

EMPOWERING EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH HISTORY RESEARCH

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Abstract

This study is focused on empowering education stakeholders through history research, the paper highlighted and discussed important issues such as empowerment, education, stakeholders and history research. The vestige of hope we currently have in the education sector is sustained by well informed and articulate stakeholders who are ever determined to make a positive difference in this all important instrument par excellence, which is not by any inch an end in itself but a means to an end. For the stakeholders to be repositioned, reinvigorated and re-aligned to perform optimally and effectively in achieving the fundamental goals, objectives and aims of education, they must be empowered by, building mutual trust, effective representation, competent group leadership among other things as suggested in the paper.

Keywords: Empowerment, education, stakeholders and history research.

Introduction

One of the most needed social services in human life is education. It has remained the life wire of man since creation. Every age holds or has device one form of education or the other as a process of integrating the young ones into the main stream of the society so as to be able to function effectively as part and parcel of the human society. The importance of education in the all round development of man cannot be underestimated. In Nigeria for instance, education is define as 'Instrument par Excellence' in the National policy on education, 1984 (as amended) while the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) described it as an inalienable Right' of every citizen. These entirely depict to the formidable and the indispensable roles education performs in the overall development of any human being, and all societies.

Meanwhile, the business of education is all encompassing and also involves everybody. Everybody is virtually a stakeholder as far as the education of a child is concerned. Individuals, groups, institutions, governments at all levels, are involve in one way or the other and at one stage or another. Right from the nuclear family to the larger society,

==== Empowering Education Stakeholders Through History Research ====

different operational mechanisms are involved in the traditional as well as in the formal, moral, social, spiritual, intellectual, physical, and economical training of a child.

In fact, History Research is a sine-qua-non in the education industry as far as the empowerment of education stakeholders is concerned. It affords actors or players in education sector the opportunity of using scientific approaches in collecting, evaluating, analyzing and synthesizing data for investigations into the ancient and modern techniques and guidelines by which histories use both primary and secondary sources. Other evidences including, Archaeology to research and then to write histories in the form of the accounts of the past especially in empowering education stakeholders with a view to repositioning them for better and greater output. It also provide extensive bibliographical information for educational advancement. Hence the need to empower stakeholders in this direction.

Empowerment

The term empowerment refers to measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interest in a responsible and self determined way. Empowerment also connotes capacity building for greater efficiency and productivity. It is a result oriented of events, intervention in increasing capacity, technical know-how, and intellectual proves to enable individuals or people function optimally. On the other hand, Empowerment in education is the process of helping all the actors in education to acquire and use information relevant to successful policy formulation and implementation processes, which History research provides.

History research is one of the sure ways of empowering education stakeholders. History Research serves as instrument par excellence or as a tool for capacity building in the education business. It facilitates individual, organizational and institutional learning which builds social capital and trust, develops knowledge, skills and attitudes. When successful, creates an organizational culture and a set of capabilities which enable individuals, groups, organizations or institutions to set objectives, achieve results, solve problems, and create adaptive procedures which enable them to survive in the long run,

Conceptual review

In the words of one of the famous ancient Greek philosophers, Aristotle, Pragmatic treatment of any concept lies squarely on the proper and effective definition of the componential elements that make up the title. In discussing this topic, there is the urgent need to define the following terms:-

- Education
- Stakeholder
- History Research, and
- Empowerment in Education.

Education has been variously defined by different scholars and authorities in varieties of terms and perceptions. In the words of Alfred North White Head, education is "the utilization of knowledge in problem solving". This definition makes education a means to an end rather than an end itself. Education is therefore a problem solving tool in the hands of man. It is used to reconstruct, renovate, and rehabilitate the society for the benefit of mankind. More so, education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skill, values, beliefs, and habits. It is the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment and generally of preparing oneself or, others intellectually for mature life. In addition, it is an act or a process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills, as for a profession". (Wikipedia).

Similarly, education is defined as "the all-round development of an individual or a process of acquiring physical, moral, spiritual, mental (intellectual) and character training to enable an individual actualize himself and contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of the society. According to the New Webster's Dictionary of the English Dictionary, education is "an instruction or a training by which people (generally young) learn to develop and use their mental, moral and physical powers". Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines it as" an exercise testing skill or knowledge. Simply put, education is the overall training of a child to become a functional and potential member of a society. It may be formal or informal. On the other hand, a stakeholder is a person with an interest or concern in something, especially a business; a person, group or organization that has interest or concern in making money. It is any agent from which a business draws its sources such as government and its agencies, community, individuals, etc.

History: Is a noun which means the study of past events, particularly in human affairs; the whole series of past events connected with a particular person or thing. It is also a continuous, typically chronological record of important or public events or of a particular trend or institution". The word history as derived from a Greek word was borrowed into classical Latin as 'historia' meaning "investigation, inquiry, research, account, description, written account of past events, writing of history, historical narrative, recorded knowledge of past events story narrative."

The New Dictionary of English language and the Thesauruses defines history as "a record or account of past events, the study and analysis of past events in total; the past event or

==== *Empowering Education Stakeholders Through History Research* ====

experiences of a specific person or thing; an unusual and significant past." History can as well be described as a subject of study or a branch of knowledge which deals with the chronological record of past events, persons and places.

Research:

This comprises "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis to increase the stock of knowledge including knowledge of business, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to device new application". Research is a careful or diligent search or studies inquiry or examination, especially, investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the right of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws. Menican (1828).

According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary for the English language learners research is "a careful study that is done to find and report new knowledge about something; the activity of getting information about a subjects".

Empowerment: refers to measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self determination in people and in communities or institutions in order to enable them to represent their interest in a responsible and self determined way, acting on their own authority. It equally connotes capacity building for greater efficiency and higher productivity. It is a result oriented intervention aimed at increasing capacity, technical-know-how and intellectual or moral or spiritual or physical prowess to enable people function optimally.

Empowerment in the Education industry

Empowerment in education is the process of helping all actors/players in education to acquire policy formation and implementation and understanding how to use the information in realizing educational goals and objectives. The pieces of information gathered are used at four levels; namely:

- **Individual levels:** At this level there is need to find ways to support individuals-students, teachers, parents, head teacher local policy makers; as they face the demands of new development in the local context by building on existing knowledge(human resources and knowledge based management).
- **Institutional levels:** Here, there is the need to support existing institutions in formulating policies, effective organizational structures and good management(including learning organization).

- **System levels:** At this system level, we find efficient ways to support system level actors, policy makers, teachers, examination bodies, board of governors, parent teachers association (PTA) etc to be able to fulfill their roles in designing implementing, evaluating and synthesizing educational policies to achieve set goals.
- **Society levels:** This level requires more interactive and responsive public awareness and systematic administration. The information or knowledge gained through scientific research helps to reposition the administrators for effective and efficient functioning.

The education stakeholders

Haven understood who is a stakeholder, it is expedient to examine who are the stakeholders in education sector. As remarked in the introduction of this paper, education for all is the business of all. Meanwhile, stakeholders typically refer to all those who are interested in the welfare and success of schools and their students, including teachers, administrators, staff members, parents, community members, local business leaders, government institutions, officials, school based committees - PTA board of governors, governing councils, examination bodies, etc. all these and others are parties that are either directly or indirectly affected and are involved in the success of education system.

Joyee Eliator, a senator in United States of America, says that a stakeholder in education is anybody who in one way or the other is affected by the education system. She went further to enumerate the following individuals, institutions and groups as education stakeholders-Governors, Legislators, Superintendents, School Board Members, Teachers, Parents, Learners Curriculum Designers, Examination Bodies, Ministries of Education, etc. She maintained that all stakeholders should have access to and benefit from the education data relevant to them to answer the questions that need to be answered.

According to the new Universal Basic Education Programme Handbook, education stakeholder refers to "one who has interest and it is expected in principle and practice to be actively involved as a stake that holds the wager to ensure success in efforts to develop the child (the learner) educationally. The person involved uses instruments that needs interactive techniques required in accordance for a meaningful achievement on a production that it's favourable result will emerge if the learner (the central focus) is to be developed accordingly".

Stakeholdership in education can be likened to a "living tree" that is expected to be fruitful and useful to humanity. Such a tree is usually made up of roots, stem, branches, leaves, flowers then seeds and or fruits. The absence of any of the mentioned parts renders the tree impotent and useless. The same thing applies to the education stakeholders. They are all indispensable and useful in achieving educational objectives

Functions of Stakeholders In Education system.

All the education stakeholders work as an organic whole. They serve a common purpose - proper training of the individual child. At this stage of this article, the various stakeholders are to be analyzed in the context of their roles in education:

The child (learner): The child is the central focus of the whole gamut of the education industry. The learner has the following functions:-

- Active participation in teaching and learning.
- Development of right attitude, interest, belief, drive and aspiration.
- Identification of and needs assessment.
- Development of generic skills aptitude and knowledge.
- Development of appropriate technology to interact collaboratively with each other and the teacher
- Self responsibility for his or her learning,

The Teacher

The teacher is one who is professionally trained on the development of the potentials of a learner; the importance of a teacher in the business of education cannot be over emphasized. He performs the following among other functions:-

- Imparts knowledge to the learner.
- Sets the tone of his classrooms.
- Builds a warm environment.
- Mentor and nurture students as a guidance counselor.
- Is a role model etc.

Government: The government is the learning house and the pivot on which all education programmes rotates. It performs its multifaceted functions through different institutions, officials/personnel and agents. The functions include:-

- Policy formulation
- Financing of many education
- Making educational laws
- Regulatory/supervisory roles
- Training and re-training of manpower
- Curriculum design/development

Parents: are expected to provide all the desirable environments needed for any child to develop and grow into useful adult members of the society, "charity, it is said, begins at home". Therefore, parents laid the foundation of formal education by imparting of traditional values, norms, custom, ethics and morals to the child. The functions of parents

can be subsumed into:- (1) biological functions, (2) social functions and (3) moral functions.

PTA

The roles of PTA in proper management of schools and upbringing of learners are enormous and indispensable. PTA performs the following functions:-

- Provide platform for parents/teachers interaction
- Supports and co-operates with the government and other stakeholders.
- Fosters mutual understanding and harmonious relationship
- Provides manpower, material and financial needs
- Provides sense of security
- Bridges the gap between the community and the school

Challenges/Problems of the Education Stakeholders

Every human activity is replete with some challenges, and the education sector is not an exception. Some of the nauseating issues confronting education stakeholders are as follows:-

- **Paucity of funds:** one of the greatest challenges facing stakeholders is lack of enough fund to run the sector.
- **Inadequate staffing of schools:** The available numbers of professionally trained personnel are grossly inadequate and this in turn adversely affects productivity.
- **Corruption:** this singular deadly monster has actually dealt a devastating blow on effective and efficient running of education at all levels. This leads to diversion, embezzlement and misappropriation of funds meant for education.
- **Population explosion in schools:** today, enrollments have astronomically and geometrically outgrown available resources in school leading to some social vices such as indiscipline, examination malpractice, cultism, poor performances, etc
- **Lack of professional self development and career advancement:** There are little or no opportunities for education providers to be trained and retrained through in-service programmes, seminars, workshops, symposia, excursions, etc.
- **Absence of research:** Lack of funds, corruption, and competent personnel, among others affect research in education.
- **Lack of coordinated supervision, monitoring and evaluation:** Our schools are poorly supervised and monitored either as a result of lack of competent and adequate man power or funds or both.

Under influences/meddling on the part of governments in recruitments, posting, upgrading, discipline and appointments of personnel. During recruitments,

==== *Empowering Education Stakeholders Through History Research* ====

government officials hijack them resulting in the recruitments of mediocre in the places of experts and duly qualified persons.

- **Policy somersault and lip service on the part of government:** Government is in sincere with education programmes. It comes up with robust and good programmes and policies but lacks the political will to accomplish them.
- **Undue bickering and instigating among the education stakeholders:** One of the characteristics of man is conflict. There are conflicts of interest ideology, ethnicity, etc and all these converge to disrupt smooth running and policies, of education especially in Nigeria.
- **Incessant change of Governments:** Government which is supposed to be a continuum and a homogeneous whole is not so, especially in Nigeria. In fact, any change of government has adverse effects on the education programmes and policies as the new government abandons all or some of the already existing programmes, projects and policies to the detriment of the people.

These identified problems or challenges bedeviling the stakeholders and indeed the education subsector can be adequately addressed through coordinated, harmonized and articulated efforts of all and sundry. In fact, History Research is a veritable, reliable and sustainable tool in solving some of or all the problems confronting our education in general and in empowering education stakeholders with a view to equipping them with all the necessary ingredients required to achieve results.

Sources of Data for History Research

There are basically two sources of data available to anybody conducting History Research and they include:-

- **Primary Sources:** These are the most sought after in History Research because they are the firsthand accounts of information. Accessing primary sources involves logic, intuition, persistence and common sense (Tuchman Gaye).
- By definition, primary data is data collected by a social science researcher by himself or herself for the specific purposes of answering a research question or exploring a social phenomenon. One example is the ethnographic research of Alice Goffman in her book "On the Run."

The Roles of History Research in Empowering Education Stakeholders:

History Research is central to capacity building and this paper takes a critical view of the processes, procedures and steps taken in History Research to be able to empower stakeholders in the education sector.

The aforementioned daunting challenges that serve as draw backs in the overall attainment of education goals can be rightly and adequately addressed by the effective use of history research. It facilitates individual, organizational and institutional learning which builds social capital and trust between and among all the actors or players in the education industry. A social capital is the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, institution or organization, which enable the component persons, units or departments to function effectively. This ensures synergy, co-operation, reciprocity and trust among the social networks. More so, History Research develops knowledge, skills and attitudes, it sharpens the intellect and increases abilities and aptitude to perform assigned roles and to achieve oriented results. In addition, History Research when successful ensures or creates organizational culture of shared responsibilities and accountability. It provides a set of capacities or capabilities which enables and creates adaptive procedures which enable them to survive in the long run. It equally provides integrative and cohesive approaches to solving problems in education sector, as all the players will be in partnership in generating and proffering solutions to tackling identified and perceived challenges confronting the training of the citizenry. Moreover, History Research increases the degree of autonomy, self determination, professional self development and career advancement in the stakeholders. This also paves ways for greater efficiency, better performance and higher productivity. Again History Research helps to vivify realities, memory, provides guidelines in daily life and brings us tidings of antiquity. Through this qualitative inquiry, the gnawing gaps between the past and the present are bridged and through the process the future can be predicted.

Conclusion

This paper has dealt with the concept of empowering education stakeholders using History Research. It is the involvement of all concerned in the education of the learner to map out learning contents, experiences, methods of instruction and evaluation procedures. At each stage or phase, different categories of people (stakeholders) are involved to ensure the optimal; effective actualization and realization of educational goals.

The participants in co-operative bargaining of the educational policies, programmes and projects are composed of professional educators, lay citizens (parents and guardians) teachers, learners, school administrators/proprietors (principals, head teachers, ministry

==== ***Empowering Education Stakeholders Through History Research*** ====

of education officials, supervisors) guidance and counselors, subject specialists or professional bodies and curriculum consultants.

To achieve the group interests in education, all the stakeholders must build mutual trust, common goals, adequate and effective representation, competent group leadership, open and clear communication, use of relevant data, adequate fine and facilities for planning and group decisions. All these variables or characteristics can only be achieved if and only if there are utilizing researches in the industry. Therefore, it becomes imperative that players must be adequately empowered through History Research so as to overcome obstacles and achieve set goals, aims and objectives.

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