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ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT: A KEY FACTOR FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT

The paper looks into the role of accountability in educational management for effective school administration. It went further to highlight four areas where educational managers can improve in the area of accountability in schools system. Furthermore, it discusses the need for accountability in the school system and how it can be effectively practice in school by the concern stakeholders. Going further, the strategies to improve accountability wereexplained adopting five of them. More so, the impact of accountability on school management was outline and discuss effectively. He impact was discuss under the five functions of a school administration in a school system and the advantages and disadvantagesof each of them was carefully examined, finally conclusion was drawn based on the findings which emphasize that Accountability should be the watchword of every stakeholders in Education system.

Introduction

Education plays important role in the general development processof every society, Education renders services that are of both economic and non-economic nature. The services education renders to the public sector of the economy has to do with increased productivity through the adequate training of human resources and the consequent effective utilization of human and material resources.

Siberman (I970) and Moorish (1972) believe that crisis in education can be avaded by reducing the increasing lack of public confidence in the school system. According to them this can be done by

I. Appropriate definition of educational goals
II. Avoiding multiple and conflicting educational goals
III. Ensuring that educational goals are compatible

Durocan(2002) believes that good accounting system should be effectively utilized in the school in-order to promote public confidence, he emphasize that the task of accounting auditing and reporting are associated with the business of formal education. Consequent upon the above, it is the duty of educational managers to be accountable to the public, the educational managers should among other duties ensure

- ❖ Protection of public fund from misuse.
- ❖ Protection of public property from abuse
- ❖ That educational goals are committedly pursued and achieve
- ❖ Wrong action or deeds in the educational system are check.

Furthermore, Okoroma (2004) identified four areas of educational accountability for education managers as include;

1. Accountability for cash: the educational manager is required to account for every cash he receives for the development of education in the school. This requirement is a factor the enables him to exercise almost carefulness in the disbursement of public fund.
2. Accountability for things: all physical facilities of the school must be accounted for. The use of such facilities as school buildings libraries laboratories, personnel etc. should be adequately accounted for.
3. Accountability for Action: all actions of every member of an organization must be accounted for by the educational manager included his own actions.
4. Accountability for Results: Every organization has goals and objectives it has set for accomplishment. The educational administrator has a duty to ensure that expected resulted are achieved. Infact, the quality of result obtained from any educational effort will show whether expected goal are attained or not.

Generally, one of the main tasks of educational management is to ensure accountability in all areas of interest. The education industry involves execution of plan educational policies to achieve expected goals. Educational management as a process of bringing men and materials together in order to ensure effective and functional teaching and learning.Okoroma et al (2008) to

achieve the expected goals and for effective teaching and learning in school, there is need to promote the doctrine of accountability by the school management.

The Need for Accountability

One main objective of education is to produce persons who are able to appreciate the values and benefits of education and contribute to the development of the community in which they live in different spheres of life whether political economic, social and technological (FME 1993) The huge amount of money pomp into the education sector in Nigeria by government, also the amount spend by parents in payment of school fees and other fees; Donating or grant from wealthy individuals organizations and group especially the old boys association among others need effective accounting to promote transparency. Scholars like Atakpa (2001) and Okala (2001) have shown concern over the funding of education and the enormous responsibilitiesmitces assigned to the educational system which lack compatibility.

Government and private school owners spend money on infrastructure such as building, payment of teachers and other personnel and on the provision of other materials. Thus, the government and private owner's needs to ensure that the money provided for education is widely spend.

The government also needs to know that the aims of education are being achieved. It needs to know through regular evaluation, where there are areas of short comings which require to be corrected so that his goals of education can be achieved. (FME 1993)

Furthermore, since schools get their students fromthe community therefore the school administrator should be accountable to the community.

Presithus (1975) in support notes that accountability is geared toward ensuring democratic responsibility to the public at large. In order words, public official should be accountable to the public they serve including the school administrators and staff.

Practice of Accountability in Education

Education activities affect almost every person in the society in one way or the other. In accounting for the progress of educational system each individual is

responsible to someone and for specific activities that facilitate goal achievement. According to Okoroma (2008) the line of accountability in education practice should follow through this ladder below.

- **Classroom Teacher**

Accountability starts with classroom Teacher He is accounted for the effected outcome of his job as a teacher. The teacher is directly accountable to the school administrator who may be Headmaster, principal, provost, Rector and Vice-chancellor. According to Musazzi(1982) to achieve the goal of improving the curriculum programmes the principal must have understanding with the teacher who report to him in order to promote accountability.

- **School Administrators**

They are accountable for resource utilization and output achieved by their institution of any given point in time. School administrators are accountable directly to the various statutory organ set up by government to coordinate their affairs: According to Ayanniyi (2001) the school administrators must among other thirty maintain good public relations with superior authorities and statutory bodies set up, such administrator maintain a close liaison with educational institutions

- **Statutory Bodies**

The National Board for Technical Education NBTE, NUC, state education management Board, National Teachers Institute (NTI) etc. are accountable to the Minister of Education for selection and employment of staff to the institutions and for in structuralprogrammes to facilitate goal achievements. These statutory Bodies are responsible for conduct of examination, accreditations of courses, certification and supervision of teachers.

- **The Minister, Commissioner and Ministry Of Education**

They are accountable to the governor/presidency for the supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the process of education. In the state ministry of Education, according to Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu (1992), provide regulation for the admission of pupils into state secondary schools as well as withdrawal of pupils from school. They went further to say that he main function of the state

Ministries of Education is the maintenance of Educational standards. Both the federal and state ministries of education are held accountable on the progress and standardization of education in the country.

- **The Presidency/Governor**

They are accountable to the natural Assembly for the selection definition and periodization of the goals and objectives of education. Education policy making process in the final analysis is heavily politicized by the political party in power who seen it as vote catching device to cajole the uninformed and poverty stricken electorates. Babalola (2002).

The National Assembly/State Assembly: They are accountable to the electorates who provide fund and enabling environment for the pursuit of education (Durosoro 2002) The National and state Assemblies initiate bills as concern educational development for the benefit of the citizens. They are accountable to the electorates through their actions and bills initiated at the floor of the house. The citizens can either concur or disapprove the bills through public hearing of the bill.

Strategies for Improving Accountability in the school system.

Accountability involves a value judgment of how judicious and effective the elements and processes in a school system have been combined to achieve identified common goal Omoregie(1981) This implies from the above that accountability has to do with monitoring and evaluation of how well assigned responsibilities are being executed for the achievement of predetermined goals. It is through evaluation that we learn to what extent the goals of education are being achieved.

According to Nwalor (1998) evaluation enables us to review the progress of education and to devise new measures for its improvement and development. In order to improve accountability for better goal achievement,the following strategies have been identified Durosoro (2002)

Supervision

This is a technique that assists educational administrators to foster professional growth of workers in the educational system. Supervision is a

professional, continuous and cooperative exercise all expects of the life of the school (Ogunsanya 2000) supervision enhances the development of appropriate educational goals and facilitates the selection of appropriate teaching procedures and facilities (Theirauf 1977) In order to achieve the school goals, supervision is important to improve the utilization of human and material resources.

Communication

This is a process that involves the transmission and accurate replication of ideas with ensured feedback; supervisionelicit actions necessary for goal accomplishments. Communication has deep significance for human organization since individual make specialized contribution for the achievement of overall goals (Ogunsanya 2000) All administrators need effective communication to facilitate their interpersonal informational and decisional roles. Effective communication with definitely helps educational administrators to fulfilled their executive functions of planning, organizing, motivating, resolving conflicts and controlling activities; all of which are linked accountability, Ibara (2008). Effective communication should promote spirit of understanding mutual trust among staff, confidence and cooperation among individuals within and outside the school system if it is applied by the administration in the school. If effective communication is created in schools, it will enhance job satisfaction and create in employees high sense of belonging and loyalty in school. It will in no doubt promote accountability.

Educational Auditing

This is analytical technique which examines the records of transactions in the education production process. (Ogbonnaya2010).Auditing in educational parlance means the verifications of records except in accounting system of an educational institution.

(Omoregie 1981). Educational auditing e nhances a better understanding of the school as a social system and this improve decision making processes. In order to have greater accountability and better management of schools school administrators are adviced to adopt the auditing techniques as it helps to determine the internal efficiency of the

school system.Eyocha (1990) describes such audit as continuous and comprise the setting up and carrying out, the various internal checks in the school.

Leadership

Leadership is the process in which a leader harnesses and co-ordinates the available human and material resources in the school for the achievement of set goal. Happin (1966) said that leadership is any contribution to the establishment and attainment of group purposes. As school administrators translate the plan and polices of their school into desirable objectives they strive for accountability. Musanzi (1982) said that the main tasks of a school administrator are interpreting task, executing curriculum programme, seeing to student welfare, equipment, physical facilities and finances inducting and retraining staff and finally maintaining effective school community relations which must geared to accountability.

The Impact on Accountability of Education Management

Education management is essentially concerned with educational planning and administration.Educational management is a process of bringing man and materials together in order to ensure effective and functional teaching and learning in school Peretomode (2001). According to Okekeet al (1985) educational management is a process which concerned with using methods, principles and practices to achieve the objectives of education. In order to achieve the objectives of education, there should be careful arrangement and utilization of available human and materials resources with effort geared toward ensuring accountability in the system.

Educational planning is the exercise of foresight in determining the policies, priorities and cost of educational system Ehiametalor (1995) In the definition of Nwankwo (1987) and Peretomode (2001) Educational Administration is the systematic arrangement of human and material resources that are available for education and the careful and systematic use of them within defined policies to achieve educational goals.

The effective management of education requires committed educational managers who are adequately motivated to perform their

duties. In order to achieve educational goals, the school administrator must be prudent and honest in discharge of his duties, as an administrator he performs those functions as listed by Igbineweka (2008)

- **Instructional functions:** The management of the school instructional programmes is an important function of the principal because the ultimate goal of educational administration is the improvement of teaching and learning. According Ukege, Akabogu and Ndu (1992) the principal design efficient work schedules, assign reasonable workloads to teachers and ensure the utilization of available professional and material resources. The principal should held responsible the vice principals and individual teachers who are assigned responsibilities such staff should be accountable to the super-ordinate for their actions and deed. In his own view Presthies(1975) notes that accountability is geared toward ensuring democratic responsibility to the public at large.
- **Staff and Personnel services:** The school administrator involves in the selection and placement of staff, staff motivation, development and evaluation. According to Otu (2006) the significance of evaluation by school managers lies on the fact that it is the springboard on which the future development of education. The school administrator is held liable to the conduct of staff. All staff should be accountable to him as the school head while he is under the school board.
- **Student services**the students are the centre of the educational process; therefore all activities that go on in the school should be aim at developing their total personality to the fullest. Ozigi (1982) said that the principal should show considerable concern for students, look into their teaching and learning situation, provide opportunities for their character development, endeavor to understand and solve their personal problems, and carter for well-being and happiness. The student's conduct while in school and during school hours are accountable to the assigned teacher or to the principal as the last resort. (Jimoh 2006).
- **Financial and Physical Resource Management:** This referred to school business administration which

is another important function of a school principal. Although the responsibility of providing appropriate material and financial resources to public school in Nigeria lies on the government, but the effective use of these resources for the accomplishment of the educational purpose rest on the school principal. The principal must have sound system of accountability for school supplies and school records kept.Ehiametalor(1995) said that the principal as the chief accounting officer of the school, the principal ensures that a good accounting system based on sound accountability principles is maintained in all his financial transactions.

- **School Community Relations:** The school as an institution is a social system designed the need of the society. According to Nwadiani (1998) the school derived its existence and sustenance from the community that supplies the input used in the school. Based on that the principal should also liaise with community for the better development of the society. The school head according to Jimoh (2006) should on regular bases liaise with the community to acquaint it with the school vision, values and programmes in-order to enlist its support.

The school principal has a dual responsibility, one to the general public and the other to the inner operation of his organization Igbineweka (2010). The school community relation should start from the relationship with staff and students spread outward to parents and then the wider public the school serves.

The principal should recognizes, strengthen and use this bond in way that will enhance the realization of the school goals (Ozigi 1982)

Conclusion

Accountability in education has been defined as answerability to one's actions in the educational system. It is the state of being accountable to the stakeholders in education and accountable to the resources used in education. Accountability in the school system helps to protect public fraud from misuse as well as fostering a committed pursuit of educational goals by administrators. Educational management as a process

should enhance the practice of accountability in the school system in order to achieve efficient and effective utilization of educational resources to attain the stated goals.

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