

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING IN NIGERIA

¹Dr. ABUH, Paul Shedrach

(abuhshedrach@mau.edu.ng)

Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Modibbo Adama University

²OMALE, Friday Odawudu

(omalefridar025@gmail.com)

Kogi State College of Education Ankpa Kogi State

³NUHU, Emmanuel Naye

(nuhunaye@gmail.com)

Department of Environmental and Life Science Education, Faculty of Education, Modibbo Adama University

⁴USMAN, Ojo Bernand Ph.D

(benveemercy2013@gmail.com)

Department of Business Administration, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Markudi

Abstract

Administration is crucial for enhancing the efficiency and productivity of complex institutions, particularly educational systems. It encompasses structured operations, goal-oriented actions, and collective cooperation within a supportive environment. Educational administration involves managing resources, providing leadership and guidance, and evaluating performance to achieve institutional objectives. Effective administration requires collaboration among teachers, school boards, inspectors, and educational authorities. Communication plays a central role by facilitating information exchange, coordination, and motivation among stakeholders, which in turn improves clarity, understanding, and overall administrative efficiency. Educational planning, a relatively modern field, is essential for the systematic development of education. It involves anticipating needs, setting policies, prioritizing goals, and allocating resources while considering socio-economic and political realities. Scholars define it as a rational and scientific approach to optimizing educational resources and achieving national objectives. The planning process typically includes stages such as pre-planning, planning, plan formulation, plan elaboration, implementation, and evaluation, ensuring a structured and coherent approach. Evaluation is particularly important as it allows continuous monitoring and improvement of educational strategies. Various forms of planning—short-term, medium-term, long-term, micro-level, macro-level, fixed-term, rolling-term, strategic, operational, and single-purpose—address diverse educational requirements. These methods enable institutions to adapt to changing demands, optimize resources, and ensure sustainable growth. In summary, effective educational administration and planning are indispensable for fostering institutional effectiveness, achieving national educational goals, and promoting long-term development through structured management, collaboration, and strategic foresight.

Keywords: Administration in Education, Educational Administration and Educational Planning

Introduction

Administration could be seen as an integral part of any organization. It is the credential for maintaining and expanding the relevance effectiveness and productivity of complex institutions such as government departments, prisons, school systems, to mention just a few. According to Enaharo and Eferakaya (2020), administration is a process by which goals are achieved through collective and cooperative human efforts in a suitable government. Their administration constitutes the following:

- A process which involves the manipulation of certain operations.
- It is goal oriented
- A collective cooperation and a suitable environment where participants could maximize performance.

Concept of Educational Administration

Aderonmu and Ehametalor (1981) defined Educational Administration as ``essentially a service, activity or tool, through which the fundamental objectives of the educational process may be more fully and efficiently realized`` Educational administration broadly means running of educational institutions which introduces guidance, leadership and controlling of the efforts of individuals in the achievement of the goals of the institution (Ayanmiyi, 1999). Educational Administration also involves management of resources, human material and evaluation or appraising the result of educational efforts. Educational Administration therefore, aimed at directing all activities towards the attainment of the goals of teaching and learning. All the stakeholders in an educational institution would contribute towards the accomplishment of these goals.

Communication in Educational Administration

Communication is intended for conveying information, institution, advice, feelings, opinions and facts correctly and accurately from one person to another or group of people. According to Odeh (2020), good communication help to stimulate enthusiasm and raise the interest and motivation of the key players in a school setting. Communication is not inborn but learnt, and a school administrator has to learn how to communicate effectively in running the affairs of the school. In the same vein, teachers are also trained to effectively communicate when transmitting skills and knowledge to students. These communication skills include verbal and written. The basic requirements for good communication are as follows:

- Clarify all your ideas on the subject before seeking to communicate to others.
- Develop a natural style of delivering your communication and
- Check and recheck whether your message is clearly transmitted and properly understood.

The Nature of Educational Planning

Educational planning as a subject is quite recent. It involves social and economic aspects. In 1917, there was a revolution in Russia. After the revolution in 1923 planning started. Planning became more established after the second world war. This was a qualitative turning point in education planning. The western countries also adopted planning. After the independence period, developing countries also started to adopt planning. In Nigeria, the first six-year plan of social economic plan including educational planning was published in 1962.

Meaning of Educational Planning What is Educational Planning?

According to Beeby, Educational planning is the exercise of foresight in determining the policy, priorities and costs of an educational system, having due regard for economic and political realities or the system's potential for growth and for the needs of the country and the pupils served by the system (Beeby, 1967:4). Coombs (1972:14) defines it as the application of rational systematic analysis to the process of educational development, with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its students and society. Woodhill (1974) in a similar opinion asserted that educational planning is concerned with how to make the best out of the scarce resource devoted to education.

Adesina (1981:12) sees educational planning as the process of applying scientific or rational procedures to the process of educational growth and development so as to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system. According to Lyons (1965) in Akighir and Ivagher (2015), educational planning is the application to education itself of rational scientific approach to examining ones alternatives by choosing wisely among them, their proceedings systematically to implement the choices made.

Ovwigho (2004) defines educational planning as the application of a rational and systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of the students and the society. In effect, educational planning deals with the future of our educational system in relation to the past and present trends. As a result, it provides the basis for future decisions and actions on issues related to education. According to Babalola (2003), educational planning involves taking of decisions for

future action with the view of achieving pre-determined objectives through optimum use of scarce resources. The scope of educational planning covers curriculum planning, target setting and manpower planning within the education section. Thus, educational planning is the process of preparing a set of decisions about the educational enterprise in such a way that the goals and purposes of education will be sufficiently realized in future with the available resources. From what has been said so far, educational planning is concerned with the action that will change the present with more desirable future. All these are closely bound with policy making, decision taking and choice making.

Process of Educational Planning

Garuge (1977) classified the process of educational planning into six stages, namely:

- Pre-planning
- Planning
- Plan formation
- Plan elaboration
- Plan implementation
- Evaluation

Each of these stages is described below:

1. Pre-planning: This is the preparation or planning for planning. It begins with,
 - The creation of a suitable planning organization
 - The establishment of planning procedures
 - The structural reorganization of the educational administrative machinery;
 - Setting up the procedures for the collection and analysis of statistical data required for planning.

Where these have already been accomplished, the principle pre-planning activity is to have the national educational objective defined by the appropriate

authority.

2. The planning stage comprises five principal steps:

- (a) diagnosis,
- (b) formulation of policy,
- (c) costing of future needs,
- (d) establishment of priorities and target testing and
- (e) feasibility testing.

Each step will be illustrated with reference to planning at national level.

a. **Diagnosis:** Once the national objectives are defined, the first step to be taken by the educational effort of the country is adequate, relevant and conducive to their achievement. This is done by matching the output of the educational effort with the objective and noting the salient divergences, weaknesses and shortfalls in nature, magnitude, quality, organization and level of performance of the national system.

b. **Formulation of policy:** the diagnosis of the existing education situation would highlight defects and deficiencies which are to be corrected so as to ensure relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. Corrective action has to be based on policy which has to be spelt out to indicate the general framework within which decisions are to be made. A set of policies framed to remedy each of the defects and deficiencies revealed by the diagnosis will form the national educational policy.

c. **Costing of future needs:** the next step in the planning stage is to cost future needs. Using the best available cost future needs. Using the best available cost data, each group of needs is cost with due consideration to fluctuations in prices. This gives an indication of the total financial outlay which should be available if the policy needs are to be satisfied.

d. **Establishment of priorities and target testing:** At the time of analyzing the data for planning purposes, the educational planner takes stock of resources available to educational development from various sources. By extrapolating the past trends he would get an idea of the resources which could be reasonably anticipated.

e. **Feasibility testing:** the targets are set according to needs that have been identified and the priorities assigned. But another serious task it necessary to ensure whether they are consistent and feasible.

3. **Plan formulation stage:** the purpose of planning is primarily two-fold:

a. To present a set of decisions to the appropriate national authorities for approval; and

b. To provide a line-point for action by the various concerned agencies responsible for implementing these decisions.

For both purposes, the authorities and agencies concerned require to be informed as to: What is proposed? Why is it proposed and How the proposals are going to be implemented?

Preparation of statements answering these questions is referred to as plan formulation; such statements must be brief, succinct and at the same time, adequate.

4. **Plan elaboration stage:** before the implementation starts, the educational plan has to be elaborated so that individual action units become more clearly identified. This stage generally comprises two steps:

a. **Programming:** programming is dividing the plan into broad action areas each of which aims at accomplishing a specific objective. Usually a programme comprises all activities which are supervised

by the same administrative unit or are so interdependent and complementary that they have to be done simultaneously or sequentially.

b. **Project formulation:** Each programme consists of groups of activities or units. Such a unit is called a project. A project usually aims at achieving a specific sub-objective or target within the main area of programme. Projects have to be identified and formulated so as to enable them to be executed. Project formulation is the task of working out the details of agency, cost, time schedules, etc. for a project; until a plan has been subjected to programming and project formulation, the task of implementation cannot be undertaken. In several countries, the problem of non-implementation of plans has been traced to weaknesses in programming and project formulation. There is a further step in the elaboration of a plan which is optional, that is, regionalization. It means the distribution of the provision of a plan over geographical identifiable units, such as states, provinces and other local government administrative area.

5. **Plan implementation stage:** The implementation of an educational plan begins when individual projects are taken up for execution. Here the planning process merges with the management process. Using the annual budget or the annual plan as the principal instrument, an organizational framework is developed for various projects. The resources (men, money and materials) needed for each project, are allocated. The time within which it is completed is indicated. Moreover, such operational details such as delegation of authority, times of communication and consultation, assignment of responsibility and feedback and control mechanisms are also created/developed.

6. **Evaluation stage:** As the education plan is being implemented, the machinery to evaluate the stage of progress and detect deviations is set in motion. While evaluation is normally a continuous operation, simultaneous with plan implementation, the preparation of reports may be at fixed points (e.g. annually, mid-term or end of term).

Evaluation serves two purposes:

It highlights weaknesses caustic targets, inadequate provisions, improper phasing etc. And throws matters for revision on the plan for the balance of the plan period. Where the practice of rolling plans is adopted, each year's evaluation indicates revision for the future years. It takes the place of diagnosis stage in providing the basis for re-planning. It thus becomes the beginning for the next cycle of planning.

Types of Educational Planning

There are various types of educational planning. Among them are:

- Sort term, medium term and long term planning.
- Micro-level, macro-level planning.
- Fixed term and rolling term planning.
- Strategic and operational planning
- Single purpose planning.

Short-term planning: This is the type of planning which covers 1-3years

Medium term planning: Medium term planning extends from 4-7years. Medium term plans define the goals and targets of a long term plan with greater clarity and provides a defined basis for action.

Long term planning: this extends from 10-

15years.

Micro-level planning: this is planning activity that is carried out at the institutional or local government level.

Macro-level planning: involves policy-making and broad target setting at the state, regional, national or international level.

Fixed term planning: is the type of planning where successive fixed term duration like 3,4 or 5 years are defined for accomplishing a specified set of educational objectives.

Rolling term planning: the time span of a rolling term plan rolls every year to shed each expired year and incorporate one year each to replace the expired year in terms of tasks to be accomplished. The continuous revision of targets according to the performance and maintenance of a constant plan period into the future contributes immensely to the quality of the plan.

Strategic planning; is the type of planning that involves the setting up of broad targets and definition of policies at the executive level (commissioner, minister etc.). In strategic planning, objectives are directed towards the long term survival, the future resources, the potential, the flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions in the system.

Operational planning: this is planning which involves operationalizing policy decisions. It is done at the micro level such as local government school. It is a plan of action to achieve an identified goal in a short time. It may extend from a few days to a couple of years. It is concerned with measurable and verifiable objectives.

Approaches to Educational Planning

There are three main approaches to educational planning, namely:

The social demand approach

The manpower requirements approach

The rate of return approach

1. **The social demand approach:** this is the planning of education to meet the private demand for education on the part of students or their parents. In other words, it is an attempt to satisfy people's demand for school places for those who wish and can gain from education. This approach has its limitations such as the following;

a. It does not take into consideration the fact that the nation's scarce resources have to be adequately allocated and that education alone does not constitute the national problem.

b. It tends to ignore the character and pattern of manpower needed by the economy and ends up producing too many of one type and not enough of others.

c. It affects quality and effectiveness to a point that it over emphasizes population demand at the expense of proper costing, thereby leading to spreading scarce resources over too many students.

2. **The manpower requirement approach:** this approach is concerned with demand for educated labour by the economy so as to satisfy production. It is considered that the development of human resources through education is a pre-requisite for economic growth. The approach aims at developing those skills that are in acute shortage in the economy or plan for future manpower requirement to increase the rate of economic development as well as curbing the surpluses and shortages in the overall development. The first major attempt at this approach in Nigeria was the Eric Ashby Commission 1959-1960. The commission took an in-depth look into the manpower

needs of Nigeria. This led to expansion of higher education in Nigeria.

Manpower requirement approach, to educational planning is not easily applied to developing economies due to lack of adequate data and information, the economic structure is the unpredictable pattern: of future growth their economies. Also, the approach does not take into account the cost and financing of skill formation. In the absence of this important aspect, the whole approach ignores the capacity of the economy to support education and violates the basic principle of economics regarding optional allocation of resources in the economy.

3. **The rate of return approach:** this approach looks at alternatives, weighs the puts it side by side with the benefits it will bring and then toes the best line within means that promises the highest ratio of benefits to cost. It looks at what society to what return it gets for educating one the margin. Thus educational investments are recommended if the rate-of-the society expected from that particular educational project or programme is higher or equal to the cost of the next best alternative. The rate of return approach to educational planning has its weakness. First, it is not very easy to measure the costs and benefits. Calculating future benefits and placing them alongside present costs, wilt no doubt lead to dubious assumptions. Besides, these future income differentials do not remain constant. However, the approach favors promoting those levels of education that exhibit the highest social cost benefit ratios.

Constraints to Educational Planning

In developing countries, there are certain recurrent constraints to educational planning.

These include:

- Lack of funds
- Community attitudes
- Youth population explosion
- Wasteful imbalance within the educational system
- The rising cost of education
- Inadequacy of planning facilities
- Political instability
- Inadequate information
- Unreliable statistics

i. **Lack of funds:** this can be taken care of in the annual budget which may cover several years that the plan is in operation. In Nigeria however, there are two serious financial constraints on the successful implementation of educational plans. First, there is the problem of under-estimation of the cost of educational programmes and over-estimation of anticipated financial resources to run the programmes. Second, there is the problem of over-reliance on anti-over optimism about external assistance.

ii. **Community attitudes:** many communities in Nigeria have their own reasons for sending their children to school. They also have their own notions about the type of education they want their children to receive or they may have reasons why they prefer boys to be educated than the girls and vice versa.

iii. **Youth population explosion:** in developing countries today the high birth-rate and decreasing death rate as a result of increasing modernization and technological development, as well as unpopularity of artificial birth control methods make the countries the canters of the world's teeming youth. The result is that even bold educational targets (enrollment projections) very quickly get out of hand.

iv. **Wasteful imbalances within the**

educational system: In most developing countries on pyramid shows a very broad base with a very sharp apex, indicating an acute lack of continuity between the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. The result is inevitable discordance, dysfunctions and disparities in the plans at the different levels.

v. **The rising cost of education:** A major focus of educational planning is the optimization of resources. Such optimization leans heavily on the issue of costs. But when owing to political and other pressures there are unprecedented rises in student enrolment, the facilities required and the services demanded, the budget cannot possibly keep pace with the costs, then planning becomes an exercise in futility.

vi. **Inadequacy of planning facilities:** Another constraint to educational planning inadequacy of planning facilities such as qualified staff, essential planning equipment (computers, office spaces, tools etc.) and systemized procedures for processing plans.

vii. **Political instability:** political instability has tended to characterize developing nations since the early 70s. The quality, stability or longevity of the political leadership tended to affect the quality and reliability of development plans. The unsettled political conditions in Nigeria and the occasional premature or forceful termination of government had tended to affect the continuity or the systematic development of national education plans between 1950 and 1998 in the country. There is also the problem of appointing people to key posts in planning based on favoritism instead of technical competence. Such appointments are usually done by the political class. This very class of people often make pronouncements without due

consultation with specialists in educational planning. Such pronouncements are ``free education at all levels`` and ``free and qualitative education`` as well. This leaves many professional educational planners in bewilderment as to what to do.

viii. **Inadequate information:** one of the most serious constraints to educational planning in Nigeria is the paucity of valid data on which useful educational plans can be based. Most population censuses have ended up in deadlocks and doubts. Even when efforts are made by planners to get information or data are often direct from sites, the institutions and agencies, these data are often not available or come too late to be useful. The tendency therefore that most of the planning is based on outdated data (Nwanko, 1981).

ix. **Unreliable statistics:** statistics are vital for any meaningful planning. In Nigeria however, it has not been easy to obtain accurate population statistics. In the pre-independent era there was the fear of linking results of the Nigerian population census. In the post-independent era, Nigerians having realized the importance of population figures have the tendency to inflate their population. This is because it is on the basis of population that amenities are shared as well as political representation. This was what led to the 1973 census. Even the 1991 census has been challenged by many communities, some claiming that they were undercounted. Educational planners are therefore faced with the problem of uncertainties. This makes educational planning difficult.

Conclusion

Educational administration and planning are fundamental to the effective management and development of educational institutions. Through structured operations, leadership,

and strategic planning, schools can achieve their goals while ensuring the optimal use of resources. Effective communication within administration fosters collaboration among stakeholders, improving institutional productivity and educational outcomes. Educational planning, as a systematic approach, helps in setting priorities, allocating resources, and aligning policies with national development objectives. By following structured planning processes—ranging from formulation to evaluation—education systems can adapt to socio-economic changes and meet emerging demands. Different planning models, including short-term, long-term, and strategic planning, contribute to sustainable educational growth. In conclusion, the integration of sound administrative practices and comprehensive planning ensures the efficiency, adaptability, and continuous improvement of education systems. A well-managed educational framework not only enhances institutional effectiveness but also contributes to national and global educational development, equipping learners with the skills necessary for future success.

Recommendations

1. School administrators should receive continuous training in leadership and management to enhance decision-making, resource allocation, and institutional effectiveness. Policies should be in place to support leadership development and accountability.
2. Effective communication channels should be established among teachers, school boards, policymakers, and other stakeholders to promote collaboration, transparency, and efficiency in educational administration.
3. Governments and educational authorities should adopt data-driven,

strategic planning models that align with socio-economic and political realities. This includes short-term and long-term planning approaches to accommodate future educational demands.

4. Adequate financial and material resources should be allocated to schools to support quality education. Investment in infrastructure, technology, and teaching materials will improve learning environments and outcomes.

5. Educational plans and policies should undergo continuous assessment to measure their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Feedback mechanisms should be established to ensure adaptation to changing educational needs.

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