

Change and Innovation in Principals' Appointment in Secondary Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper discussed the change and innovation in principals appointment in secondary education in Nigeria. This paper is discussed under the following subheadings: the concept of change and innovation; principals appointment criteria and process; areas that needed change and innovation for appointing principals. The paper observed that teaching experience appears to be the major criteria that is being used currently to appoint teachers to the rank of school principals in Nigeria. After drawing experiencing from some other countries on how principals was appointed using competency on the job, graduate qualifications and professional training, the paper concluded that teaching experience should not be the only yardstick for appointing principals of secondary schools in Nigeria. As school administrator, the principals need to be formally professional trained; have requisition qualification and competent before the assume principalship position. The paper therefore, suggests that the Nigeria national policy on education should be amended such that potential principals would attend compulsory administrative courses before assume managerial position.

Keywords: Change, Innovation, Appointment, Principal, Secondary education

INTRODUCTION

The role of education to the social, political and economical development of any society cannot be overemphasized. Education thus plays a crucial role in national development. It is for this reason that Okeke (2009) stated that education index is a true indicator of the level of development of a nation. It is quite apparent that the extent of development of a given country is an instantaneous correlate of the extent of functionality of their academic gadget.

Secondary faculty education occupies a totally important position in the academic device in Nigeria, due to the fact it's miles that degree that determines the educational and professional career of students. Education at secondary school stage is the form of schooling children acquire after primary schooling and earlier than the tertiary level (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). The aim of secondary schooling is to prepare the people for useful dwelling in the society, in particular in 21st

century that is about giving scholar the capabilities they need to succeed this new international and supporting them grow the confidence to practice those talents

The twenty first century training places greater emphasis of professional-based curriculum in which students are made to collect competitive lifelong skills for productive living and worldwide competitiveness. The position of the 21st century college is to develop college students who've the abilities to take growing obligation for their own studying so that it will keep this process all through lifestyles, relate learning to the abilities and knowledge needs of the society, increase college students' trouble-fixing talents through collaborative gaining knowledge of and team paintings, offer open get admission to international learning environment and provide right atmosphere for individualized studying amongst students (Reid, 2015). United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2016) mentioned the 'twenty-first century skills as soft competencies, established abilities and 'non-cognitive skills. This implies that the effective transport of exceptional schooling specially on this twenty first century wherein emphasis is on skilled-based schooling and cannot be attained without related to all educational stakeholders for correct faculty administration with the intention to make sure that every one that is required to supply effective education are offer appropriately and on the right time and properly controlled in the school gadget via administrators.

Principals' Appointment Criteria and Process in Nigeria

In Nigeria, college administrators are appointed into principalship without a well regulated approaches plan which may be wanted for first-class and powerful college management. Public school principals in Nigeria secondary colleges are more often than not appointed into principalship primarily based on school room coaching experience without competency in faculty management. In case of personal faculty principals in Nigeria are appointed into principalship by using the proprietors of colleges.

“The headship of secondary faculties in Nigeria is mostly a made from the coaching pressure.

Teachers, who have spent no less than ten years in service, are generally appointed as principals and vice principals of secondary faculties. Sometimes two vice principals, one for management and the alternative for instructional are appointed for larger faculties”.

Hence long stretches of involvement stay the main measuring stick for arrangement into the place of chiefs. Up to this point, the auxiliary school device doesn't take managerial capability and rules into consideration for arrangement into the board positions in faculties. (Arikewuyo,2009).

In the event of chief's arrangement in open universities, Olayiwola (2015) called attention to that the Showing Administration Commission (TESCOM) or State Widespread Essential Training Board (SUBEB) is the legal our bodies answerable for such arrangement for the benefit of the public authority. The way of naming school central is to pick a couple of the senior educators, this is, Grade 14 or 15 instructors yet a couple of states delegate under Grade level 14 because of deficiency of labour supply in their country. Consequently, address room training revel in transforms into a high part without thought for proficient capability, tutoring and capabilities in school the board. He further expressed that the TESCOM or SUBEB has distinguished the imperatives of talk room training appreciate as a top notch measuring stick for designating optional workforce chiefs in Nigeria. For instance, in Waterway country of Nigeria, the specialist saw that the Streams SUBEB in Nigeria has presented principalship guaranteed composed test and oral meeting for the two administrators and agent chiefs as parts of the determination cycle into principalship.

However, Observations have also proven that maximum personal faculty proprietors in Nigeria required prospective candidates who desired principals role to possess at the least submit graduate diploma or grasp in academic administration as an brought benefit at some point of the choice system in order to make certain that capable school principals are appointed. The nearby initiative at maximum private schools in Nigeria debts for the relevance of professional competency

in school administration (Olayiwola,2015). According him, the non-interference of presidency on employees process of private schools make sure flexibility and high-quality manipulate in appointing college principals.

There have been diverse proceedings in exclusive quarters about falling popular of secondary training and ethical decadence in colleges. They are said to be inefficient and accused of failing to offer direction and adequate management for his or her faculties. Secondary school college students are now not performing up to expectations in their instructional endeavours. Likewise, the rate of indiscipline amongst students, as properly among teaching and non-coaching workforce cannot be over emphasised. Many students are disobedient and interact in acts of hooliganism, while the staffs aren't handiest corrupt, but also have interaction in acts of infidelity. Cases of exam malpractices, drug abuse, sexual harassment and so forth are gradually turning into part of the lifestyle of the school. All these inefficiencies, at the part of secondary faculty principals in Nigeria are frequently attributed to their lack of expert competency, loss of managerial qualifications and insufficient professional education, that is needed to administer the faculties. Thus the use of teachers seniority as a criteria have didn't provide the prerequisite vital for eligibility into principalship positions.

Therefore, there is a want for change and innovation in appointment of principals in our secondary education., a person who's to deal with secondary school training have to be qualified and ready expert who might manipulate both human and texture resources open successfully. The school leader is answerable for offering talented power inside the school which will obtain educational focuses that are the reasons behind the presence of schools. There are various stand-out agents at different control levels who're locked in with school control. Among these, the outright for the most part fundamental, - the stuff tooth round which, the wheel of the school practices turn. Heads of discretionary schools are blamed for the commitment of dealing with their singular helper colleges on an ordinary reason guaranteeing that academic focuses are achieved (Yinusa, 2013). They as such have a fundamental capacity of drive as they lead their gatherings of instructors, students, non-preparing workforce, watchmen and the get-togethers toward the accomplishment of informative targets, which to an enormous sum; depend on genuine staff control under the directing of the school bosses. Utilizing ready and green individuals as heads of our different discretionary schools is in this manner basic.

The school otherworldly, is more than every single person in the faculty, is liable for school environment, for the possible results of effectiveness and for please refined with the aide of students and staff and besides the critical thing of labour force association on whose limit and capacity, character and master ability, the tone and execution of the school, will by and large depend. Regardless, other than the focal, there are different parts that choose the show and sufficiency of the specialists. Among these are the OK of the analysts, the school association, the instructors and the educational materials and sources available, among others. For chiefs with the intend to offer the vital organization, they ought to have palatable educational and capable capacities; a complete data on the systems and procedures of informative activity practices, an information of the dependence of the various sections of the school neighbourhood; cognizance of labour force cash like accounting techniques and a full skill of the public longings of preparing despite the undertaking of the school. The boss has that critical occupation of control and the leaders that controls the qualities of school sufficiency and is thus prepared to conclude school brings about lots of respects

At the point when control and authority is accurately gotten done, the outcome could be advancement in the result of the educators, the tenderfoots notwithstanding the help group of labourers with an end goal to upgrade progress of the school targets.

The Concept of Change and Innovation

Change honestly approach doing something exclusive in preference to what was it is a variant within the reputation quo. Change can be defined because the adoption of an innovation, in which the last

intention is to improve consequences through an alteration of practices. Change is also a method of gaining knowledge of new thoughts and things. It is gaining knowledge of how to do and getting to know to understand something new. Change is the technique of remodelling antique matters with something new (Esobhawan, 2005).

Change in the academic machine particularly secondary schooling is a method through which new programmes, practices, techniques, processes and thoughts are injected into the system to replace the vintage and useless ones. Thus, instructional changes are brought to resource the belief of desires and goals of secondary education. The educational change additionally means the variation, deviation in educational policies, objectives and methodology from what it was once.

Change is a process through which new practices, techniques and approaches are put in place or on the other hand infused into the tasks of a framework to supplant, old or insufficient ones (Udo, 2014). Change is any adjustment in the construction or innovation of foundation. Change is a reality which is steady in each association. Since, human culture is dynamic, so it is exposed to different changes. Okeke (2009) noticed that changes and alteration in training in schooling are basically long haul in nature and require cautious idea and thinking to guarantee that they won't hurt both the staffs and the understudies. He further expressed that ground breaking thoughts are presented doesn't make the one being replaced an ill-conceived notion.

Ebuara (2011) was of the view that change is a cycle through which new practices and techniques are set up into the activity of the framework to supplant old ones. In any case, the course of progress in each putting together requires the commitment and cooperation of individuals included. Yet, according to the singular viewpoint, a change might begin with change in conduct (Oredein, 2009).

Advancement is a part of instructive change which includes the adjustment of certain parts of instructive projects. Its fundamental point is the recharging of information sources, cycles and result of school associations. The fundamental point of development is the infusion of novel thoughts and innovation into procedure for tutoring for the purpose of acquiring change school system (Nwogu, 2013).

As indicated by Ebuara (2014) an advancement doesn't mean exactly the same thing as imagination, change, improvement, item improvement or development, however every one of these exercises might prompt development. To put it plainly, advancements are not closed in themselves but rather implies towards closes. In the arrangement of schooling in Nigeria, development is an exceptional sort of progress which might include re-establishing data sources and item. It implies adjusting to new condition as well as making new and better circumstances.

Areas That Needed Change and Innovation in Appointment of Principals' in Secondary Education

The principals of the secondary education play an essential position in the cognizance of tutorial desires and objectives of the secondary schools. Thus, since it has been found that enjoy on my own can't offer the necessary yardstick for the appointment of Principals, it's far vital to look for extra corrective methods, which includes years of coaching enjoy to:

- **Professional Competence and Skills:** There is a need for exchange and innovation in appointment of secondary faculties principals via criteria on years of experience and seniority. The success of any human endeavour relies upon on the skills and skills possessed via the employees who carry out the tasks essential for the success of motive or objectives.

“The Nigerian Civil Service, including the educational system relies mostly on years of experience and promotion to elevate people from one cadre to the other, especially from the classroom to the managerial level. There was a report on Nigeria PUNCH Newspaper on 23rd August, 2022 that “137 Directors fail tests organized for them to become principals of unity schools which only 207 directors, who passed the computer based competency test.” The danger here is in

promoting an individual from a position of competence to a position of incompetence. There had been cases of individuals who performed well enough in lower positions, but who later occupied positions too difficult for their competencies “(Obilade in Arikewuyo,2009). He further reported that in the Nigerian school system, individuals who have been competent teachers or heads of departments often get promoted to the post of the Vice Principal. In this position, they relate well with teachers, students and parents and were intellectually competent. Sometimes, they gained further promotions to the rank of school Principal. Usually, these people had never had to deal with officials of State School Board or Ministry of Education; nor had to handle so many students by themselves. Several of them are soon regarded as incompetent Principals since it was apparent that they lacked the required skills to work with such high officials and deal with the student body as well as the resulting administrative problems. This processes need modification if education in Nigeria must compete favourably with other secondary schools in the world by considering teachers with professional competence and managerial skills on the job when comes to appointment of principals.

As a teacher, you most likely already possess many of the strong leadership qualities required to be a principal before appointment as a principal. A process that will consider not just seniority and years of teaching experience but requirement of professional competency and skills on principalship position. These skills include:

Leadership skills: As a principal, you are in charge of a large team of staff, as well as a huge number of students and you are the mediator between students, teachers, and their parents. Therefore, as principal you must be a strong leader so that students, staff, and parents respect you and listen to what you say. It can be useful for principals to have previous experience in various other teaching leadership roles, such as head of a department or organizer of a co-curricular activity (many principal postings will require you to have this previous experience anyway). This gives you the opportunity to develop your leadership skills by managing a smaller team before taking on the role of principal where you are in charge of everyone in the school.

An ability to adapt and innovate: One of the skills that all educators, not just principals, should have is the ability to adapt and innovate. We live in a world where technology is constantly evolving and there are constantly new teaching techniques emerging. Principals have to lead by example and must not be afraid of change but rather make changes to the curriculum and teaching style as these new trends and techniques emerge. **IT skills:** Furthermore, in order to remain innovative and keep the curriculum and teaching styles relevant, principals must feel confident with the latest technology. As with everything that principals do, they must lead by example because if they do not try to use this new technology, they cannot expect their teachers to. This has become even more important due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting move to online learning across the world which means that teachers now have to rely on technology more so than ever before.

Communication skills: As a principal, you come into contact with many different people: parents, students, and staff members. You therefore need to make sure that you communicate any necessary information to them, and in an appropriate way- the way that you would address a student would be different from how you would communicate with a parent or staff member. To communicate with staff you could send out a weekly bulletin with any relevant information they may need to know about students.

An ability to delegate: There is a common misconception that a good leader is someone who is able to do everything themselves. Whereas, in fact, the best leaders (and therefore the best school principals) know when they should delegate a certain task to someone else. There might be some tasks which other staff members would be better equipped to complete, or sometimes a principal may

simply have far too much work to complete themselves and requires help from other members of staff to get everything done. This is where being able to delegate specific tasks to other members of staff comes in very handy.

Problem-solving skills: Problem-solving skills are arguably one of the most important skills for a principal to have, since on a daily basis, principals are presented with a range of problems from funding issues to students' home issues. If anyone (staff or students) has any kind of problem, then the principal is the person that they will go to in order to help them solve it.

Therefore, there is need to appoint a principal with instructional leadership skill for effective schools' administration such as co-operation with teachers in defining objectives for the school, selecting learning experiences, methods and procedures to achieve the objectives; assigning subjects and classes according to qualification and competence, allocating time to subjects; making facilities accessible to all teachers according to need. The skills also included are: principal ensuring that all staff work co-operatively for the common goal of the schools, supervising lesson plan, teaching and learning activities, evaluating the plan and implementation of curriculum programmes and assisting teachers. Mgbodile (2003) stated that for effective schools' administration, school administrators must possess and employ planning and decision-making skills, leadership competencies, supervisory skills and skills for school climate management.

Professional Qualifications: Another area that requires change and innovation in principals appointment is using professional qualifications in educational administration as yardstick for principship positions not just years of teaching experience of the teacher or their grade level. Oluwatoyin and Azeez (2016) stated qualification is the training or acquisition of a degree or any certification which a prospective principal gets in addition to teaching skill, experience and other knowledge. It could be described as the condition or standard which must be adhered to before a Candidate for the principalship can apply for the job. Qualification can also be defined as the extent of preparation, certification, background in content, field, and advanced degrees It is expected that this qualification will make the person suitable and competent for the job of the assigned school leader, the principal; this competence in turn will help such a principals achieve effectiveness in their school.

“In some developed nations, professional qualifications in educational administration, educational leadership, other related courses and specific training are used as prerequisite for appointment to the principalship position in secondary schools. Schools where such principals led were reported to be effective in terms of high performance in educational outcomes as measured by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OCED) programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)” (Oluwatoyin & Azeez,2016).

Oluwatoyin and Azeez (2016) asserted that principals appointment policy in some developed countries require specialised pre-service preparation and qualification as mandatory or recommended for entry to principalship position .The type of pre-service qualification in countries where such training is mandatory or recommended varies and leads to a range of credential options: postgraduate degrees, partial credit towards Masters Degree programmes and earning of a license like Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), which it emphasizes more on professional teachers on classroom

“The Decree on teaching personnel qualification in Finland stipulates that a principal must have a graduate degree, teaching qualification for the desired school level, sufficient teaching experience and either a graduate qualification in school administration or “proven sufficient skill in educational administration”. In South Africa, it was found that principals’ qualifications ranged from matric and a certificate, up to honours degree, the equivalent of a first degree in Nigeria”

(Oluwatoyin & Azeez,2016). Promotion from teaching level should proceed through the grade levels before getting to principal position. This means that to qualify for the principalship position, a candidate must have attained the management cadre by becoming a Head of Department and then, a Deputy Principal before moving to the school leadership position. This is not always the case as some candidates were found to have been appointed as principals from the lowest levels of teaching cadre because of political influence that was exerted on the promoting body. Principals are selected, interviewed and recommended on behalf of the States by the Governing Bodies of the Schools should be an applicant with professional qualifications on educational administration

This paper also discovered that one of the policies and practices that influenced the performance and outcomes of secondary students in Finland positively was the fact that all teachers were required to obtain a postgraduate qualification as a prerequisite for employment. Principals were then appointed from the crop of successful and effective teachers after leadership preparation training. The leadership preparation training are organised by the National Board of Education or Universities. Those courses taken during training for leadership to be one of the sources of Finish principals' positive leadership practices and as a result, the effectiveness of their schools.

Professional Training: Professional schooling need to be a standard for instructors who desire to make a career in school headship because observations have shown that years of enjoy and seniority now not account for all this is had to employ human beings into administrative obligations. Unfortunately, enjoy in many states in Nigeria, indicates that the procedures for recruiting instructors to end up principals is unsystematic and have now not been based on professional standards (Mulkeen; Chapman; DeJaeghere &Leu, 2007).

The Federal Military Government of Nigeria, in 1992, installed the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in Ondo, Ondo country. The aim is to give expert training to all those who are concerned and need to make a career in educational planning and administration.

Constantly, the Foundation is expected to prepare head educators of essential universities, Chiefs of auxiliary schools, heads of tertiary foundations, overseers, close by preparing officials, and so on. There is the requirement for NIEPA to foster preparation modules and get ready occupant extended term schooling projects and courses for hopeful optional school Chiefs. This is the training in Hong Kong, Singapore and Joined Realm. In truth, ownership of endorsement gave at the stop of such preparation programs, should be one of the measuring sticks for designating Directors of auxiliary resources in Nigeria rather best contingent upon individual long stretches of educating appreciate and seniority. As a matter of fact, Mulkeen et al (2007) found that this model isn't confined to Nigeria alone. In an investigate a few other African nations, it become verified that numerous optional school heads are not well ready to fulfill the requirements presented by the changing over nature in their positions. They further contended that coordinated and methodical schooling in scholarly administration and strong and clear control that goes past a periodic studio or workshop by and by gave in greatest designs is desperately required for directors in Nigeria. NIEPA, as by and by comprised is just getting sorted out studios and workshops for heads of universities, (NIEPA 2008). However, the Foundation wants to move past this and develop to be what Mulkeen et al, (2007) portrayed as an establishment that makes a speciality of unrivaled reaches or certificate for instructive initiative.

Those instructors who are determined to have leadership capability among them must be encouraged to follow the management music. Once those teachers had been positioned at the management track, they need to be uncovered to formal management coaching and development at one of a kind levels in their profession. Vice principals who goal to emerge as principals have to undergo the formal leadership programmes and those categories of expert personnel's would turn out to be ability school directors.

CONCLUSION

Change and innovation are the attracting forces that induce real development in a education system. When the change is positively affecting every area of the system, success is guaranteed. Therefore, appointing teachers into principalship position is the area that need positive change where teaching experience should not be the only yardstick for appointing principals of secondary schools in Nigeria.it has been identified that the success and effectiveness of school administration is the function of the headship of those schools. The calibers of school administrators are to be assigned to managerial position. When these school administrators put their professional competency on the job add to professional qualifications and training acquired would perform their functions effectively for overall enhancement of educational goals.

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions were made:

1. Government should amend national policy on education such that potential principals would attend compulsory educational administrative courses before assumed managerial position.
2. Government should appoint a candidate into principalship who possessed leadership and managerial skill through training and competency on the job not seniority.
3. Government should have a standardized status quo for professional qualification on educational administration and career pathway for school principals.

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