

Organization Resources and Leadership Styles as Factors Affecting Policy Implementation and Reforms in Higher Educational Institutions.

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Abstract

In the bid to develop tertiary education, successive governments have been initiating policies, laws, reforms and innovations. However, there have been complaints about actual policy implementation in the institutions. Scholars fear that the gap in policy implementation may negatively impact graduate employability skills and achieving sustainable goals. This paper examines the level of organizational resources in terms of human, material and financial resources and leadership styles such as democratic, transactional and autocratic leadership styles as factors that can affect policy implementation in public and private tertiary educational institutions. It was recommended that administrators should be trained on modern ways of implementing government policies. Also, security and corruption need serious government intervention for effective policy implementation on campuses.

Key Words: Organisational Resources, Leadership Styles, Policy Implementation, Higher Education.

Introduction

Tertiary education is germane for the development of any nation., In recognition, successive governments have continually invested millions of naira in establishing, maintaining and developing tertiary education in Nigeria. Higher education is imperative for the development of any nation since the output of this level of education becomes doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, and accountants, who are significant drivers of the economy. Given the extensive social and private benefits that result from tertiary education, access and inclusion are essential for achieving social justice and realizing the full potential of young people. First and, in the interest of fairness, every individual must be given an equal chance to partake in tertiary education and its benefits irrespective of income and other social status.

According to Poornima and Uma (2017), for effective policy implementation, elements such as personnel and financial resources, Administrative capability to achieve the desired policy goals, and political cum judicial support (from the legislative, executive and judicial wings of the government) are required in the organization. Managing policies at the organizational level involves the function of tertiary institutions' management or the internal quality assurance unit to ensure that systems are in place to promote and determine the level of commitment and monitor the policy implementation process results. Elenwa (2020)

submits that policy implementation through quality control should involve monitoring specific tertiary institutions' policy outcomes to determine whether they comply with relevant quality standards and, secondly, identifying ways to eliminate causes of unsatisfactory results.

One of the major constraints to policy implementation in tertiary education in Nigeria is the need for more human, financial and material resources. There is a need for more required academic staff, and financial and material resources must be adequate in educational institutions (James and Botimi-Slaboh, 2019; Robinson & Ibara, 2020). Due to a shortage of resources, university programmes need to be accredited by the National University Commission. Teaching staff are essential for determining the quality of education because they transmit educational policies into practice and action; thus, attainment of good quality in tertiary education institutions requires teaching staff of adequate quantity and quality. To achieve the minimum expected standards, modern and adequate materials are needed for teaching and learning activities.

For effective policy implementation, the leadership style of any tertiary institution administrator is cogent in harnessing the organizational resources, practices and policies for desired performance. This is why Idiegbeyanose (2018) defined leadership style as the method or approach a leader adopts to manage organizational resources, including human resources. It is a process of working through people to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Furthermore, Idowu (2019) posited that leadership styles to be adopted by a leader should depend on the situation he or she is confronted with.

Organizational Resources

Resources refer to the funding, equipment and facilities available for supporting the policy's implementation and sustainability. These are;

Human Resources: One of the major constraints to policy implementation in tertiary education in Nigeria is the shortage of academic staff. Oluwasanya (2014) expressed concern that many experienced and young lecturers are fleeing from the frustration of tertiary education life into more rewarding and more challenging sectors of the economy and even to overseas countries. Corroborating this view, Ibara (2020), citing Bamiro (2012), opined that teachers are the hub of any educational system. Teaching staff determines the quality of education because they transmit educational policies into practice and action; thus, attaining good quality in tertiary education institutions requires teaching staff of adequate quantity and quality (Ibara 2020, citing Bamiro, 2012).

Material/Physical Resource

These tangible resources can easily be seen and observed in any institution. The physical resources in the educational system; include classrooms/lecture rooms, staff offices, vehicles, health centres, libraries, and laboratories, among others, which directly or indirectly contribute to the educational outcomes. They facilitate the smooth delivery of organizational activities and processes. The physical resources may vary according to the organization but require proper maintenance for a clean and safe environment. Hence, schools' physical resource management practices must align with the school improvement plan by linking school assets to basic education service delivery standards and strategies. The student's poor performance has been traced to inadequate and poor management of school facilities. Infrastructure (physical) has been identified as one of the facilities that must be appropriately utilized for successful teaching/learning outcomes (Robinson &Ibara,2020). Supporting this view, Akinnubi and Oladimeji (2021) noted that to make optimal use of physical facilities, school personnel should have adequate knowledge of functioning facilities and alternative uses to which they could be put. Otherwise, some facilities may need to be more utilized while others would not be used at all. The utilization quality of infrastructural facilities by the school head enhances the quality of instruction delivery by the teacher and the positive performance of students. Proper utilization of school facilities will lead to achieving the desired school goals and also depends on the needs and rate of usage of school facilities (Obasi & Asodike, 2014; Robison &Ibara,2020).

Financial Resources

Over-dependency on crude oil as the only revenue source for the country, mismanagement of the scarce funds, and embezzlement worsen the already bad situation. As a result, of the undeniable fact that resources are scarce, education is left to compete with other sectors of the economy (Yawe & Terzungwe, 2019). Lack of funds is one of the factors that are responsible for the inability of the administrator or management of tertiary education institutions to maintain the buildings, equipment, furniture, water supply, repairs and replacement of some school facilities (Ibara, 2020). In private higher education institutions, funds must be generated through private or personal efforts without government intervention. Akinsuroju, Anyanwu and Benson (2018) identified five sources of funds for Ogun State's private universities: tuition fees, revenue-yielding projects, bank loans and income generated from

donations. Sufficient money is required to expand the existing physical structures, add additional plants, maintain the entire plants, and improve their aesthetic value. In the case of privately owned higher education institutions, fees paid by students are heavily relied on for the smooth running of the system.

Leadership Style

Leadership is about the ability of an individual or organization to guide other individuals, teams, or entire organizations. Leadership style is therefore concerned with providing direction, plans, implementation and people's motivation (Nasereddin&Sharabati, 2016). According to Idiegbeyanose (2018), it is a process of working through people to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Leadership style combines traits, characteristics, skills and behaviours that leaders use when interacting with subordinates (Jeremy, Melinde and Ciller, 2011, cited in Idowu, 2019). Nasereddin and Sharabati (2016) submit that no particular leadership style can suit all organizations and industries because leadership style depends on the leader, context, followers and culture. Generally, followers do not always view leadership style the way and manner a leader views it; they only view it from the perspective of how it favours them. A follower can only know why a leader chooses a particular leadership style at any given time if they are in a leadership position (Idowu, 2019). Types of leadership styles are discussed below:

1. Transformational Leadership styles

Leadership expert James MacGregor Burns introduced the concept of transformational leadership style in 1978. He defined *transformational leadership* as a process that occurs when one or more persons engage with others so that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978, cited by Idowu, 2019). Transformational leadership is a style of leadership where the leader works with employees to identify the needed change, create a vision to guide the change and execute the change (Business Dictionary, 2016). Transformational leadership's main objective is to work to change or transform his or her followers' needs and redirect their thinking. Charismatic leadership needs individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation (Schultz & Schultz, 2016).

2. Transactional Leadership Style

The transactional leadership style implies that reward or punishment is premised on individual performance. This is because the reward is contingent on performance and punishment for failure to perform effectively. Transactional leadership is based on the

principle of the exchange of rewards between leaders and subordinates (Mottoh, 2015). Transactional leaders allow followers to fulfil their self-interest, minimize workplace anxiety, and concentrate on clear organizational objectives such as increased quality, customer service, reduced costs, and increased productivity (Idowu, 2019).

3. Laissez-faire Leadership Style

The laissez-faire leadership style has low involvement in activities, leaving matters to their followers and very little involvement in decision-making. Laissez-faire leaders, in reality, provide information but no direction for their staff and do not get involved with followers; hence, employees become frustrated and disorganized, which results in low work quality (Idowu, 2019). The laissez-faire style is an avoidant leader who may refrain from intervening in subordinates' work affairs or avoiding responsibilities as a superior. Furthermore, if a laissez-faire leader observes that the group members are performing well, the leader allows the members to have liberty of action. The leader hates crises. He tries to satisfy everybody in the system. This type of leader is disillusioned, disorganized, inactive and indolent. He is not worried or concerned with productivity as the leader abdicates his responsibility. The leaders in this category have little concern for job and staff welfare (Omole, 2020).

4. Autocratic Leadership Style

An autocratic leader mainly selects based on his/her judgments and ideas that rarely include followers' advice, and these leaders have absolute control over the group (Zareen, Razzaq & Mujtaba, 2015). The leader alone exercises decision-making and authority for determining policy and procedures for achieving goals. He believes the job must be done at all costs, not minding what happens to the subordinate. This type of leadership is based on one-way traffic communication and the denial of conflict. In short, the leader is an absolute monarch with unlimited authority (Omole, 2020). Autocratic leadership represents all those leaders who make a decision without the consent of team members and apply when a quick decision is to be taken, and team agreement is not essential for the acquisition of successful results. (Boehm, Dwertmann, Bruch & Shamir, 2015).

5. Participative Leadership

This is also known as the participative style, as it encourages the participation of subordinates in the affairs of the organization. The leadership style allows the involvement of the subordinate in the decision-making process, self-expression, initiative, communication and so on. Participative leadership is more effective as the whole group feels satisfied, and every member can gain recognition and self-worth (Omole, 2020). Participative leadership is a very

open and collegial style of running a team where group members participate more in decision-making (Ray & Ray, 2012, cited by Nasereddin and Sharabati, 2016). Khuong and Hoang (2015) observed that because participative leadership impacts employees' motivation, a leader can follow some suggestions to ensure that everybody has a say and that collective decisions benefit more from this leadership style. It enables the leader to create and improve the morale of a workplace that helps employees feel engaged with the company whenever they contribute ideas on business decisions and activities. Oketch and Ainembabazi (2021) posited that when employees feel their role is less submissive and restricted, they have less of a tendency to withdraw and focus more on task completion. In addition, they are more open to sharing views and discussing perspectives on those ideas freely before making decisions.

Educational policy Implementation

Viennet and Pont (2017) assert that educational policy can be formally understood as the actions taken by the government concerning how government addresses the production and delivery of education in a given system. Educational policies cover a wide range of issues, such as those targeting equity, overall quality of learning outcomes and school and learning environment.

Educational policies of Nigeria are made up of the decisions on how to educate citizens, where to get them educated, where to get them employed, whom to teach them, how to finance education, what to teach, how to impart skills, goals and objectives and even the philosophy (Noun, 2011 cited by Ogunode and Adah, 2020). The National Policy on Education has been revised in 1989, 1998, 2004 and 2013. Thus, any policy to be formulated is done by first and foremost identifying and capturing the overall philosophy and goals of the nation. The five main national goals of Nigeria, which were regarded as the necessary foundation on which the nation's education is built, are:-

- (a) a free and democratic society;
- (b) a just and egalitarian society;
- (c) a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- (d) a great and dynamic economy;
- (e) a land full of promising opportunities for all citizens.

The goals of tertiary education include;

- a. Contribute to national development through high-level workforce training;
- b. Provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities at informal and formal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians;

- c. Provide high-quality career counselling and life-long learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work;
- d. Reduce skill shortages by producing a skilled workforce relevant to the needs of the labour market.
- e. Promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service;
- f. Forge and cement national unity, and
- g. Promote national and international understanding and interactions.

While clarifying types of policies, Sadiku (2006), avers that the government generally makes those to guide the overall conduct of each category of educational activities through the President or the Ministry or Department of Education. Such policies are for the whole education system (or country); they are system policies. Sadiku pointed out that another group of educational policies made within the confines of system policies (nested in system policies) are policies of lower management, including policies made by educational parastatals, schools, heads of institutions, faculties or departments, and teachers. These Sadiku are called institutional policies. Because the authority of the government is of a higher order than that of an educational institution, institutional policies are nested in the policies of the government policies. Serwa and Xinhali (2020) stated that the primary task in policy implementation is providing institutional resources for putting the program into effect or process under a given institution. The implementation also involves money to be spent, laws to be enforced, employees to be hired, and action plans to be put in place. Implementation of a public policy presupposes outputs and impacts. Policy implementation involves mechanisms, resources and relationships that connect policies to action through accomplishing, producing or completing a given task. According to Igbokwe (2020), educational policy implementation involves translating policies into specific courses of action; it is the day-to-day carrying out of a policy document.

To ensure that the policy has achieved the intended purpose, educational policies are evaluated, either during the implementation process or at the end. To evaluate an educational policy, the output after implementation is assessed Emunemu and Eragbai (2011), cited by Alao and Ojo (2020), illustrated that equality of opportunity or access to education is a government objective, but achieving a target of 40% female access of the available opportunity in that form of education is an output. Igbokwe (2020) asserted that in implementing policy guidelines, suggestions are made on improving the policy and adjustments that sometimes lead to corrections, criticisms and recommendations to give birth

to new policies. A range of stakeholders and interest groups are involved in educational policy implementation, such as bureaucrats, administrators, civil servants, the Federal and State Ministry of Education, the National University Commission, the National Board of Technical Education, the National Educational and Development Council, State Universal Boards, Local Government Education Authority, Proprietors, Academic and Non-Academic staff and students. Ogunode and Adah (2020) argued that the quality of educational policies depends on the capacity of the designer or planners, the available resources and the level of involvement of stakeholders.

Organizational Resources, Leadership Styles, Policies and Reform Implementation in Higher Education System

There is no gain in saying that running higher education institutions is capital-intensive. Many projects demand financial resources. Thus, educational administrators must develop strategies and policies to ensure economical, effective and efficient utilization of funds. Additionally, to implement policies, a high and adequate workforce is required; hence, achieving this involves training, recruiting and retaining the right calibre of lecturers. Sadly, there are incessant complaints about too much workload for the university staff. Robinson and Ibara (2020) observed that in so many tertiary institutions in the country, due to a shortage of lecturers, their programmes need to be accredited by the accreditation agencies; meanwhile, only a few available lecturers are seriously overworked. In addition, the facilities for staff development and research opportunities could be improved, thereby reducing the quality of education in private universities in Nigeria (James & Botimi-Slaboh, 2019). Another issue that affects the morale and effective delivery of instruction by lecturers is the issue of insecurity. The tension induced by members of tertiary education institution communities due to the activities of these secret cult groups and kidnappers tend to impact quality assurance in Nigeria's educational system negatively.

The role of the leader in the university system involves harnessing available organizational resources to ensure government policies are effectively implemented through the best strategies and techniques available. Idowu (2019) posited that the leadership style is correct and proper to be adopted by a leader for effective institutional policy implementation. However, the usage depends on the situation he or she is confronted with. Transformational and transactional leadership styles are the most accepted styles by followers. Transformational leadership is the most suitable style for academic staff members who are highly educated, have good experience, and are ready to work as a team. The style causes a

change in individuals and systems, focuses on changing and transforming followers to assist each other, and inspires empowerment and motivation of the followers (Nasereddin & Sharabati, 2016; Idowu, 2019). In another view, Oketch and Ainembabazi (2021) suggested that participative leadership is critical to directing staff efforts in performing behaviour necessary for task accomplishment. Also, private universities should engage staff in decision-making through consultations, respect for their views and opinions and, above all, involvement in formulating policies that define their day-to-day work to remain motivated. However, new or inexperienced employees, Nasereddin and Sharabati (2016) suggested that the transactional leadership style is the most suitable for new followers, inexperienced, low level of education and routine work for institutional policy implementation. The transactional leadership style uses rewards and punishments. This style is also suitable in crises and emergencies, it motivates followers through a system of rewards and punishments, and it is known as managerial leadership, which focuses on the role of supervision and controlling.

Challenges of Educational Policy Implementation in Nigeria

Inadequate Consultation: Many times, authorities in charge of educational policies find it very cumbersome and need to consult with other stakeholders. Then Educational policy implementation becomes a success when most of those implementing educational policies are adequately consulted at the policy formulation stage; they sometimes need help understanding such policies, technicalities, approaches and intentions. It is, therefore, crucial for core stakeholders to understand educational policies and its objective in order to translate them into reality.

Inadequate Resources: Financial, human and material resources are never enough to implement educational policies. According to Chigbu and Woyengikuro (2019), an institution's teaching and non-teaching staff should be paid for practical functionality, capital project, instructional materials and other services that facilitate education needs. Concerning human resources, Igbokwe (2020) asserted that teachers are not available in some of our schools and where they are, some need to be more experienced and with sufficient training to carry out the reforms of new policies in our educational system. In the same way, there need to be more material resources in terms of structures, facilities and instructional materials in our schools. This makes policy implementation impossible.

Political Interference: Politics is a social mechanism for exercising authority and power concerning resource allocation and distribution. As much as the government sets national educational goals, political activities interfere with policy formulation and implementation.

According to Chigbu and Woyengikuro (2019), for instance, the personal interests of political leaders are imposed on practitioners against what the policy planner dictates. An education planner is a technical planner who knows the principles of planning education with the appropriate ingredient for effective policy formulas. Hence, sensitive educational positions require well-trained experts rather than technocrats from other professions. Igbokwe (2020) stated that some leaders keep changing policies indiscriminately due to ulterior motives, which do not lead to the success of policy implementation. Others find it difficult to insist that an educational policy be implemented for fear of opposition. The political activities will affect the supervision of the educational implementation process, which has to be done according to the political interest as against the national interest for development.

Corruption: The corrupt tendencies of public officials and politicians in connivance with private institutions and individuals have severe consequences on the practical implementation of policies in the country. Iyanda and Bello (2016) posited that corruption could be seen not only in the inflation of contract figures or percentage negotiations but the outright diversion of billions of naira meant for one programme or another. Corrupt public officeholders could manipulate the process or misappropriate funds set aside for the implementation process. No policy succeeds if the process is recklessly manipulated, mischievously tempered with, or consciously circumvented.

Insecurity: Many educational policies designed and formulated to improve access to education and the quality of education have been adversely affected due to insecurity in the country. According to Thisday (2018), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) says Boko Haram has killed 2,300 teachers in Nigeria's northeast since the start of the insurgency in 2009. In the report, the United Nations agency revealed that 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the region, affecting access to education. In the southern region, students and lecturers express fear of being kidnapped when going and coming back from school. These security challenges frustrate the policy implementation process in the educational system.

Lack of Continuity in Commitment to Policy Implementation: Many good educational policies have been suspended because of changes in government. This affects the smooth implementation of educational policies. According to Ogunode and Adah (2020), Nigeria's educational system has witnessed a series of changes in policies and programmes. Some of the changes seem desirable, while some will make one wonder why some of the other changes were ever initiated. In a similar submission, Nzeako (2016) expressed dissatisfaction

with a situation whereby the old government is interested in education and releases enough funds for its effective running. However, the new government may not continue from where the previous government stopped due to a lack of interest.

Recommendations

- There should be increased sensitization on modern policy implementation strategies in the tertiary education systems. Government should facilitate training through workshops, conferences and seminars for the capacity development of administrators of public and private higher education institutions since all the institutions are expected to conform to the same national policy on education.

Institutions should look inwards for innovative methods to generate revenue through initiating capacity development programmes within the community. Also, commercializing innovative projects through exhibitions and partnering with local and foreign companies for project ideas are necessary for fund generation.

- Government should increase the level of funding for the institutions to keep up with the yearly increment in enrolment, which causes excessive pressure on staff and existing facilities.
- Unnecessary political interference in employment and staff appointment into critical positions should be discouraged; instead, these should be based on the level of academic qualification, competence, accountability, diligence, and other leadership qualities that should be carefully considered.
- There should be a more intense campaign for non-tolerance for corruption in tertiary education institutions and among other government officials. The effort of the government to further enforce limits on cash withdrawals but promote more cashless transactions to curb corruption should be supported by all citizens and institutions. Although some scholars doubt the successful implementation of such policies during this period, the sincerity and level of government sensitization of citizens and institutions are crucial for the policy to yield positive results among individuals and tertiary education institutions.
- Government should engage more local and neighbourhood security guards and campus security personnel through technical training required to feed the police personnel with necessary and timely intelligence gathering to combat criminals within tertiary education institutions successfully.

- For effective policy implementation, there should be continuity in monitoring the output, outcome and impact of previous educational policies. Change in government should not be regarded as an opportunity to abandon previous policies and initiate new policies. New government officials and tertiary education institutions should note that in case of modification or changes existing in policies, it should be done in the interest of all stakeholders and not for personal desire.

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