

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP: A KEY TO EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS IN NIGERIA

Sussan Ifeoma NWANEKEZIE

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This paper focused on strategic leadership as the best approach to educational success in Nigeria. The issues militating against the realization of educational goals in Nigeria were examined, and stated that it has become so critical that the government and all stake holders should strive to proffer lasting solution, if Nigeria education should remain relevant globally. However, the writer observed that the realization of educational goals in the school system is dependent largely on the caliber of leadership educational institutions bring to bear in the running of their daily affairs. For this reason, this paper looked at strategic leadership as a major approach for effective leadership needed to bring the educational system in Nigeria, out of the woods. More so, the paper equally gave the conceptual clarification of some terms such as: education; meaning and definition, leadership; meaning and definition, strategic leadership; meaning, definition, characteristics etc, and educational success; meaning, definition, factors that hinder and or enhance educational success. Conclusively, strategic leadership was explained as leaders who are visionary, change friendly and good team players needed to apply interventionist approaches to re-strategize, revamp and reposition the Nigerian educational system back to the right track to achieve the desired educational goals. Among other things, the paper suggested that government in collaboration with other educational stake holders should ensure that all levels of institutional leaders should train in strategic capacity building leadership skills or approaches, to be able to be at par with the global standards; and to improve the teaching /learning activities.

Keywords: Education, Leadership, Strategic Leadership, Educational Success.

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INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, education is acknowledged as an instrument per excellence for national advancement. It has a multi-dimensional contribution in ensuring a safer, healthier, advanced and prosperous world. Since education determines the pace of growth and development all over the world, makes it critical that maximum attention be given to improvement of educational standards by all stakeholders. Education equally contributes towards the political, social, economic, technological

and cultural advancement of a nation. Self-development, skills acquisition, knowledge, abilities and competences that lead to both economic and societal advancement are all acquired through education (Nwanekezie & Ogoni, 2021).

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN 2014) specified goals of education to include among others:

- To maintain and ensure unhindered access and equity to education;
- To maintain the quality of educational delivery at all levels;
- To promote functional education for skills acquisition, job creation and poverty eradication or reduction;
- To ensure periodic review, effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum at all levels in order to meet societal needs and the world at work;
- To collaborate with development partners, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and local communities to assist and fund education
- To promote information technology capabilities to all levels.

The above listed educational goals are desirable, but the challenge remains in the successful implementation of the goals. It does appear that since the pre-colonial era till date, educational policies have always had issues with successfully achieving its goals. Adiele (2020) gave credence to this when he recalled “most government policies in Nigeria (especially educational policies) failed due to gross inadequacy of both human and material resources needed for policy implementation. As a result of none successful implementation of the educational policies, the educational system at all levels in Nigeria could be said to have failed to produce students with skills or self-reliant; neither has it provided the much-needed socio- economic and political development to the nation. To this end, educational system may be said to be in a serious dilemma if not at the brink of total disintegration which only strategic leaders may redirect to the way of recovery and eventual success.

As it is, the factors responsible for the mess of very poor attainment in Nigeria educational industry are legion. Some of the facts are glaringly evident in poor leadership quality in educational institutions, incompetent educational instructors or teachers, lack of capacity building for educational leaders and teachers, political uncertainty, poor funding for education and research, lack of collaboration and integration with other sectors, inadequate incentives and motivation for subordinates, poor infrastructural facilities (library, ICT units, science laboratory), indiscipline among teachers /students, ethnicity and tribal sentiment in the appointment of institutional leaders and none recognition for merit and hard work in the field. Be that as it may, these litanies of uncertainties plaguing the Nigerian educational system, coupled with other internal institutional challenges, could in greater percentage been responsible for very poor academic standard achievement, turning out of low grades of unemployable graduates, and other hindrances in achieving educational success and by extension, realizing the goals of education in Nigeria (Ajaka et al., 2014 cited in Ololube, 2018a). Many academics in their various works have stressed that poor funding has been one of the major problems facing educational advancement in Nigeria. As Adiele (2020:127) opined, “there is no clear policy on education funding budgetary allocation to education since independence have never been anywhere near the 26% recommended by UNESCO, rather it has oscillated between 8% and 11% over the years”.

Besides funding, poor educational leadership has also been identified as a core challenge to achieving educational success. Generally, leadership is defined as the ability to influence others without force or violence to do what the leader wants them to do in order to realize a common goal. Leadership is an indispensable factor to steering back educational success into the system. From the look of things, it might not be out of place to state that Nigerian educational system lacks quality leadership with vision, commitment and determination in this scientific era. To buttress this fact, Ololube (2018b) affirmed that there is a general belief that quality leadership is a contemporary challenge in schools and students' brighter performance in today's education. Leadership challenge in the educational institution is visible in the differences and mismatch between what is offered in the schools at all levels, and the types of education at the real world at work. This mismatch is made visible in the quality of graduates turned out from the system that lack skills, knowledge and are unemployable.

From the foregoing, the writer presumed that academic excellence which has been a mirage in the education system, could be corrected or realized with strategic educational leaders who are visionary, skilled, committed, change friendly and knowledgeable in transformational leadership approach. Little wonder "reformers, stakeholders, parents, members of the business community, have complained that the failure of the school is as a result of poor leadership" (Anyagwu & Ojule in Ezech & Okpokiri, 2019). Considering these facts as presented, this paper is therefore inclined to presume that strategic leadership remains the most likely option to addressing the educational challenges which have hindered success, and have equally become more devastating as it spreads to all facets of life (socio-political, economic circle, and technological) in the present-day education in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Concept of Education

Education is a very important sector in every nation. All over the world, education determines the pace of development and growth both economically, socially, politically, technologically and other wise. It is a process of impacting valuable knowledge, skills or values that will result to positive change in behaviour of persons or students. Education is seen and defined by various scholars from different perspectives which means that there is no generally accepted definition of the term "education. Again, Adiele (2015) observed, that the gigantic function of education calls for committed leadership for the vast administrative work needed to be accomplished. It could also be defined as a means of acquiring knowledge, skills and aptitudes through teaching and learning that could transform a learner for better life. In broad term, education has been defined as a systematic training and instruction, through which knowledge, abilities, development of character and mental power are developed (Merian-Webster, n.d.). Education is a process by which children or adults acquire skills to upgrade the abilities, potentialities and other behavioural characteristics or acceptable values to the society they live (Fafunwa cited in Ezekiel-Hart & Adiele, 2010). It has equally been described as the bed rock for every nation. Okeke (2004) supported the claim that education plays significant roles in the overall growth of any nation. In the same vein, Akpan cited in Nwanekezie and Ogona (2021) gave voice to the statement and affirmed that education in Nigeria is acknowledged as an instrument per excellence for national development.

However, the Federal Government in the national policy on education listed some laudable programs or goals for all levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary), some of which have already been highlighted. The question at the moment is, how far has the laudable goals been actualized? If the answer is not satisfactory as it appears, what then should be the best steps to bring the system out of the woods so that the long expected educational dividend will be actualized. To realize the educational goals which would translate to achieving educational success, this paper tends to suggest that time has come for the gigantic function of education to be accorded the desired attention it deserves by the stakeholders to ensuring that only committed and skilled leaders who understand and can apply the contemporary approaches to leadership are allowed or appointed to mane the vast administrative work needed to accomplish success in the education industry. To this end therefore, it might be suggested that all traditional, analog, autocratic, bureaucratic, rigid and uninformed institutional leaders at all levels, should give way for more strategic, skilled, proactive, innovative, visionary and dynamic leaders to take over the mantle of educational leadership, and do the needful.

The paper therefore appears to present strategic leadership as the better approach to handle the educational backwardness, because of what they stand for. They are leaders that can create visions, ideas, motivate the groups and translate new ideas into reality. Strategic leaders are agents of change, good team players and innovators. They appear to be the way forward because they have the required skills, knowledge and the influencing attributes or acumen for transforming the workers, as well as mop up the mess that have lingered over the years in Nigeria education system. However, as experienced leaders, they know how best to identify problems, set goals, place priorities and follow short term plans in other to achieve sustainable success (Austin, 2019).

There is no gain saying the fact that management of education in Nigeria in the 21st century has become more complex a task which only seasoned and more strategic leaders can handle (Okeke, 2004). The reasons are not far-fetched. As all can see, there is a rapid increase in demand for formal education at all levels coupled with technological advancement globally which have brought changes in the society and in all aspects of life. These changes have brought concern to leaders of educational institutions who are making efforts to ensure that not only would they provide quality education, but also produce the best graduates who can fit into the global competitiveness (Nwanekezie, 2020).

However, the success needed in the educational system to meet the global competitiveness may certainly continue to eluded us if the government and other stakeholders continue to appoint mediocre or employ unqualified educational leaders that lack skills, vision, knowledge of collaboration or technological know-how, on how to coordinate, motivate and influence the groups to work towards the success of educational goals. The era of autocracy or the use of force by the leaders to ensure compliance from workers in institutions or organizations has given way to a more collaborative, integration, openness and friendly relationship between the leaders and their subordinates. Having attempted to explain what education is, what it should provide for the human society, and the type of leadership needed, the truth remains that Nigeria educational system may have failed to have successfully realized its goals. This informed the writer's conviction to suggest that strategic educational leadership is key for all levels of education. In the same vein, it is being suggested that for the ills or rots bedeviling the educational system to be effectively addressed, and replaced with high educational standards that would meet the global competitiveness, strategic leadership remains the way for achieving educational success in Nigeria.

Importance of Education

Education has been defined as the panacea for vast range of tasks of the society, and the bed-rock for national development. Its support for research is the sure source for new knowledge discovery, inventions and new technological findings for advancement. The ultimate aim of education is for the betterment of man. However, this broad perspective of education appears to agree with the dictum propounded by Kuan Chung Tzu who opined that “if you wish to plant for a year, sow seeds; if you wish to plant for ten years, plant trees; if you wish to plant for life time; develop man” (Tell Magazine, August 23, cited in Okeke, 2004). Could it be said then that the world could have been at its worst state without education? Nonetheless, to attempt to list the importance of education may be difficult, but permit me to mention but a few, thus:

- Education is the biggest agent for social change, transmission of knowledge, culture or social heritage.
- Values, norms and societal acceptable standards are shared through education.
- It leads to the development of knowledge and information about new discoveries, facts and methods (ICT era).
- Education aids the development of man for life, allocates roles in the society through recruitment, and socializes the people into occupations, professions or political roles (Okeke, 2004).
- Education aids the growth of literate society that could respond to the scientific era of technological demands of the modern world.
- The provision of literacy, numeracy and special training for professional abilities and competences are part of the functions of education.

As presented in this paper, education remains the corner stone for the growth of man and the nations. The socio -economic, political, technological and educational success of any nation, depends to a great extent on the quality, knowledge, commitment, skills and approaches the educational leaders’ exhibit in their daily running of the organizations. Their abilities to create visions, communicate clearly what it entails, integrate, collaborate, influence and convince their subordinates to embrace the new vision, and work as a team towards achieving the pre-determined goals is needed. To this end, the paper suggested that strategic leadership could be the way out for realizing educational success in Nigeria.

Concept of Leadership

A leader is one who coordinates, sorts out, controls and deals with the exercises of an association for accomplishment of their objectives. Since leaders ensure the effective growth of the organization, the man power development of the individuals and the society at large, any organization without an effective leader is bound to be in disarray. Oragwu and Nwabueze (2015) stressed that leaders assume important roles in the art of leadership and as executives of an organization for individual development, societal advancement and worldwide intensity. The saying that to understand the meaning of leadership will need an understanding of behaviours, attitudes and characters that leaders portray might be real. Tracy (2014) gave an understanding when he said “there are three types of people in the society; those who make things happen;

those who watch what is happening; and those who haven't the slightest idea of what is happening". Leaders according to him can be best counted as those who make things happen. Based on this premise, leadership can be defined as the capability or ability of a person or group of persons to direct, convince and guide the subordinates by clarifying the path those subordinates will tow through motivating, inspiring and influencing them to work at a level far above their expectations to achieve a desired objective. Northouse and Rowe in Ololube (2019) expressed support to the above and affirmed that leadership is a process where by an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a pre-set goal.

Bennis cited in Adiele (2020) in clarifying the meaning of leadership had likened it to beauty when he said "it is hard to determine beauty, but you know it when you see it. Just like beauty, the term leadership is so popular and commonly used on daily basis that one is tempted to assume that there is a general consensus on what it means. This is not so as there are as numerous definitions as there are scholars engaged in leadership studies". That is to say that leadership definition is not a one cap fits all. It has various definitions as various scholars approach it from their different perspectives and understanding. Stogdil in Nwanekezie (2020) supporting the statement, affirmed that there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept. However, few other leadership definitions will be presented to back up this paper.

Leadership could be broadly defined as the ability to convince a team or group towards realizing goals of institutions or organizations. According to Baparika (2018) the influence of the leader could come by the possession of an institutional appointment of managerial rank in an organization. Though leadership may be invested by institutional appointment, but unless those leaders possess administrative capabilities along with academic excellence, they may face darning consequences hence the need for acquiring leadership skills. Little wonder Asubiojo et al. (2005) opined that leadership implies a lot of things put together, and could be defined as a discipline or an activity and so on which a leader may not cope with if s/he is not properly groomed. Dressler in Nwiyi (2019) expressed that leadership which carries the load of mobilizing all resources (human and material) towards achieving the goals in the most economical and profitable manner for the organization, should need effective persons.

Nonetheless, here are few other definitions that approximate to what may be seen as generally accepted definitions of leadership:

- Leadership is the ability to elicit extraordinary performance from ordinary people (Tracy, 2014).
- Leadership is a development of a clear and complete system of expectations in order to identify, evoke and use the strengths of all resources in the organization, the most important which is people (Batten, 1989 in Nwanekezie, 2020).
- Leadership is the process by which a person exerts influence over other people and inspires, motivates and directs the activities to help achieve group or organizational goals (Jones & George, 2003 in Adiele, 2020).
- Leadership involves the achievement of organizational goals through a process of influencing, directing, acquiring normative personal characteristics and power, and coordinating group activities to make individuals in the organization strive willingly towards the attainment of the set goals or solution to a mutual problem (Ukeje, Okorie & Nwagbara, 1992).

Every organization is goal oriented and that is why effective leadership is key to the realization of their pre-determined goals. Leadership is the ability of a person or group to direct or influence others on how and what to do to achieve organizational goals; and good followership can only emerge where there is leadership by example. Yiki (2013) gave credence to the above and defined leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree on what should be done, how to do it and the process of helping the subordinates or group effort, to achieve the objectives. Ololube (2018a) in Igweneme (2019) explained that no reasonable achievement could be made in any institution without effective leadership who takes initiative to implement innovations, build on past circumstances and expand on prior and existing successes.

Leadership is an act of motivating, convincing and carrying a team of people to work towards achieving a common goal of an organization or institution. For the set objectives to be realized, the leader has to apply good leadership approaches, skills, charisma and affection that could convince the followers to go with his or her direction. There has to be a common goal, which the subordinates should be willing to work with the leader to achieve, as well as impacting their lives. Those skills, charisma, abilities, or behaviours of a leader, that influences or motivates a person or team, to do what ordinarily they would not have done, makes the difference in leadership. The writer then defines leadership as a process of convincing a group or team to willingly accept to do in the most productive manner what the leader wants them to do. However, the leader leads by example and gives meaningful direction to the effort of the group. It is the effective effort or style the leader brings to bear that induces the followers to work with zeal and confidence. In other words, leadership is the capacity of a leader to make others work convincingly towards accomplishing a specific task. Okeke (1985) cited in Nwanekezie (2020: 758) gave credence to this and opined “how well an organization is carried out, depends to a large extent on the quality of leadership which the leader brings to bear on the day-to-day performance of the duties”.

From the foregoing, it could be deduced or presumed that leadership in Nigerian educational system leaves much to be desired as this has affected all aspects of human endeavour especially in the quality of graduates groomed today. The Nigerian educational institutions lack committed, visionary, and strategic leadership which is needed to rebrand the educational system and give greater attention to human empowerment and societal development. The political leaders are not left out in this mess. They have equally failed over the years to give adequate budgetary allocation to education sector nor lead the citizens with honesty. Part of the problem could be leadership inefficiency, incompetency, lacking in skills and knowledge in strategic leadership styles or approaches. However, only few of the Nigerian leaders in the past, were transformers in social, economic, educational and political life of the masses (Nwiyi, 2019).

Therefore, for Nigerian educational system to achieve the desired success, there has to be a paradigm shift from the analog leadership mentality and practices that sees innovation and change as serious challenges. Such educational leaders need to be replaced in this era of technological explosion where change is the in thing; with visionary and strategic leadership who are change agents, skilled with the right approaches to re-brand the system towards achieving the goals and objectives of the institutions. On the other hand, all traditional educational leaders who still desire to serve must be encouraged to enroll into leadership capacity and skills development programs to update their knowledge. Leaders that can inspire, influence, and awaken the subordinates to see problems as a stepping stone to discovering new knowledge may be the option for now (Nwiyi, 2019).

Concept of Strategic Leadership

Strategy could be seen as mapped out plans to be adopted in the course of carrying out an action that could bring about solution to a problem. Strategies are usually initiated by leaders who carry the visions and ideas believed to bring about positive changes that could lead to the realization of the desired educational objectives. The best strategy in the world could be frustrated if a leader fails to set the visions clear to the group, or influence and convince them on how the new process could be beneficial to all. It has to be clear that the new vision or idea could help the group improve their knowledge, skills and well-being, as well as lead to goal attainment. Ezeh and Okpokiri (2019) explained strategy as a plan that involves unique set of activities designed to solve notable challenges facing the realization of educational goals.

Education in Nigeria from the look of things could be said to have gotten to the crossroad, or at the brick of total collapse because of the lingering challenges. There is therefore an urgent need for all stakeholders especially school leaders at all levels to take proactive strategic steps to ensure carefully planned and managed educational programs for sustainable development or relevance. The importance of strategy in dealing with all areas of human activities cannot be overstated. Strategy deals with carefully deciding and choosing to act differently in certain programs, and to bring better performance than others in them (Porter, 2011). Central to strategic leadership is a strong conviction that the dreams, visions or ideas are worth sacrificing for. The leader's commitment to the vision and the belief system, gives rise to strong conviction that they have something different to offer to achieve greater success in the educational institution which others don't have. In the instance therefore, strategic leadership becomes an indispensable factor to stirring back educational success in Nigeria educational system. Ololube (2018) in Ezeh and Okpokiri (2019:1390) stated thus "the popular belief that quality leadership is a major factor in schools and students' performance remains true to this day". This statement attests to the fact that the ability to bring about educational success will be elusive without a strategic or functional leadership. To this end, Ololube (2018b) again gave voice to the above and stated that strategic leaders are capable as they can fix errors, solve problems, take responsibilities to see that the right changes are affected in institutions and amendments promptly made when they veer into turbulent paths.

Nigeria educational system has fallen in standard and quality because of incompetent leadership in the system. No one can give what they do not have, hence, the knowledge passed on to students could be greatly affected due to leadership incompetency. Anyaogu and Ojule (2016) gave credence to this when they clarified that all stakeholders in education industry such as reformers, parents and members of the business community have asserted that academic and school failure is as a result of poor leadership. In the same vein, researchers and theorists while responding to the claims, identified reasons for leadership deficiencies which include but are not limited to lack of capacity building training for leaders, ignorance and fear for change, poor leadership styles or approaches etc.

To bridge this gap, the following different dimensions were prescribed for effective leadership that will bring about success in our educational system in Nigeria. They include but are not limited to transformational leadership, distributive leadership, institutional leadership, transactional leadership and strategic leadership which is favored in this paper (Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019). Educational institutions will grow through strategic and transformational process with the leadership and followers adopting the right approaches, skills, methods and techniques to achieve educational goals (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). School leaders (Headmasters, Principals or even the

Vice-Chancellors) should adopt the right approaches, and also perform exemplary roles and behavior that should influence the character of the staff and students for better teaching and learning outcomes. This could create the best platform for the growth of core competences and excellent environment for conducive learning (Hoskisson et al. in Ezech & Okpokiri, 2019).

The global technological advancement and dynamic society today has affected the school institutions internally and externally, thus creating an urgent need for strategic leadership for a systematic planned and unplanned educational changes. Strategic leadership therefore is what schools in Nigeria at this point need. They are leaders who could change visions into achievable goals, as well as correct the wrongs in the present educational system with their knowledge and technological skills. They have proven abilities to collaborate with group members, share visions and be able to convince the followers or staff to work as a team towards goal attainment (Ankan & Enginoglu, 2016). Strategic educational leaders could be explained as possessing uncommon or new plans or methods designed to show known challenges geared towards realizing educational goals.

It may have become a common saying that the state of Nigerian educational system at all levels have deteriorated to an embarrassing stage where graduates find it difficult to defend the certificates they possess, while teachers get too busy to do proper work. Even though numerous problems such as poor funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, staff and student's indiscipline, poor remuneration of workers and others are there, the most important challenge has been identified as inadequate leadership quality. Acquisition of appropriate skills, the right attitudes and approaches through capacity building, integration and collaboration is required. According to Nwanekezie (2020), for any reasonable change to take place in any organization there has to be a deliberate shift from the old practices and methods of doing things (analog ways) to the new approaches (digital era), and that explains the need for strategic leadership.

They are change agents that can incubate new ideas, visions, strategies, and clarify issues. Strategic leaders give directions, guide motives and missions of the institutions towards realizing the goals of the new mission or agenda. Leaders who have the knowledge and skills to galvanize and influence the teams, people or groups, to key into the new vision through collaboration, integration, or long-term commitment, that could lead to creation of new institutional culture in the event of change. Strategic leadership is what the Nigerian educational institutions of all levels need for effective leadership, realization of educational success and the best process of guiding new ideas for the future changes ahead (Nwanekezie, 2020). They understand the concept of the educational system and what is needed to be done to make it work at all times. S/he leads in the innovative process of the system no matter the levels because they all deal with leadership.

From the above analogy therefore, the paper is still inclined to believe that to bring back the lost glory in the educational system in Nigeria, will demand for strategic leadership who are visionary, skilled, intellectually sound, good team players with transformational leadership acumen is key. They seem to be proven leaders that understand the strategic steps to be taken to ensure that education is seriously planned and managed in order to bring the needed success the individual, families and to the society at large. They also know how to set achievable goals that will ensure educational growth. Peretomode (2012) defined strategic leadership as the enablement to set specific goals and direction for the purpose of organizational success and development. Strategic leaders are initiators of new programs or innovators of new ideas that could transform the situation on ground for better productivity. They could explain the means school leaders could use to bring about desired changes or translate visions into tangible goals.

A Strategic school leader carries out the roles with conviction, determination and diligence which directly influences the work ethics of both the teaching and non-teaching staff positively. This positive influence of the leader on the staff creates the right atmosphere for the development of the right competences that aid effective teaching and learning (Hoskisson et al. cited in Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019). The high technological and changing nature of the society in this modern era has adverse effect on the school all round, thus the urgent need for a strategic leader who could bring about planned and unplanned educational changes that could stand the test of time and compete favorably with global standards. Strategic leadership is not the same as any other leadership dimensions. While other leaders influence the behavior of their subordinates, strategic leaders not only influence behavior of groups but also transform goals visions or ideas into tangible reality. In other words, for school principals to lead strategically, they require having the eyes of an eagle to see widely and clearly with great insight to build and support new structures (Norzaillan et al., 2016).

Strategic leadership therefore are leaders with the needed skills, knowledge, and the right approaches for change that will bring about the long-awaited success in the educational system in Nigeria. They are inventive leaders who have clear visions of the strategies or methods to adopt in convincing the organizational members to work willingly towards achieving the organizational goals most effectively. They motivate and persuade the workers to follow their visions, and also show great concern and passion over the development of their teams or workers, as well as their welfare. Strategic leaders create clean defined environment and structure in the organization; and make good use of rewards and incentives to encourage productivity and better output among the employees. Their mastery of the scientific era approaches to effective leadership convinced the writer to suggest that strategic leadership is what is needed to transform the educational system in Nigeria to global standards.

Characteristics of Strategic Leaders

According to Adiele (2020), strategic leaders exhibit the following characteristics:

Commitment to Action: Strategic leaders are seriously committed to bringing into reality their visions. Through their human actions or influence, the employees believe in them and key into their vision.

They have Updated Information: These leaders are also updated with recent information on how continued growth will be achieved in the organization. They assess information from both formal and informal structures within and outside the organization.

Power Utilization: They are careful in their use of power, while discharging their duties; they avoid exhibiting power drunk attitude.

Broader Views on Issues: Strategic leaders have wider views on topical issues regarding effectiveness and goal attainment, which they willingly share with their workers. They love integration, collaboration and team work.

Highly Motivated: They are usually highly motivated in pursuing and sharing their vision and are determined to succeed. Strategic leaders see challenges as opportunities for new knowledge discovery.

Compassionate: They are leaders with human passion especially towards their subordinates' feelings. They sort and respect their subordinates' views in making decisions on organizational issues.

Self-Control: They exercise self-control to themselves and to their subordinates as they think before they act. Strategic leaders are skills in managing distractions as they arise. However, they use of force isn't associated with their leadership due to their greater understanding.

Delegation of Authority: Strategic leaders are willing to delegate authority to the workers to reduce work load and stress. This act, encourages the subordinates' involvement in decision making.

Sociable and Reliable: They exhibit appreciable social skills, usually very friendly, interacts freely with workers and shares the organizational visions which will in turn be part of the organizational culture.

Create Vision: These leaders incubate vision and strive to accomplish them.

Advantages of Strategic Leadership

- They create stronger bonding and structure for the organization. Structural ideas are used to draw up short and long term plans that center on organizational growth.
- They are clear and straight in the decision-making process; and have clear directions that guide actions and decisions of both the leader and the lead.
- The common vision is translated to common platform that promotes the organizational goals.
- Strategic leadership style reduces friction, since everyone is accommodated in the decision making.
- There is a clear understanding of operation with clear idea that makes the job of the subordinates' easy, since they understand the essence of the required procedure.
- There is a clear objective which makes it easier for implementation.
- Cooperate culture and values are respected as they insure mapped out rules, ways and processes of doing things.
- They have clearly defined objectives that guide on what is rightly done and exposes lacking areas for improvement.

Disadvantages of Strategic Leadership

- Too much reliance on visionary approach in predicting the future; as getting accurate forecasting always could be challenging because most prediction could be guess work which when relied upon, could results in poor choices and decision.

- Unpredictability of the future poses a great danger here as there could be unforeseen circumstances that could show up in the organization that could create managerial problems.
- It appears to be very difficult for people to predict correctly what might be in longer years like 10-15 years considering the rapid speed of technological advancement.
- Short term visions, if not well articulated could be hindered by long term goals.
- They are slow to react to immediate problems due to long term decisions that may not be easily reversed.
- Visions might take a long time for the organization to achieve the envisaged results.

Strategic Processes Geared Towards Changes in Education

Change is a process that leads to the creation of a new way or system by a leader for actualization of better results. Porter (2011) agreed that change is a process that demands that a new system be created to enable leaders realize their goals. Strategic leaders move with vision and time, while positive change remains their goal. This is what the educational system in Nigeria needs now. However, eight stages have been identified for organization or institution that desire change (Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019). The approaches include the following:

Identification of crisis: A strategic leader first identifies the issues at hand, and how best to approach them. In the issues of education in Nigeria, there are legions of challenges as earlier mentioned, that need leaders with the appropriate skills on how to tackle them one after the other. In this instance, leaders who are vase in knowledge, skilled and are desirous or willing to effect changes should be appointed either by the educational policy makers, or those in high government circles to make the system. The issues of ethnicity, tribalism, nepotism and what have you are not helping matters as government displays sentiment in their appointment of school leaders which has given rise to lots of mediocrity in the system at the expense of meritocracy, skills and knowledge to prevail. Therefore, strategic leaders who are change agents, and could easily champion the corporal change agenda in the Nigerian education system, and proffer solution should be given the chance.

Create a change group: These are groups of people that share the same vision and compassion to lead the efforts to bring about change. The leader influences the behavior of the team which grows gradually to accommodate more active supporters for the better initiative. The school leaders as active participants should be committed to achieving the educational goals. They should learn to help and communicate plainly and friendly to their teachers, workers and even the students to develop a proper knowledge of the problems in the teaching and learning process, and also appreciate the opportunities that would be created from such collaborative efforts.

Create vision: Leaders who have foresight and courage to visualize things and translate them into reality. Visions help to guide and direct the change efforts as leaders focus on the vision statement, set goals, direct the school organization, help stakeholders, teachers and students to know what the system is all about, how the vision will achieve success through their daily activities and what everybody stands to gain (Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019).

Communicate the new vision: Strategic school leaders understand better the usefulness of change groups or team behaviors. Positive behavior of the leaders and the teams could impact on other teachers, lecturers or even students who are not in the group. This could be expressed through frequent communication, at staff meetings, student assembly, open day speeches, P.T.A meetings, Board meetings and Newsletters to incorporate the vision in the school's daily programs. The leaders should also create space for personal development and growth of the team members, and others. Strategic leaders are open, friendly and sensitive to the emotional needs of the groups while upholding social justice, fairness, equity, integrity, honesty, etc. among the members in the school.

Eliminate obstacles to change: This is a very critical stage where skills should play great roles. The leaders have to bring the new ideas and approaches as they provide leadership to others, and encourage them to try the new approaches. Some of the obstacles that usually make some leaders or staff resist change include: fear for the unknown, poor attitude of the teachers, ignorance, lack of knowledge or skills to contend with the challenges that the new change may pose and so on. However, while some teachers or people may confess, they want change, their attitudes may not show same and the leaders need to manage these behaviors to ensure success and productivity. Be that as it may, if all challenges are not moved immediately, the leader is never to be discouraged but persist as the major obstacles must go for effective result to be achieved.

Plan for short term achievement: A strategic leader knows that nothing good comes easy, and to bring major changes in the education industry will need time which may affect people's zeal if it takes too long to produce result. For this reason, strategic leaders usually go for short term achievement and celebrate them to motivate positive attitudes. However, some people are not inspired when they do not see tangible success of their efforts. This could make them become in different or active resistor of the new agenda. They therefore plan strategically for visible achievement, improvement, recognition and rewards for teachers and workers who perform very well in the tasks apportioned to them.

Leaders manage success: Leaders ensure that programs and activities are completely matured or developed to ensure their success, because success cannot be declared if the program has not reached logical conclusion, otherwise teachers or staff efforts may be weakened which could cause setback or discouragement. Both the initiators and resisters of new programs must be followed with care by the educational leader so that tangible time is not spent celebrating wins, at the expense of re-engineering new projects needed to stimulate bigger challenges.

Align change to school culture: Changes in the school system can last when it becomes a lifestyle.

Two factors come into play here when advocating for change in a corporate culture like the school.

Firstly, there should be a conscious effort established by the leader to show the people how the new approaches, behaviors and attitudes have helped improve people's performance which is what the leader must pass across clearly to the teachers or staff at their gatherings. Discussion should be allowed on performance and reason for its success.

Secondly, the top management cadre in the institution such as the vice principal, heads of department etc. should also run with the leadership vision for continuity. The leader should ensure to groom good successors who should take over from him/her. This is because success without a successor amounts to zero.

Strategic Leadership Approaches for Educational Success

Strategic leaders apply suited approaches to realize the visions or goals of the educational institutions; hence, it is best suited with structured plans that allow goal actualization. Schools should translate theories into practice as growth in education can be achieved as a result of learning and knowledge application. Some of the approaches as stated by Nnabuo et al. (2006) include: team management strategy, skills management strategy, decision making model, conflict management strategy and so on. These various strategies are briefly explained below. As earlier mentioned, strategic leadership works best with structured or organized plans to be realized (Robert-Okah, 2005).

Team management strategy: Teams are the bedrock of all societal organizations be it formal like the educational institutions or informal. A strategic leader's first function is to carefully create the team and select their major actors that will run with him or her to realize the goals of education. The leader must be dedicated and passionately committed to the vision. These attributes need to be embraced in the present-day educational leadership where insensitivity is the order of the day. The leader develops team attitude, and ensures that team leaders co-operate with the corporate vision to be realized. In the school system, the principal should lead by example and be able to coordinate the teachers, non-teaching staff and even the students to work collectively in carrying out their tasks of teaching and learning in order to achieve better outcome which will be evident in the improved behavior of the students, and the new skills acquired (Ovenda, 2016). Corporate collaboration and integration of the teams enhance goal attainment. It should then be said that strategic school leaders should support teamwork among teachers and even students to improve cross-fertilization of ideas, inter-dependence and better result.

Skills management strategy: Strategic leaders know how to improve and manage skills of their workers. Skills are natural potentialities or abilities inborn in man, teachers or leaders. They are God endowed capabilities which could remain dormant if not properly directed. Osemwegie in Ezeh and Okpokiri (2019) explained two types of skills as Job-related and transferrable skills. Job related are the technical aspects of skills relating to the profession. Examples are teaching skills like: teaching, lesson note planning, methodology and communication skills, etc which are very important as core teaching skill. Transferrable skills on the other hand are those skills transferred from the teacher to the learner in the course of teaching. Such skills include: planning digital literacy, writing or reading literacy, accepting responsibilities, meeting deadlines in assignments, performing leadership roles and so on. Strategic school leaders show the importance of these skills and ensure they are properly explained through staff development programs. The leader also impacts the staff by showing positive attitude to work, being punctual, being time conscious, ability to work with others, honesty, integrity, responsibility and accountability.

Decision making model: Decision making plays great role in strategic educational leadership where school leaders use rational decision to see the organizational objectives. Identified discussions are developed and best alternatives selected and acted upon. This helps the school strategic leader to set attainable clear goals. Ejimabo (2015) explained decision making model as a strategic act of making a choice. Hence, the success or failure of an educational institution has been greatly linked to the leader's decisions or choices rightly or wrongly made. Considerations are usually given to relationship in decision making as teachers internal or external activities are central as the behavior of strategic leaders affect the decisions they make in schools (Ankan & Enginoglu, 2016).

Conflict management strategy: This is a very robust skill of strategic leaders in any school. Institutions are run by people who make interaction with one another individually or as a group. Where interaction exists, there is bound to be disagreement at times that would lead to offence or conflicts. In fact, conflict is a serious disagreement or argument typically a protracted one and a necessary aspect of all educational institutions because you can't avoid it (Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019). The ability of the leader to act promptly on issues before they escalate is key. Conflict should be promptly managed because school organization as a place of free interaction and communication with diverse views and opinion can easily degenerate to internal disagreement, and the timely intervention by the leader is important especially in the management of new vision or change (Longe, 2015). Strategic school leaders must therefore be skillful and timely in settling conflicts not only among the teachers, but also among the students. Leadership should employ tact, encourage openness and group cohesion in the school. The competence of a school leader to reduce conflicts is strategic.

Other Strategies Needed for Sustainable Educational Success

These include:

- To build core competences
- To manage the value chain
- Create and manage knowledge
- To develop prototypes, and
- To integrate information and communication technology to school practices.

Managing education to bring about the expected outcome needs diverse approaches that would hasten goal attainment and sustainability. It also requires maintaining standards and building of compelling new brand techniques that would guarantee education success or attainment of educational goals. However, to bring this to pass in the Nigerian educational system, leaders must lead strategically and must be skilled enough to do the following:

Build core competences: Competence is the fundamental key to attaining educational success at all levels. This may critically be lacking among the educational leaders and subordinates in the education system in Nigeria. When school leaders, lecturers, teachers and even students are lacking in competence, it simply means that the system had already failed before taking off. This may have informed the reason skilled strategic leaders should be given a chance in the education industry in Nigeria to rebrand it. Core competences explain group learning and how to

coordinate, integrate and collaborate learning in different yielding skills and technologies to bring about growth and progress (Faiz in Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019).

Core competence is the key to raising educational standard as it aids school leaders and staff to create value, new ideas, skills, knowledge and experiences which are the expected outcomes of learning. Strategic educational leadership therefore encourages and creates platforms for skills development in teaching and other related areas. Such skills include: teacher creativity, problem solving skills, communication skills, leadership competence skill, and skills for collaboration and integration with others. The paper therefore posits that for educational success to be actualized and sustained in Nigeria, there has to be serious leadership and teacher capacity building campaign. This should be achieved by funding organized seminars, workshops in-service training and international conferences for the various levels of leaders and teachers in the education sector (Obasi & Asodike, 2007). When competences are carefully developed among educational leadership and teachers that manage the school system, quality service delivery to both the stakeholders and the society at large will be visibly seen even on the quality of graduates or students produced. Strategic school leaders in essence should ensure that teachers are equipped with the needed technical skills for better educational outcome (Pandolfini, 2013).

Manage the value chain: Education as a valuable instrument to all in the nation must maintain its prideful position in the nation's economy through the quality teaching delivery by the teachers and learning outcome in the students. This accounts for the reason a strategic leader focuses on the value the system creates (Norman & Ramirez, 2000 in Ezeh & Okpokiri, 2019). When a strategic leader brings about desirable transformation in the school, the educational system then creates value. This simply changes the existing tradition with better and effective approaches where new roles, methods and functions are allotted to teachers to change the old status-quo. How the teachers or the staff provide these services matter as commitment should be the watch word for all and sundry. Teachers should imbibe the reading culture in order to understand properly the concepts they teach to avoid complacency, redundancy and abnormal attitude. The teachers should show good habits which should be inculcated in the students. School leaders must create value for each member's responsibility for a holistic, reformatory system as trust and cordial relationship should be encouraged among the teaching and non-teaching staff and the students to ensure conducive learning environment. All change ideas must be well communicated and applied to develop new knowledge and teaching of new concepts in better ways (Onuoha et al., 2015).

Create and manage knowledge: Knowledge creation is a major function of the school organization. It is a viable avenue of competing with other nations and gaining an advantage. Innovation means bringing or creating new vision or ideas, technologies into the system (Nwogu, 2013). In other words, educational change creates new knowledge while innovation manages it. Advancement is hindered with poor management of new knowledge, and this is a major challenge of Nigerian educational system. Without broader view in the management of educational change, new ideas, knowledge and technologies in pedagogy will only boost stagnation and retention of old traditions operational in institutions of learning. This informs the reason the clamor for strategic leadership with a broader vision and mission to affect social change in the teaching and learning process is key (Hanburg & Busksch, 2017).

Develop prototypes: There is no gain saying that ideas rule the world and new ideas are essential elements of change process. Strategic leaders create ideas which when translated into reality becomes knowledge. Conceived ideas are developed through experimentation which is what strategic leaders do. School leaders should be generating new technologies in their instructional delivery to assist teaching and learning process go easier and faster.

Integrated information and communication technology to school practices: Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are the new era developments that have brought appreciable changes in the education sector. To affect this into Nigerian educational system needs collaboration with others schools around the world for wider knowledge, cross-change of ideas, exposure etc (Ndwiki & Thinguri, 2017). Strategic leaders should encourage digital platforms and forums to increase easy access and usage. They provide both the facilities and the structure to accommodate all. For example, the interactive white board provided in the school system cannot be used because special spaces where not created for them to be mounted. These kinds of challenges could create handicaps for change to be fully integrated or attained in the system (Pandolfini, 2013). However, strategic leaders should ensure that these challenges are surmounted and the needs met for the success of the educational system in Nigeria.

Concept of Educational Success

Educational success could be viewed and assessed from the accomplishment of purposes, goals or objectives set out to be achieved at the end. Every purpose is expected to lead to a result. The ability of the system to have successfully realized the purposes or the objectives of the laid down educational policies and programs in the lives of people, students, the economy, and the society at large would determine its success. As could be said, the National Conference of 1969 which fashioned out a philosophy for Nigeria's education that would answer to the people's needs, gave birth to the emergence of the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1977 (Ezekiel-Hart & Adiele, 2010). The National Policy on Education had five objectives namely:

- A free and democratic society;
- A just and egalitarian society;
- A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- A great and dynamic economy;
- A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens

However, the National objectives of Nigerian Philosophy of Education have the following:

- To build National consciousness and National unity;
- To imbibe in the people the right values, attitudes for individual survival and for the society;
- To train and expose people's minds for better understanding of the world around us; and
- To develop the right skills and competences mentally and physically in the individuals to help them contribute positively to the society.

From all indication, there is no doubt that the core purpose of education from the two positions above is to transform the lives of individuals through knowledge and skills acquisition from

education that would lead to a self-reliant, community development and societal growth. However, the realization of these purposes or goals is the onus that would guarantee educational success, and this calls for skilled and committed leadership to guide and encourage the staff to be more committed, and give meaning and relevance to all sections of the educational system. In the words of Akuegwu cited in Akuegwu (2019) educational goals can be achieved if the leader's relationships, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and made functional to the extent of having the capability and capacity to add value to human lives by making students better and more sophisticated at their exit point. That is to say that the gigantic educational leadership roles would require determined and capable leaders who have mastery of the job, and can influence the staff to adopt the best strategies that will bring about the desired changes in the lives of the learners, for self -actualization and societal growth.

Educational success is not just having a certificate or degree, it is more than that. As stated above, it can be explained in terms of goal attainment. It is about getting the learner (students) ready for satisfying life. It entails teaching or impacting in the students' relevant skills and abilities that employers need in employees. The strengthening career and technical education (SCTE) for the 21st century act will help students reach these goals (Handbury & Buskch 2017). Educational success could equally be explained as the accomplishment of learning process; gaining subject knowledge; and developing employability skills. When educational system cannot successfully realize the set goals, it implies that the desired success would be a mirage.

Factors Militating Against Educational Success in Nigeria

Nigerian educational sector is challenged with lots of issues which have affected the educational success adversely. Prominent among them have been adequately mentioned in this paper. However, few will be briefly explained here thus:

Inadequate leadership: good leadership is very fundamental to the success of educational system. A leader is one in the group given the task of guiding, directing and coordinating task relevant group activities. Poor leadership therefore implies a leader's inability to possess or exhibit unquestionable intellectual ability, or lack of physical and mental capability to do the job. There is lack of professionalism in educational sector management, as non-professionals are usually appointed into leadership positions. This situation portends danger as quacks who do not have the technical skills and knowledge expertise in educational leadership take the central stage. Be that as it may, the end result is seen in the fallen standards of education, unemployable grades of students produced, poor goal attainment, uncoordinated educational plan projection, lack of vision and exemplary leadership qualities etc.

Poor funding: Funding as we know is be the bedrock of educational success. In Nigeria, educational funding has been a major factor militating against the full implementation of educational goals. It has always been grossly under-funded even though government usually declares that education is given priority in its annual budget. Notably, funding of education in Nigeria has always been below the recommended benchmark of 26% of annual budget allocation by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Ihebom & Uko, 2020). Inadequate funding has negatively impacted all levels of educational system in Nigeria, thereby hindering educational success.

Lack of qualified teachers: Teachers are indispensable elements in any educational system, because they constitute the foundation layers for developed and developing nations (Ihebom & Uko, 2020). The rising cases of unqualified teachers at all levels of education occasioned by the admission of unqualified personnel in the teaching profession portend danger. This act goes against the regulation that stated that only the professionally trained personnel should be allowed to teach. On the other hand, most teachers are not learner friendly due to lack of skills or methodology on how to handle issues relating to teaching/ learning activities etc.

Inadequate infrastructural facilities: Most Nigerian schools from primary to tertiary levels lack adequate basic infrastructure needed for better teaching and learning activities and research. Such challenges include; dilapidated buildings, inadequate classrooms and playgrounds, outdated library texts, unequipped science and ICT laboratories and so on. Adequate provision of infrastructural materials will provide better results in instruction, students involvement and outcome, and increased interest in learning. They are significant components in ensuring effective and successful educational outcome and therefore needs to be adequately put in place.

Lack of motivation/incentives to teachers: Motivation could be seen as the force that energizes, directs and holds positive behavior of a teacher in the classroom. Lack of incentive, demoralizes the effectiveness of a teacher in the school setting since they can't find satisfaction in their profession. Employers and leaders should adopt motivational methods to enhance teachers' job performance. Ofoegbu in Babalola and Ayeni (2008) expressed that teacher motivation are those factors that work in the school system which if not provided to the teacher could dampen performance, bring about stress and frustration which could adversely affect students' quality outcome. However, Ipaye (2012) cited in Ihebom and Uko (2020) noted that the prime motive of people going into career is to get the resources to meet their physiological and family needs. Not much could be expected from a teacher whose needs are not met in the phase of the rising cost of living in Nigeria today.

Curriculum deficiency: educational curriculum in Nigeria is not responsive enough to the needs of the people. The curriculum content must provide the needs and aspirations of both the students and the society at large and this could be solved through constant review of the curriculum by the stake holders. But there seen to be great challenge here when teachers who are expected to implement the curriculum are not involved in the curriculum design. This gap usually brings disparity between the curriculum contents, what is taught and what is actually needed.

Other factors include:

- Indiscipline among the teachers/students in school
- Examination malpractices
- Teachers' poor knowledge of ICT
- Nepotism in leadership and teacher recruitment
- Poor capacity building strategy for leaders and teachers
- Inadequate research minded leaders/ teachers
- Politicization of education
- Poor teacher/students' relationship and so on.

Strategic Leadership Factors that Could Enhance Educational Success in Nigerian

There are quite a number of factors, strategies or approaches if properly applied by strategic leaders in the running of Nigerian educational system, could bring about the much-desired success in the school system. They include but are not limited to the following:

Good educational leadership: Good educational leadership is the motor for educational success. School leaders at all levels who are focused, skilled, visionary and change friendly could identify the issues at stake and strategize on how best to tackle the challenges to ensure success and growth of education in Nigeria. The approaches and administrative capabilities brought to bear by the leader, will avail much in achieving the needed goals. School leaders through good collaboration should move beyond the confines of their institutions to exact influence far beyond the school environment to the communities and other sectors for better relationship, interaction, integration and expansion of knowledge (Morena et al, 2007 in Bunham, 2010).

Moving from bonding to binding: There should be movement from bonding to bridging the gaps between other systems and the schools. This will increase integration, cross-fertilization of knowledge and ideas among the various systems or sectors with education. Bonding with other sectors such as the health sector etc should be advocated as opposed to the traditional ways of limiting the activities of teaching and learning at individual school levels that has limited learning in so many ways.

Bridging the gap: For education success to be realized, bridging the gap from the traditional practices in order to respond to the challenges on ground is paramount. In essence, there should be a paradigm shift or total transformation from the traditional leadership styles, review of outdated curriculum to meet the present-day needs, and appointment of qualified leaders and teachers by the powers that be on merit, to man the educational system.

Adequate funding: Adequate funding of educational institutions, celebration of meritocracy, provision of adequate facilities and equipment in schools for conducive atmosphere for learning, introduction of reward and punishment for teachers and students, promotion of excellence and hard works, maintaining standards for admission, standardized recruitment policy into the educational institution and discipline in the education system are paramount.

Reconsideration of core purpose: This explains a total departure from educational systems and schools that is focused on academic attainment and certificate to a more holistic and integrated approach for obtaining life opportunities to the full. Education that could help one to be self-independent or an employer of labor should be advocated now.

The restructuring of service: educational provision should be realigned to reflect the focus of all in full. That is, the subsuming or merging of education and other services connected with children or youths into one acceptable and interdependent strategy in teaching/learning process.

Share resources: Schools should have strong alliance and collaboration with their communities and community resources instead of being secluded in the confines of the school walls. This simply means that there should be open communication, collaboration and sharing of ideas and assistance in common with mutual understanding.

Integrate strategies: Leadership and schools must shift from piece meal national policies that are hardly applied or implemented, to the growth of identified cross community initiatives that focus on issues like intervention in the years, healthy living initiatives, drug abuse programs, teenage pregnancy etc. Further strategies like unemployed or socially disadvantaged might apply.

Changes in roles: This explains that the education of a child or a young person is more than just delivering the curriculum or having a degree but the ability to help the child discover his potentialities and be self-independent.

Switch in culture: This is very sacrosanct to strategic leaders, as it suggests a shift from the old practice of 'find and fix' to the new ways of 'predict and prevent'. Right from time past, educational system and schools in Nigeria have long walked and are still walking on a wrong philosophy of waiting for sickness and attempting to cure, rather than foreseeing issues and preventing them before they occur. Rawley and Coaster (2014) summarized the above thus "early years' provision compensates for inadequate family life; primary education compensates for the lack of early years' provision; secondary school remediates for failing of primary schools; universities and employers bemoan the time they have to spend compensating for the inadequacies of secondary schools and when all else fails, prisons provide basic education". God forbid that Nigeria educational system and indeed the society could be likened to be in that situation now. When all things seemed to have failed, (insecurity, school dropouts, kidnapping, ethnicity, tribalism, nepotism, 419, drug addiction, indiscipline of all kinds, corruption, lack of employment) and what have you, appear to have taken the central stage not only in the Nigerian school system but indeed all other sectors of the economy. It is really unfortunate that Nigerian prisons may not be able to provide the basic education.

CONCLUSION

Strategic leadership has been suggested as a better approach for the management and rebranding of the educational system in Nigeria in order to achieve the desired success. Strategic leaders are change friendly, and could translate identified problems into opportunities for new discoveries and knowledge. They could apply their skills of interventionist approaches to re-strategize, revamp, revitalize and reposition the nation's ailing educational system to the standards for national development, better quality output for global competitiveness and advantage and to what it used to be in the 60s. The new visions and ideas to be created by the strategic leaders will enhance successful transition of corporate change of the system through team work, collaboration with other units or systems, and application of knowledge, based on social system perspective. The paper therefore stressed the need for experienced educational strategist who are visionary, full of ideas on how to translate their visions into reality, communicate the ideas, positively influence and encourage the workers, direct and control team efforts, support capacity building by organizing seminars, conferences, long and short-term training programs within and

outside the country for leaders, teachers and other personnel. They should also harness and manage skills, attitudes and behaviors of workers to produce high performance and greater outcome that is required.

SUGGESTIONS

The paper made the following suggestions:

- It is being suggested that for the gigantic educational institutions to yield the desired dividend, only committed, skilled, knowledgeable and change-friendly educational leaders who understand and can apply the contemporary approaches to leadership should be appointed or elected by the government or other stakeholders based on merit and competence to ensure positive educational outcome; and not on tribal or political sentiment which breeds mediocrity and fallen standard in education.
- Government should as a matter of necessity raise the budgetary allocation to education to 26% recommended by the UNESCO, in order to adequately fund educational institution to enable the leaders motivate the subordinates, and provide the needed infrastructural and instructional material such as standard libraries with topical journal and relevant texts; well-equipped science and ICT laboratories for both practical and experimentation for new discoveries, and for technological advancements etc.
- Teachers and students should be encouraged on the act of collaboration, integration and co-operation with other teams or group in the form of excursion within or outside the states for cross-fertilization, examination and exchange of ideas for future growth.
- School leaders, teachers and other personals should be encouraged on the best ways to embrace change and innovation attending periodic long- and short-term trainings, seminars and conferences in the act of strategic leadership capacity and skills development programs to update their knowledge with the present-day educational needs. Through such exercises, new techniques, ideas, creative thinking, which could enhance the quality of teaching and learning process are acquired.
- Teaching and learning should be interactive, participative and student centered to promote scientific enquiry, critical thinking and learning that leads to self-development, as well as assist students develop in their areas of potentialities or abilities
- Educational system should depart from focusing on academic certificate to a more holistic and integrated approaches that would imbibe critical thinking, self-reliance, and creative ability to make informed decision to the learner.

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