

THE GAP BETWEEN TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

This study is on the gap between teaching and research in educational management. Efforts were also made to address a conceptual framework of educational management. The work also tried to correlate this gap to its consequences on reflective practice in education and how it has affected educational management. The relationship between educational management, teaching and research. This work discovered that there is indeed a great gap between teaching, educational management and research. It is based on this that recommendations were made and how to close the gap be closed for effective educational development.

Education has never been more challenging and pertinent than in today's global world. It is considered as one of the most important factors in the development of nations. Irrespective of the vast reliance on technology, teachers remain the key in the teaching learning process.

In the administrative dispensation of educational organization, all activities are directed towards the attainment of the goals of teaching and learning and contribution towards the accomplishment of these goals is expected from all staff (professionals and non-professionals), parents and lay members of the community. Arikewugo (2004) viewed quality in education to be judged by both its ability to enable the students perform well in standard examinations and relevance to the needs of the students, community and the society as a whole.

In a functional education system, the classroom is the laboratory where learning activities form a bridge between the learner and his natural needs. Teachers in a functional education system are those who stimulate the moral and spiritual needs of the learners, aid them to acquire knowledge through self study and personal experience rather than spoon-feeding them with facts which are foreign to them.

Meaning of Teaching

In all facets of our lives teaching is being carried out by non-teacher educators such as clergymen, parents, neighbours, friends, employers etc. as well as professional teachers who are knowledgeable and experienced in the act of inculcating learning in a less experienced and knowledge person?

According to Onwuka (1990), he describes teaching as the creation or provision of experiences and guidance of activities designed to promote learning on the part of those engaging in the activities. This implies that the efforts of the teacher are deliberate in his bid to provide directions, guidance activities and resources that would promote learning in the learner. It is on these bases that management underscores a reflective stand on teaching. When teaching is managed well it reflects the development of a society which brings about the issue of research.

Learning should encourage and promote creativity in the learners. In other words, he must be able to think, to investigate, to explore and discover things for himself.

The teacher should provide enough activities and learning experiences necessary for the student to learn. This could be done through demonstration, experimentation, questioning and construction. He learns by doing, as he actively interacts with the teacher and the external condition of his environment. He is an active participant in the teaching-learning process. Thus teaching should stimulate and encourage active participation of the learner.

Conceptual Framework

In the field of academics, educational management can be described as the art of working, particularly through people for the achievement of the broad educational goals. According to Awojo (1997: 24), he defines management as the process carried out by one or more individuals to coordinate the activities of others to achieve results that cannot be achieved by one individual working alone. He further defined management as a set of activities which include planning, organizing, controlling, staffing, directing and coordinating organizational resources to achieve its pre-set goals.

According to Nwaoku (2005:3) Management is seen as the total system of organization - getting organization personnel, to accomplish their work so as to achieve organizations objectives. It is the job of getting things done through people. Management practically deals with delegation of authority or functions to subordinates, infact, the ability to delegate authority and still get the job effectively done is the acid test of managerial talent.

Concept of Research

Research is the careful study of a given subject, field or problem, undertaken to discover facts or principles (www.thefreedictionary.com) Research is also the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions. One can also define research as careful study that is done to find and report new knowledge about something or the activity of getting information about a subject.

Concept of Reflective Practice

Against this backdrop, reflective practice is an essential issue in educational management. According to Henderson (1996) reflective practice as an inquiry approach that emphasizes ethics of caring, constructivist and creative problem solving. Reflective practice is an active and careful consideration of the basic assumptions and conclusion one holds in a direct experience that inform future actions (Nonloly and Nosworthy, 2004). Deville (2010) stated that reflection is a learning method which fosters meaningful learning through questioning and investigation. In relation to this discourse, reflective practice means the assessment of the underlying rationale for taking certain decisions in the process of

teaching and learning. It also means the critical evaluation of the suitability or otherwise of decisions taken in relation to the effects of such decisions on student learning and teachers professional role expectations. The purpose of reflection is to improve future decision making in subsequent research/learning. This is in agreement with the opinion of Diezman and Wallers (2006), who asserted that reflective practice is a means of ascertaining the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities. Schoon (1987) asserted that reflection in action carries functional potential of reconstruction of meaning, and that reflection in action and of action are means of developing professional capability of learning and problem solving. Stanley in Ogonor and Badmus (2003) stated that reflective research practice entails an ongoing examination of beliefs, and practices, their origins and their impacts on the teacher, the student and their learning process. Norsworthy (2008) reported that reflection is an element of metacognition. The author further asserted that reflection orientates learners towards self focus and self evaluation.

Reflective Practice: A Strategy for Bridging the Gap Between Teaching And Research In Educational Management,

Reflective practice enhances student conceptualization of themselves as researchers. Reflective practice affords students the opportunity to reflect not just on matters associated with professional life and growth but also on who they are and are to become in the future. Klob (1984) associated a higher level learning with reflection and conceptualization associated with active experimentation which teaching and research afford. According to Deville (2010), experiential learning which research affords empowers the students meaningful understanding of the concept of teaching and research and ability to construct their own theories from research.

Ezeh (2008) defined a strategy as a process of doing something. In this study, a strategy is a goal directed activity or a pattern of behavior in research practice situation. It can also mean research and learning events which are designed to optimize student's professional competences in research field experience. The purpose of this paper is to educate the potentials of reflective practice as learning strategy which can improve student research field experience.

The following are the main issues that are raised in this paper and they include:

1. What is reflective practice in relation to research in educational management?
2. Which strategies can be used to facilitate reflective practice in research in educational management?

The Gap Between Teaching and Research

The need to close the gap between teaching and research is often assumed and just as often ignored. Research should and does influence teaching and educational management but the gulf between the two can at times seem large. Teachers are told to use "research-based" strategies and yet such strategies may be presented to them stripped of the very sensitivity to context, analytic rigor, and thoughtful skepticism that are the hallmarks quality research. The ultimate goal of research in educational management is to enable teachers, teacher educators and instructors to make sound decisions about the

educational activities and experiences that will best serve students. Decisions informed by educational management research range from systematic matters such as the selection of standards and benchmarks or the evaluation of instructional and assessment programs at the national, states and local levels, to the individual decisions each teacher and teacher educator must make about her or his particular classroom. Not all educational management research focuses directly on student learning.

Relationship Between Educational Administration, Teaching and Research

In the school system educational administrators have to face new challenges everyday, they have to grapple with uncertain issues and find ways to revamp their institutions in such conditions. In these kinds of scenarios, there is the need to have decision-making talent capable of flourishing in the new

environment. Their positions as administrators have placed them as leaders in their work places. It is expected that their unique perceptions and experiences as experts on teaching and learning, as well as their role as lead researchers should be brought to bear in facilitating positive productive attitudes of students in research work. In other words to achieve the desired results as administrators especially in the educational sector, there is the need to prepare students with skills needed for inquiry and continuous learning.

In this context the role of educational management has become very important. Management education in general is concerned with imparting knowledge that is relevant for managerial career and also concerned with developing capabilities to use this knowledge in problem and analysis, diagnosis, anticipating events, etc. and in decision making. (Dayal 2002).

The quality of education or teaching-learning process should enable future administrators to contribute global learning solutions to their institutions as quickly as possible. Teaching-learning process at management education institutions means more than facilitating learning environment where academic staff and students are working together; teaching and learning are interwoven towards the needs of students and the demands/challenges of the global world.

Feeding research knowledge into teaching can be viewed as a knowledge transfer process. The relationship between Research and Teaching has been widely studied in the last two decades. Jenkins and Zetter (2003) view the value of creating such a link from three perspectives; experientially (both students and faculty benefit); conceptually (benefit from development of knowledge); and operationally (benefit from reciprocity of research and teaching as learning activities). Scarfe Adam in his paper, "Conceptualizing the Teaching-Research Contrast: A process philosophical perspective formulates an argument by definition, inspired by whitehead's manner of thinking, by which we can posit how teaching informs and enhances research and further conceptualize the teaching-research contrast. Similarly Vammila (1995) and Henkel (2000) pointed out that there are a number of studies, which show that academics feel strongly about the problems caused by the desire/wish to do research and to teach.

According to Sagor (2003) as cited by Donna (2005) argued that teachers, who conduct action research, bring certain skills to their classrooms. They are observers (looking at what is happening and thinking about information they already have); they are questioners (everything that occurs in a classroom can be seen as data to be understood); they are learners (reflecting on what they learned rather than on what they taught); and they are more complete teachers because they bring together the concepts of knowing and doing. McFarland (2007) indicates that the changes in quality assurance and funding mechanisms have created a tension between research and teaching. Firstly, the separation of research and teaching of quality assurance has created problems within universities as regards choosing a mission statement (research excellence versus teaching excellence) and allocating resources. A second tension arises among academics as research is more rewarding compared to teaching, academics aim for research excellence at the expense of teaching' (p.588). Brown (2005) considers that the academic discussion on the linkage between research and teaching "contains a certain confusion. It is uncertain whether the research that academics are supposed to overtly link to their teaching is the research already undertaken and published by others in books, journals or textbooks, or whether what is to be introduced to teaching is their own personal research" (2005, p.394). Scott (2008) opined that business school must articulate what type of research is valued (pedagogic, discipline based or applied). Preparation of new materials for use in courses, creation of teaching aids, and research on pedagogy all qualify as learning and pedagogical research contributions. Watkins, C. and Mortimore, P. (1999) expressed pedagogic research as applied research into teaching and learning practice. The primary aim of such research is to enable the teacher to understand and interrogate their practice, rather than add to the global stock of knowledge.

Pedagogical research plays a key role in the university's plans for future development, building on existing expertise in areas such as experiential learning, education for sustainable development. Thus, Pedagogical research can pave the right path for the development of the school. Applied research is designed to solve practical problems of the modern world, rather than to acquire knowledge for knowledge's sake. It is basically to answer appropriately to the needs of educational management by

dissemination and valuing knowledge and know-how.

Cooper and Mcalister (1998) in their paper suggested that in research universities can compete effectively if they focus on research that is both basic (influencing further knowledge development) and applied (problem driven), and if they differentiate their offering by incorporating the findings of their basic, applied research into their curriculum.

Indeed there are many theories of management, Henry Fayol identified fourteen principles that he felt should guide the management of organizations and that he found useful during his experience as a manager. Researching on them will not only expose the students to more knowledge but will help build their reflective practice.

Fayol's set of fourteen administrative principles which emphasize among others, chain of command, allocation of authority, order, efficiency, equity, and stability. They are:

- a. **Division of Work:** Sub-division of any operation or organization into its basic components to ensure workers efficient performance through a reduction of waste, increased output, and a simplification of job training. This demands the specific sphere of competence.
- b. **Authority:** Authority is the right to give orders and the power to extract obedience. Responsibility, a corollary of authority, is the obligation to carry out assigned duties.
- c. **Discipline:** Discipline implies respect for the rules that govern the organization. Clear statement of agreements between the organization and its employees are necessary and the state of discipline of any group depends on the quality of leadership.
- d. **Unity of command or chain of command:** This refers to the hierarchy and levels of decision-making and authority relationship in an organisation. Directions should be issued by one superior to ensure coordination of the organisation, centralized decision making, and the flow of responsibility from top to bottom. Jobs are to be broken down into small parts and grouped to permit individuals to work only a limited number.
- e. **Unity of Direction:** Similar activities that are directed toward a singular goal should be grouped together under one manager.
- a. **Subordination of individual interest:** The interests of individuals and groups within an organization should not take precedence over the interests of the organization as a whole.
- g. **Remuneration:** Compensation should be fair and satisfactory to both employees and the organization.
- h. **Centralization:** Managers must retain final responsibility, but they should give subordinates enough authority to do the task successfully. The appropriate degree of centralization will vary depending on circumstances. It becomes a question of the proper amount of centralizing to use in each case.

- i. **Scalar Chain:** The scalar chain, or chain of command, is the chain of supervisors ranging from the ultimate authority to the lowest ranks. The exact lines of authority should be clear and followed at all times.
- j. **Order:** Human and material resources should be coordinated to be in the right place at the right time.
- k. **Stability of personnel:** Successful organizations need a stable workforce. Managerial practices should encourage long-term commitment of employees to the organization.
- l. **Initiative:** Employees should be encouraged to develop and carryout plans for improvement.
- m. **Esprit de corps:** Managers should foster and maintain teamwork, team spirit and a sense of unity and togetherness among employees.

Functions of Educational Management

Having examined Fayol's set of administrative principles, it becomes imperative to also highlight functions of management which is concerned with organization of people and resources. According to Ikwuegbu (2006:7) Educational management perform the following functions:

- a. Formulate plans, policies and programmed for achievement of set goals.
- b. Set goals or objectives for using available resources both human and non-human
- c. Identify the activities to be performed and organize the activities into groups
- d. Define the tasks to be performed by each group and group the task into jobs or programmes.
- e. Staff the jobs with people and also initiate work activities.
- f. Supply incentives to stimulate productivity
- g. Set up controls to measure achievement of objectives and take remedial action if objectives are not being met.

Research Which is Informed by Teaching

The aim of teaching is knowledge transmission and many a time there could be possibilities where teaching can be key to research or teaching-led research. Specially, when designing/re-designing of curriculum; one needs to think through. Here the core is to teach a subject and in the process of understanding that subject, teacher requires research. Teaching-led research can be used to showcase new course/new developments with stakeholders group. Sometimes questions from students can led to substantiate research which students can give new ideas of refining research. In a paper by Becker and Kennedy (2004), interviews of the faculty members in respect of the question as to how their teaching informs their research were discussed. And, there was a consensus of responses to the effect that teaching substantially informs research.

Teachers involved in research can gain insight into how they are working presently while looking forward to their future practice. Although extensive knowledge and research of practice learning has accumulated as well as means of facilitating such learning in the university, discussion of ways to bridge the gap between research practice and academic learning and teaching models to support such integration is surprisingly sparse (Feiman – Nemser and Buchman, 1989). Though students are exposed to a good deal of theoretical knowledge, they find it difficult to transform theory into tools that can be implemented in their research practice.

Research that Informs Teaching

There is a widely held axiom in universities that research informs teaching. The issue is what does this actually mean? Teaching in discipline and subject areas should reflect research knowledge, as informs the discipline or subject area. Research can directly inform teaching through example and practice by mirroring the thought process. (Ray and Woods Berry 2009) Here are some points for research-led-teaching primarily taken from University of Melbourne experience. (Baldwin 2005).

Garnett and Holmes (1995) stated that research can provide teachers with a framework for the development of up-to-date course material and research related projects.

It is believed that a good teacher is constantly searching for relevant examples and anecdotes. If a teacher is engaged in research in his/her areas, then this can very well keep him/her up-to-date with the current innovations in the respective fields and the dynamic changes too. This understanding provides ample scope for using those facts/data in classroom environment.

Conclusion

It is clear that reflective approach to teaching, research and educational management involves changes in the way teaching and research are perceived and the teacher's role in the process of teaching. It assists the teacher in discovering the means for correcting and improving his or her teaching. In addition, reflective teaching approach enables teachers to analyze, discuss, evaluate and change their own practice as well as to adopt a systematic analytical approach towards teaching and research. Thus, there is a synergy between teaching and research. Research informs teaching and teaching informs research. Educational management ensures ways to strengthen this synergy. In light of this, to strengthen the teaching-research relationship; it is important that educational management first recognizes its importance and find ways to create a research culture.

Recommendations

To ensure sustainable educational system in Nigeria, the following should be taken into consideration:

- i. Government should make available sufficient fund for research in the educational institutions.
- ii. Teachers/lecturers in the educational management should ask students to explore some of the cutting-edge research topics themselves. Such teachers should ask students to find out the current trends in advance and share their findings in the class. This practical exposure will not only break the monotony of chalk and talk technique but will also expose them to research practical.
- iii. Research seminar course for students should be integrated into their educational curriculum for the teaching of research based practices.

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