 above shows that items 12, 23 & 17 ranked above the cut-off point, while others fell below. This implies that items 12, 13 & 17 are the only facilities management practices adopted by administrators.

Research Question 3

What are the strategies for improving the management practices of administrators?

Table 3: Mean responses of administrators and teachers on the strategies for improving the management practices of administrators.

S/NO	ITEMS	X ₁	X ₂	XG	REMARKS
18	Prudent utilization of available human and material resources	2.86	2.54	2.70	Agree
19	Influencing the productivity of technical education teachers	3.55	2.81	3.18	Agree
20	Effective coordination of technical education programmes	2.75	2.50	2.63	Agree
21	Rewarding of outstanding administrators and personnel with various incentives	3.11	2.92	3.02	Agree
22	Improvisation of facilities when necessary	2.71	2.52	2.62	Agree
23	Increase in resources allocation	2.61	2.53	2.57	Agree
24	Good rapport and effective communication between administrators and personnel	3.12	3.01	3.07	Agree
25	More emphasis should be placed on the administrative training of technical education administrators when they are in school	2.81	3.05	2.93	Agree

The results presented in Table 3 above revealed that the respondents accepted all the strategies for improving the management practices of administrators presented in the questionnaire.

Discussion

Analysis from Table 1 revealed that the respondents disagreed with most of the items addressing current personnel management practices adopted by administrators of technical education institutions. Respondents agree with 2 items and disagreed with 7 items. This is an indication that administrators have neglected majority of the standard personnel management practices as presented in Table 1. Their practices therefore is at variance with the view of Okoro(1999) who stated that the quality of any technical programme depends to a large extent on the quality and morale of staff of the institution. He added that the personnel function of the technical administrator requires the administrator to develop and maintain good relationship between himself and his staff.

The findings of this study as presented in Table 2 shows that out of all the facilities management practices presented, respondents agree that administrators adopted only items 12, 13 & 17. This implies that because of action and inaction of administrators, consumable materials for students practical are not always provided, school workshops and facilities are not properly taken care of and all the safety devices needed in workshops are not there. This is detrimental to teaching and learning in technical education. There can be no meaningful technological development that would take place in this kind of situation and that is why Olaitan et al.(1999) while commenting on the importance of facilities in the school system maintained that the quality of education depends on the

existence and good condition of necessary facilities.

Table 3 revealed that administrators and teachers of technical education agreed with all the items posed to them. It will be noticed that the grand mean scores of the items ranged from 2.57 to 3.18. This mean that all the proposed strategies for improving the management practices of administrators have been accepted. Respondents seem to favour the idea that administrators should pay more attention to the institution personnel in order to influence their productivity. This is in agreement with Ndu et al.,(1997) who observed that the responsibilities of an educational administrator should include among others the formulation of personnel policies, recruiting and assisting staff, promoting the general welfare of staff, stimulating and providing opportunities for professional growth of staff. From the foregoing, it is clear that no nation can make reasonable technological development in the absence of effective management of technical educational institutions.

Conclusion

From the study, it is clear that a nation with the aspiration for technological development needs to pay more attention to the improvement of the management practices of technical education administrators in order to make headway. Hence, the time is ripe for technical education administrators to imbibe the idea of reasonable reasoning for reasonable reality.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

- Administrators should adopt management practices that will lead

to prudent utilization of available human and material resources.

- Administrators should pay more attention to the needs and aspirations of technical education personnel in order to influence their productivity.
- Education is the only industry that manufactures manpower for the nation, therefore, there should be increased allocation of resources to the sector, especially technical education.
- Administrators with outstanding performance in school management should be rewarded with various incentives by the government and non governmental organizations in order to create room for improvement.
- More emphasis should be placed on the administrative training of technical education administrators when they are in school.

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