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Educational Managers' and Administrators' Roles Towards Fostering Innovation in Education for National Integration and Development

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Abstract.

This paper discussed the roles of educational managers and administrators towards fostering innovations in education as to create room for national integration and development. Educational managers are to draw educational curricular to embrace global innovations which educational administrator while implementing these educational policies via the curricular should cultivate innovative culture. Human societies experience innovations and cultural changes from time to time. Education whether formal or informal is the only vehicle through which innovative changes and cultural practices are transported from one generation to another. In the formal setting the school does this by exposing the individual learner to the innovative and cultural practices that are needed for the development of the society. In view of this, school managers who make educational policies and programmes and educational administrators who implement these policies have to encourage the adoption of innovative changes a well as positive cultural practices that would aid the societal growth, national integration and national unity. This paper also portrayed technologies especially information technologies as strong forces behind innovations and stressed that educational system should be technologically driven for a country like Nigeria to have national integration and development. The paper concluded among other things that educational innovations are essential tools for national development and integration. As such, educational managers and administrators have vital roles to play in fostering innovations in education. The paper offered some suggestions on how to solve problems of management of innovations and concludes that the adoption of innovation in education is very vital for national development and integration.

Keywords: innovation, integration, national development, ICTs, innovative culture.

Every human society is prone to socialization and changes brought about by the embrace of innovations and cultural influences that occur in various institutions within it. The school as an institution is established to socialize the individual into the society. As a social system, the school accommodates all categories of people with different cultural, social religious and political backgrounds and tries to harmonize their varied interests and inclinations by exposing them to similar learning experiences through the planned curriculum. The school is able to achieve this by enforcing certain rules and regulations that are not at variance with those of the larger society that it is serving. It is therefore the responsibility of the school leadership as well as those of the teachers to ensure that the school goals which may include the adoption of some innovations into education are achieved to the utmost benefit of the society.

It is important to note that the school does not at all times only transmit the existing or orthodox culture of the people, rather it should from time to time try to create new knowledge, ideas and skills. Even though certain positive cultural values may be propagated by the school, yet the education system should not be allowed to remain conservative. Education as an institution should strive to maintain a balance between the past of a people and their future desires and aspirations. In line with this view, Agabi, Okorosaye-orubite, Ezikiel-Hart and Egbezor(2005) opined that in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic(USSR) during the post 1917 revolution, the education system had the task of changing the society. In the same vein, the Nationalist Socialist Party of Germany otherwise known as NAZI, two decades later struggled to overhaul the culture of Germany through the education system.

In this modern era, technologies have become the driving force behind all innovations which is gradually translating into cultural values of some societies around the world, even in Africa. This demands that leaders of organizations and institutions who desire to keep abreast with the global trend must cultivate innovative culture as to be relevant and at the same time be able to contribute to the national integration and development. The inability of any society, organization, institutions and the likes to embrace changes and innovations often time results to low level of success in the achievement of set goals.

Education as a tool for socialization, national integration and development should function as a vehicle for the adoption of innovations and positive cultural values that would promote national unity, integration and development. This is achievable when educational managers and administrators who make and implement policies, plans and programmes embrace the available technological changes that will bring about positive changes that would improve learners and educators as well as the curricula. It is the light of this, that this paper is billed to examine the responsibilities of educational managers and administrators in fostering innovations, especially in the areas of information communication technologies that would make education a worthy instrument of societal change, national integration and development in this era of globalization, via the following sub-headings;

- The concepts of education, educational innovations, innovation culture, information communication technologies (ICTs) national integration and national development.
- Some education Innovations in education.
- The responsibilities educational managers and administrators in the fostering innovations and cultural practices in education.

- Impacts of educational innovations on national integration and development.
- Problems of management of innovations in education;
- Possible solutions to these problems.
- Summary
- Conclusions
- Suggestions.

The Concepts of Education, Educational Innovations, Innovation Culture, National Integration and National Development

Education- education as a concept has no definite definition for the fact that its meanings and implications vary from one society to another. Nevertheless, for the purpose of paper of this nature, education can be defined as a process of transmitting, acceptable learning experiences, knowledge, skills, innovations norms and values of particular society from the adult members of that society to the younger members of such society and even beyond. In line with this view is the definition offered by Haralambos and Holborn (2004:690) which stated that education can simply be seen as an aspect of socialization which ''involves acquisition of Knowledge and the learning of skills whether intentionally or intentionally which often help to shape beliefs and moral values .This implies that what may be seen as education in one society may not be valued as education in another society. Also, education may occur consciously when the learner aims to learn and unconsciously when the learner does not intend to learn. Supporting this view Castle (1965) cited in Adiele, Leigha and Abraham (2010: 2) defined education as '' all that happens to us from the day we are born to the day we die''. In the light of this, education may occur in formal, informal, non-formal and semi-formal settings. It all depends on the learners' dispositions, aim and interests. This also implies that education includes the imbibing of technological innovations that improves teaching and learning processes as well as contribute to national integration and development.

Education being seen as a tool for national integration, unity and development, is in the sense that education empowers citizens of any country to contribute politically, economically, socially and even religiously to the unity and the development of such country. In other words, through education countries of the world produce human capital that bring about the needed technological innovations that aid national development and advancement.

Innovation can be seen as a process of creating something new from an existing phenomenon or established ways of doing things. It involves radical changes that sometimes may receive some degree of resistance. Kuboni et al(2008) defined innovation as '' the process of making changes to something established by introducing something new''. According to them it applies to ''… radical or incremental changes to products, process or service''. Innovation can also be seen as a way of proffering solution or creating a new way of solving an existing problem. It brings about changes and new cultural practices.

Educational innovations can be seen as the introduction of changes in ideas, structures, techniques, methodologies and technologies designed to improve educational process and outcome (Achunine, 2006). This implies that educational managers, planners and administrators must be abreast with the available technological innovations

that are needed within the society and thus use education to make them accessible to the people.

Innovation culture ''is the work in environment that leaders cultivate in order to nurture unorthodox thinking and its application in workplaces that foster a culture of innovation. This could be in the area of adoption of technological innovations into educational design and delivery. Generally it subscribe to the belief that innovation is not the sole responsibility of top leadership but can come from anyone in the organization (https://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/innovation-culture).This implies that when the leadership of the school system creates the enabling environment for some educational innovations, these educational innovations can be championed by anybody within the school system. When this is allowed to happen, it brings about some changes that would be of benefit to the society.

National integration is the act of creating the awareness that citizens of country have a common identity. This means that even if the citizens of a country belong to different ethnic groups, religious and political affiliations and speak the different languages, yet they recognize themselves as one people. Taylor (2017:1) sees national integration as very important when she opined that,

> *"The importance of national integration is obvious; it Unites all people of the nation and the national minority In a country …all people are equal regardless of their interest Religion, race, sex, and class. National integration is a helpful Way to protect the fundamental rights and freedom of people and to satisfy their right to judicial protection. Promoting national Integration means the country gives its people an opportunity to Live together in peace and prosperity".*

So, national integration is the spirit of oneness and unity that exist among individuals living in a country despite their ethnic diversity, social, religious and political differences.

National development involves the process of ensuring that there is improvement in human capital and infrastructural provisions. This is achieved by the intellectual development of individuals through the exposure to the needed form of education and social values. In other words, the inability of a country to provide the needed human capital at any given time could result to national underdevelopment. Education is therefore the key factor for nation building, adoption of positive innovations and maintenance of relevant cultural practices. As such, educational managers and administrators must ensure that school curricula be planned and administered in line with acceptable cultural values and innovations.

Some Innovations in Education in Nigeria in the Last Two Decades

As mentioned above every society has one form of education or the other (formal and informal) depending on the current needs of that society. Changes occur as a result of the need to meet the goals and aspirations of the country at any given time. Historically, before the advent of the Islamic and Western education in Nigeria, there was the Nigerian indigenous system of education otherwise known as subsistence

education or education for the survival of the peoples. This form of education kept everybody busy as every individual was gainfully employed in one trade or the other. However, the advent of Christianity which brought about the Christian or western education down played on the Nigerian indigenous education as the western education served the interest of the colonial administrators. Hence the introduction of formal education which produced clerks, teachers, catechists who became engaged in available white collar jobs provided by the missionaries.

The curricula of this form of education was seen as inadequate to the traditional and societal needs of the Nigerian society and this is why the formal education in Nigeria has been subjected to series of changes and innovations over the years. This section is therefore billed to explore some of the innovations that have occurred in the Nigerian education system over two decades.

The Nigeria's National Policy on Education

The first edition of the Nigeria's National Policy on Education was published in 1977 but was revised in 1981, 1990, 2004. The present edition of the national policy is that of 2014.The essence was to ensure that the policy address the current needs of education following the political changes. Ayemi and Dada (2011) opined that the government initiative to reform the education system in the 1990s apart from the revision of the National Policy on education include two studies that were carried out on the education sector as at that time. The first was the Situation Analysis Policy Study (SAPS) which was conducted in cooperation with the United Nation Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) (1992). This study was to determine the factors that inhibited access to the education and the factors that affected the quality of education. The second study conducted in 1997 assessed the learning achievements of Nigerian Primary School children at level. The result of this study showed that children lacked basic numeracy and literacy competences. These reforms aided the improvement of the education system.

The Universal Primary Education

The Universal Primary Education in Nigeria was an educational system that was started in the 1950s as a result of the Macpherson constitution of 1951 which granted democratic rights to the citizens to elect members to the regional House of Assemblies of the three regions in Nigeria. It gave the assembly men the powers to raise and appropriate funds and also to pass legislations on health, education, agriculture and local government (Wikipedia Dictionary) based on this the Western region embarked on the regional education policy to see that most primary schools age children attended primary education. Later in 1972 the government took over the full responsibility of primary schools and in 1976 launched the nationwide Universal primary education program in order to correct regional, rural-urban and sex imbalances in the education system as well as to invest on human capital.

The Universal Basic Education programme (UBE)

This is another innovation that was made in education. The Federal Government of Nigeria in 1999   introduced UBE to reduce the level of illiteracy and to facilitate national development and improve the fallen standard of education which resulted from

the crises that besieged the implementation of the Universal primary education scheme launched in 1976. The universal Basic Education was a major move to achieve Education for all (EFA) by the year 2015 as part of the global Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Ogunsanmi & Ibimiluyi, 2014). However, as opined, by Okugbe (2009), the implementation of the UBE programme which was launched by the former President Olusegun Obasanjo was hampered initially by lack of enabling law. The UBE Bill was signed into law in 2004 while the programme itself started in 2000/2001 academic session. Nevertheless, over the years the education systems of some countries have adopted some innovations and have imbibed some positive cultural services. This they have done through the use of technology. This is specifically in the area of information communication technologies (ICTs).

Information Communication and technologies (ICTs) can be defined as ' ' electronic and/or computerized devices and associated human interactive materials that enable the user to employ them for a wide range of teaching and learning process in addition to personal use' (Cox 1999 cited in Adejoh &Ozoji 2005 : 102). Also Ajagun (2003) stated that ICTs include the radio, television, videos, computers, sensors, interface boxes, e-mail, satellite connections, internet and all the software and materials which are employed by the teachers for teaching and learning. The application of ICTs in education can therefore be said to mean the use of computers and telecommunication technologies in teaching and learning processes. There is now a global digitalization of information and the education industry which solely depends on information dissemination is not left out. This is innovative enough to the extent that instructional processes have greatly improved.

Supporting this Robinson (2008) opined that the use of the new information technologies can serve three main functions:

- To deliver all or part of the learning content to learners.
- To supplement and extend content provided in different forms(e.g. print) and
- Provide a two-way channel of communication for exchange between teachers and students with their peers for feedback or for learning problem-solving, advance, debate and support.

   Further, Robinson (2008) outlined the following as the ways in which ICTs can be used in the education;

- To support conventional classroom work;
- Designing and developing learning materials. Some learning materials when downloaded from the internet must be adapted to suit the specified instruction objectives.
- Use of electronic teaching materials such as books, journals, newspapers, magazines etc.
- The use of visual library, stocks, electronic versions of books, journals, etc.
- Accessing, storing, analyzing information in electronic forms.
- Useful in research as it gives access to a world of resources, especially in electronic form.
- Plays a key role in educational administration: students' data, personnel information and administration, purchasing and supplies, advertisement, etc.
- Useful in independent study and individualized instruction.

- Makes learning more vivid and engaging.
- Useful in the assessment and testing.

Furthermore, Nnadi (2010) was also of the view that ICTs can be of immense help to education because they can enhance the dual capacity of both learning and learning. According to him, today all branches of knowledge are stored in the so-called 'idiot-box' and anybody who has an internet access and some basic internet skills can always get needed information. Nnadi (2010) also opined that other uses of ICTs in education include;

1) Distance education and e-learning is made possible
2) Knowledge of ICT can help in material creation in form of text books, journals, conferences and seminar papers, handouts, etc.
3) Delivering repetition and memorization drills.
4) Makes teaching and learning more entertaining and interesting.

Other ways in which ICTs are applicable in education include;

- The use of CD ROMS and other Digital Media- obviously there is an increasing number of teachers who now use computer graphics, video disc, CD ROMs and other digital media to deliver their lessons to students. They use computers and multimedia technology to create in-class presentations using power points. In order to create learner-centred instruction, many teachers now use hypermedia and interactive multimedia software to put students in control of class activities which is against teacher centred learning.
- Payment of school fees- the current practice in many educational institutions, especially tertiary institutions is that students now pay their school fees on-line and avoid long queues and waste of time.
- Computer as storage device – computers are now used by classroom teachers in keying the results of their students for easy processing and retrieval. Information about students can be stored in the computers by teachers and administrators.
- On-line registration- with the introduction of the use of ICT in education, candidates and prospective students can now register for various school programmes from the comfort of their homes.
- Bridging the gap and space- with the use of internet students and teachers can now be connected to the World Wide Web. This helps them facilitate their group discussions and distant learning. Supporting this Idih (2001) cited in Nnadi (2016:5) stated that with access to e-mail in their classroom, teachers have the opportunity to communicate with colleagues at schools, educators in other schools, parents, administrators.
- On-line conversation- with the use of the internet, students and their teachers can engage in academic discussions, charting, asking and answering questions, organizing meetings, reporting etc.
- Computer Base Tests (CBT)- this is used for General Studies Examinations or marking scripts of large classes. The use of CBT demands that students register for their courses on-line as to enable the internet provider to get their details in their data base. The teacher or lecturer is expected to send about fifty to one hundred multiple choice questions per course along with their answers for the internet service provider in different CDs. In cases of space constraints, the exams can be taken in

batches. The results of these examinations are release as soon as the students have finished answering the questions.

- Use of Optimal mark Reader (OMR)- this machine can mark, grade and generate over 20,000,000 results within forty- eight hours. This is the same Joint Matriculation Examination Board (JAMB) that accounts for the quick release of their results.

Indeed the use of information communication technologies in education is a worthwhile innovation that has for more than two decades now become a culture in many countries of the world. It is gradually eroding the old traditional ways of conducting teaching and learning activities. Obviously, the use of ICTs in education and in other fields of life endevours has made the world a global village. This implies that there is a national and international interaction among people in the world and this to an extent has launched them into a people of common culture. Distance is no longer a barrier to communication and interaction. Gone are the days when mails from Africa to Europe stayed months on transit. Now with the innovation of ICTs mails takes munities to reach their destinations. Even in education, distance is no longer a barrier to teaching and learning since students can learn online from their teachers even from the comforts of their homes.

It is line with this that FRN (2014: 47-48) section 5, no.110 made provision for innovation education when it stated that the goals of Innovation Enterprise Institutions include, to:

a) Train post-secondary students, who are desirous of acquiring
   Industry specific skills, knowledge and appropriate certification
   To pursue a chosen trade or career;
b) Educate post-secondary students to think creatively and transform
   Knowledge through technological processes into wealth, and have a
   Broader economic base;
c) Provide technologically based skill training that ensures students
   Understand how their expertise fits into improving the society and fulfilling national goals…

In section 5, no 112 the FRN (2014) enumerated innovation enterprise institutions as follows:

a) Information Technology (IT) institutes;
b) School for oil and gas technology;
c) Fashion institute of technology
d) School of hospitability and tourism;
e) Film academy;
f) Academy of creative arts;
g) Construction and engineering institute;
h) Paralegal school;
i) Institute of telecommunications; etc.

The policy therefore affirms in section 5, no 113 that the government shall:

a) Approve, accredit and regulate all innovation enterprise institutions as well as the certificates awarded, thereby create a national branding and identity, and

b) Set up a framework that will drive Public-Private Partnerships in the establishment, management and administration of innovation enterprise institutions.

It can there deduced from the above policy statements that the government is in firm support of innovations especially through information and communication technologies as to ensure national development and integration.

The Roles of Educational Managers and Administrators in Fostering Innovations in Education

There is however a noticeable gap between the innovative modern education and what students actually learn in schools. There is a very slow pace of adoption of innovative ideas in education due to the fact that many educators or teachers still cling to old or traditional and ineffective methods of teaching. They seem not to have realized that using innovative teaching methods spur students to learn and equip them with the tools they need to succeed in the economic world.

It is therefore very important that educational managers who make policies and programmes must ensure that educational programmes provided in the national policy on education are in line with the national needs and aspirations. The policies must take into cognizance the innovative practices, especially in the area of technology and the application of technologies in teaching and learning. Subjects and courses which will expose learners to some innovative ways of doing things and solving current problems must be provided for the education polices.

Educational administrators should endevour to implement plans and programmes as contained in the education policies that geared towards fostering innovations and some positive cultural values and practices in schools and learning centres. They should adopt innovative culture which would help the teachers accept some innovations that would enhance teaching and learning process in schools. Teachers should be sent on in-service training from time to time. They should be encouraged by their school heads to attend conferences, seminars and workshops as to up-grade their knowledge and understanding of innovative practices in education. With this teachers can be sure they have knowledge of new techniques and methods of teaching.

Educational managers and administrators have great responsibility in ensuring that ICTs innovations are adopted in education if education must meet up with task of aiding national integration and development. They must realize that the provision of worthwhile, relevant and functional education is of utmost importance for national integration and development. They must ensure that persons with ICTs technical skills and knowledge are employed in schools as to be able to manage some technical break downs of some ICT facilities.

Students must be exposed to some information technologies that aid their learning. They should also be trained or encouraged to acquire ICTs technical skills. This will enable the education section to always have available technical manpower to manage information communication gargets. School administrators and managers should prevail on the government as well private individuals to provide needed funds and facilities that will enable the innovation of ICTs useful to the sector. They should ensure that needed ICT facilities are acquired in the right quantities and adequately managed. Facilities breakdowns should be handled promptly.

The school managers and administrators should find time to sensitize parents, their host communities and others on some innovations that are adapted to the education sector from time to time. This will enable them to keep abreast with what is happening in schools within their environments and also make them to make financial contributions as well expert advice towards such innovations.

Impact of Educational Innovations on National Integration and Development

The fact the education undergoes innovations and positive changes from time to time is a guarantee that the nations which it serves will always experiences development in every facet of it economy. In other words, the extent of innovations that are adopted in the education industry determines the level of national development and national consciousness. As a result of technological advancement, the world has become a global village, and as such every country is expected to direct it educational system towards embracing all forms of technologies as to keep abreast with the global trends of things.
So far the educational innovations that have been adopted in Nigeria for instance, especially in the area of information communication technology have helped the nation to keep to world standard of examinations in various educational institutions. Situations whereby examination body like Joint Matriculation Examination Board (JAMB) conducts examinations with the aid of internet service provisions and publishes results at the quickest possible time is commendable. This is a level of national development and brings about national integration.

Schools and some organizations within the country are now using CD-ROMs to deliver more interactive learning experiences, especially those that feature videos and sounds. This delivery style could hold larger quantities of information, which is very ideal for distance learning. Indeed a country like Nigeria that have diverse culture and language and people as well as migrant farmers, fishermen and cattle rear who move from place to place actually needs innovations of ICTs for distance learning as to ensure that everyone receives the needed forms of education. When this is achieved, it would aid national integration and development.

Problems of Managing Innovations in Education

The natural tendency of rejecting changes and innovations by individuals is also seen in the education sector. People are more relaxed with the old ways of doing things, and are apprehensive and skeptical when changes and innovations are introduced. Initially the introduction of the use of ICTs was now acceptable by teachers and other education workers. Some feared they might loose their jobs since learning materials are now made available on the internet which meant to some extent, that learners may not need to be taught by the teacher before they learn. So, teachers in particular were reluctant to embrace the use of ICTs in the teaching learning process.
Another problem of managing innovation in education is seen in the area of funding. Most innovative changes that are needed in the education sector require huge financial investments by the government. The problem however is that the government has always been unable to meet these financial demands. This has resulted in the stunting of the introduction of some innovative practices that would have boasted educational activities and consequently national development. In line with this is the problem of mismanagement of educational funds. Sometimes, funds that are made for the

acquisition of educational facilities are mismanaged by school managers and administrators. This hinders prompt solution to educational problems and application of innovative ideas.

Furthermore, there is also the problem of electricity supply. Indeed without electricity supply, computerization and accessibility of information nationally and internationally will be impossible. There is also dearth of technical personnel who ought to proffer technical solutions to breakdown of facilities, especially on ICT tools.

Way Forward

In other to effectively sustain the adaptation of necessary changes and innovations in our educational system, educational managers should endeavour to cultivate innovative culture so that teachers are trained to accept changes that would improve education sector, and consequent aid national development. Educational managers should endeavour to manage funds provided by the government or even internally generated revenues judiciously so as to be able to have resources to implement needed innovative changes as they occur. ICTs technical personnel should be employed in their required number to ensure that there are enough manpower to manage the gadgets and tools of ICT.

Summary

This paper has so far discussed the responsibilities of educational administrators and managers towards fostering innovations in education for national integration and national unity. Educational innovations have been defined as the introduction of ideas, structures, techniques, methodologies designed to improve educational process and outcome. National integration is the act of creating awareness that citizens of a country have a common identity. The paper highlighted some innovations that have occurred in education sector in the last decades and also pointed out the various roles that school managers and administrators should play towards adaptation of ICTs and other innovations in education. Some problems of managing innovations were also mentioned and the way forward stated.

Conclusions

There is a good reason to believe that innovative changes in education bring about national development and integration. This paper therefore concludes that:

- Innovations occur as a result of search for solutions to existing problems;
- Innovations have to do with create new ideas, strategies and methods of doing things;
- Educational innovations are essential tools for national development and integration;
- Educational managers and administrators have vital roles to play in fostering innovations in education.
- Information and communication technologies are currently the pivot of educational innovations.

Suggestions

In view of the need for educational innovations for our national development and integration, this paper hereby suggests the following;

1. That innovative practices must be encourages in the education sector;
2. Educational managers and administrators should cultivate innovative culture within the education sectors;
3. Teachers should be made to keep abreast with the innovative trends as to be able to adopt them to teaching learning process;
4. Information and communication technologies as the pivot of current innovative practices in education should be encourages;
5. Teachers must be made ICTs literate and skilled;
6. Educational funds should be properly managed
7. Technical staff for various innovative practices must be employed;
8. There should be in-service training for teachers, workshops, seminars and conferences, to keep them abreast with innovations and changes in the field of education.
9. Educational managers and administrators should keep their host communities abreast with the innovations in education.
10. Students must be made to adhere to innovative practices in education.
11. Educational managers are to draw educational curricular to embrace global innovations and acceptable cultural practices via the curricular and should cultivate innovative culture within the school system.

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