

Managing Lecturers' Qualification Upgrade: A Study of Ghana's New Universities

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ABSTRACT: *This paper presents a descriptive and analytical study of managing lecturers' qualification upgrade in Ghana's new universities. The expansion of Ghana's higher education requires a reciprocal increase in qualified lecturers to meet the growing demand. The reduction in government expenditure on public universities, and the non-funding of private universities constrains the number of highly qualified lecturers required in Ghana's new universities. Ghana's private universities have more to deal with since its major source of financing is through students' enrollment which is usually associated with a myriad of challenges. This paper specifies on lecturers' qualification, labor ramifications, and management strategies for Ghana's new universities.*

KEYWORDS: *change theories, lecturers' qualification upgrade, and Ghana's new universities.*

I. INTRODUCTION

If the development of nations and quality of human growth hinges on education then there must be the collective efforts towards effective management of education. Education is the pivot around which the development of human capital evolves [1]. Human capital is the relevant development given to humankind to enable them work effectively for the socioeconomic progress of nations [16].

A legislation of the government of Ghana in the 1990s gave way for the emergence of Ghana's new universities [14]. The majority of the new universities is privately owned. The public universities continue to extend campuses to other parts of the country contributing to the growing number of Ghana's new universities. Both private and public universities are contributing to meeting the growing demand for university education in Ghana and the sub-Saharan.

I will enumerate step-by-step methodology to didactic development among teaching staff in Ghana's new universities and how leadership lubricated the wheels of educational management to

the gains of both management and students respectively.

II. UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION

Leadership and management are promulgated in either of two ways or simultaneously as change management and/or maintaining management status quo. In a planned change regime, leadership involves establishing direction, aligning people, and motivating and inspiring them to achieve a planned outcome [12]. Effective management planning is necessary for educational success. Leadership and management may overlap as: leadership is required for problems that do not have easy answers while management maintains the status quo, particularly in organizations that have reached their echelon of maturation and therefore does not need immediate management change.

Leadership is 'the process in which an individual influences other group members towards the attainment of group or organizational goals' [16]. Also, leadership is 'one of the great intangibles. It is a skill most people would love to possess, but one which defies close definition [7]. In summing up Shackleton and Crainer's definitions of leadership, the individual becomes the focal point of leadership in that the individual 'leads' and the individual is 'led'.

Leadership may be both 'nature' and/or 'nurture'. It can be inherited, but largely it is a skill that can be developed. Psychologists of the 'nature-nurture' debate believe the individual is born with certain characteristics and also picks up habits from the environment in which the individual grows [6].

Management absorbs two similar terms as: leadership and administration. The term ‘Management’ is used in Britain, Europe, and Africa, while ‘Administration’ is used for the same function irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, students and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration) [9].

Another distinction between leadership and management can be explained as: leadership is influencing others actions in achieving desirable ends while management is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangements [8]. Admittedly, leadership and management need to be given equal prominence. The challenges of leadership and management of organizations require the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment of leadership [2].

Unlike the management theories applied in other organizations, educational management theories are many-sided. Educational management contains a multiplicity of theoretical approaches with each carefully guarded by a particular epistemic community. This means different educational environments must determine their own managerial rules in accordance with the standards required by the law that establishes them. Following management theories, policies and practices of successful universities may be recommended but a ‘copy and paste’ approach may not work in the same way as every educational environment. One of the measurements of educational management performance is the relative outcome and destination of school leavers.

In this paper, the term ‘management’ shall imbibe ‘leadership’ as a typology [5] for the management of Ghana’s new universities as shown below table 1:

Table 1: Management and Leadership Models in Education

Management model	Leadership model
Formal	Managerial
Collegial	Participative
Political	Transactional
Subjective	Postmodern
Ambiguity	Contingency
Cultural	Moral

Bush noted perceptibly that leadership and management be given equal importance in order to achieve educational objectives [5].

Qualification for teaching degree courses stipulated by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) is ‘a PhD degree in the relevant subject area’ [14]. Enforcement by the NAB requires Ghana’s new universities to take steps to implement the teaching qualification policy among its teaching staff.

III. MANAGING CHANGE IN EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Educational change is either internal and/or external. Internal changes are usually controlled internally while external changes are more often than not imposed by external forces. Change requires ‘the creation of a positive climate, the identification of future directions and the linking together of action by people at all levels in the organization’ [15]. Burnes upholds that there are no universal rules to change but rather ‘linking action by people at all levels of the business’ [15].

For change to occur in an educational environment, the change theme will include: leadership, organizational culture, school planning, staff development, and learning theory. All these educational themes coupled with the Education Reform Act 1988 necessitate frequent changes in the British Educational System which are replicated in other nations that run British Education System. Like some countries, educational change is sometimes driven by political power to determine the nature of schooling systems. Such imposed change is often not followed to achieve its ultimate objective because they are politically driven rather than the theories of change in educational management.

Educational change in Ghana is so far no exception to being politically motivated without a proven record of planned strategies. Such Change may not be easy especially when the change does not suit the ‘changed’ and are fiercely contested. Change may breed tension and its reflex action is resistance. Educational change is necessary only if it will benefit the educational system. Forces that triggers change are: ‘any disorganizing pressure arising outside or inside the organization indicating that the current arrangements, systems, procedures, rules and other aspects of organization structure and process are no longer appropriate or effective’ [3]. These triggers of change may come from either external and/or internal forces. The external forces of change are those factors that the organization usually has little control

over whereas internal forces are those that are close to the organization and its control are usually within the ambit of the organization. Examples of external forces can be political regime, the level of the economy influencing what economic factors ought to be prioritized by the government, and technological factors. Internal forces like poor employee performance which bring down productivity may be a good reason for the change. Be it external and/or internal forces that may cause change. Change in educational development points to people as: task, structure, system and the people themselves [13].

IV. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS OF 'LECTURERS QUALIFICATION UPGRADES'

One of the key functions of the NAB is to ensure tertiary institutions engage qualified lecturers to teach at appropriate levels of their courses. As private tertiary institutions proliferate in Ghana, there is high demand for PhD holders to become lecturers. As government expands campuses of public universities to other regions of the country coupled with the fact that not all who hold PhD are willing to become university lecturers, demand exceeds supply. There is also the argument of salary differentials which makes it not too competitive for Ghana's universities to attract top-notch immigrant lecturers. Hence, many of Ghana's new universities have included other standards of qualification for lecturers' employment. For some universities, the criteria for employment of a lecturer is a Masters degree with relevant experience in industrial practice. Masters degree qualifications include: MA, MSc, MBA, and M.Tech, MPhil, but these are contrary to the required university lecturer qualification by NAB.

The NAB's quality check remain that some lecturers of Ghana's new universities do not meet the stipulated qualification. The NBA's objection is detrimental to the lecturers, students and the universities at large. This poses a call for change. The change even though external hinges on the internal management of the affected universities since its repercussions are enormous. The supposed reaction from affected lecturers and university management shows such change is not immediately pleasant.

Burnes asserts to three schools of thought namely 'Individual Perspective School, Group Dynamic School, and Open System School' [4] as a central point in change management theory. These three schools of change management thought will be

examined in the change process of lecturers' qualification upgrade in Ghana's new universities.

The Individual Perspective School – propounded by behaviorists and gestalt-field psychologists argues cohesively that the individual is a product of 'environment and reason' [4]. Pavlov is widely acclaimed for his behaviorist experiment of a dog which 'salivates at the ringing of a bell'. Arising from Pavlov's experiment is the behaviorist conclusion that one of the basic principles of human actions is conditioned by their expected consequences hence rewarded behavior is repeated while unrewarded behavior is ignored [4].

There are sparks of the Individual Perspective School in Ghana's new universities lecturers' qualification upgrade. The change precipitated a responded stimulus; it was an individual response. Individually, the lecturers felt aggrieved because even though 'generally' the change is known, it was not expected. On the part of the affected universities even though it is spelt out in the rules and guidance of the NAB, it responded to the environment where a university education is higher demanded where lecturing can also be facilitated by other qualified personnel than the solely bureaucratic prescription of the NAB. Obviously there was behavior modification of affected lecturers' and universities involved in the manipulation of reinforcing the responded stimuli so as to reward the desired activity.

In everyday life we respond to stimuli which are extrinsic to our expectation. The affected lecturers did same on hearing the instruction for lecturers' qualification upgrade. Their immediate response was without a corresponding analysis of the individual benefit in the long term. However, in an individual's reflection a PhD will guarantee a university teaching career and increase salary.

There was the need for management of the affected universities to call individual affected lecturers to a meeting. Such critical meeting's outcome must be one of a mutual understanding. Obviously management had to adhere to the NAB directive but must not lead to distraction of teaching since an overnight replacement of affected lecturers is not visible and also may affect students because some lectures may be truncated. There is therefore the need for a 'planned change' which will be considered in detail.

Managers of the affected universities will not achieve desired change basing their focus solely on the theory

of Individual Perspective School hence the calls for the theory of the Group Dynamics School.

The application of the theory of the Group Dynamic School yielded some management success in the 'lecturer qualification upgrades.' This theory has the longest history (Schein, 1969) and was originated in the work of Lewin (1947) asserts the impact made on the individual is as a result of the intricate set of representative relations and forces of a group [4].

The application of the theory of Group Dynamics School in Ghana's new universities lecturers' qualification upgrade superseded the universities management initial concentration on affected individual lecturers. Effective change must be at a group level affecting the groups' norms, roles, and values [10]. Norms, roles, and values are the nerve center of every organization's success. It combines the theory and practice of change management.

Norms, roles, and values tie organizations to a winning team, in that it ensures unity in team work which brings success. Failure is often the result when work is done in isolation. Team work in organizations is a progressive realization of collective effort rather than a mere collection of individuals. The clarion call for the twenty-first century organization is to come to a firm understanding and acceptance that organizational development is about team-building.

Admittedly, Group Dynamics School made some progress. But the theory of the Open System School was introduced because both the Individual Perspective and Group Dynamics only managed the 'individual' and 'group' but did not consider the organization in its entirety. The success of organizations depends largely on the effectiveness of their management style.

Arguably a change in one part of an organizational system will affect other parts of the system and its effect will encompass the operations of the whole system. In the Open System School approach, all the parts that make up the whole must be accurately tested, and if the need be they be worked on in order to have all parts of the system functioning as one unit.

A question as how affected lectures be immediately replaced since the recruitment of highly skilled personnel with a PhD as lecturers do not come over night? It takes wide search and money sometimes you may have to poach them which imply you will give better conditions of service than what they are getting at existing places. The question bothers on

Ghana's new universities management strategies to the theories of change. The immediate non replacement of affected lecturers may cause students agitation which in-turn may affect the university enrollment, employment opportunities for its graduates and the like. Some students may even leave to competing universities.

A definitive guide to ensuring continuity of efficient staff mean organizations must build team work to ensure interdependence in knowledge and skills sharing among, continuous training, motivate hard work by rewarding success and punishing failure, and poaching talents from competing organizations. This guide can apply to educational institutions particularly higher education.

Open System School theory of change management pursues organizations businesses as an interdependent approach to corporate objectives. In my estimation this approach should have been a guide to the management strategy of lecturers' qualification upgrade in Ghana's new universities where the lecturers' qualification upgrade be managed to benefit all parties involved. Affected lecturers should stay at post while they upgraded their qualification by enrolling in research degree programs relevant to their teaching subjects. By this approach students will not suffer for lack of lecturers and the universities will function accordingly. Hence, the universities will succeed to have moved all the sub-systems comprising the Individual Perspective and the Group Dynamics theories and merged to Open System School theory where the universities, affected lecturers and students will benefit.

Though the Open System School theory seem to have provided a solution there may be other forces that could have made the application of the theory 'not one in all' solution. What if the directive by the NAB to replace 'unqualified' lecturers was to be effected immediately?

There are other issues associated with Ghana's new universities lecturers' qualification upgrade as: public relations, job prospects of graduates, students' communication, and financial implications.

A. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Where crises are now played out in full public view, progressive organizations like universities cannot do without effective public relations activities. Having a plan in place to deal with any public related eventuality is necessary.

With the growth of public relations in education, academic definitions of public relations have developed. Burson explains four functions of public relations [11].

First, public relations professionals as a sense of social change perceives the rumblings at the heart of society that augur good or ill in the organization and help management prepare for the onslaught and the impact of those issues. Second, Henry David Thoreau described public relations as a corporate conscience and urged practitioners to always bear in mind to be conscientious. Third, public relations require the mastering of communication skills and honing social judgment. Fourth, public relations must be the corporate monitor. The spirit of the ombudsman should pervade the public relations person's job.

The NAB's mass media announcements of some Ghana's new universities default to standard regulations are detrimental to the image of the universities. It becomes necessary for universities public relations to salvage the image of their universities. With the plethora of media in the country, it is a difficult task for universities to respond to all media front issues published against them. However, they have to engage a fairly balanced number and selection of media from print to online.

Public relations activities even though may help as an immediate stop gap to a bad press given to a university, it is not 'one in all' solution; continuous public relation activity is necessary. Another danger to be tackled through public relations is 'perception': people's perception of affected universities and its students. If the negative perception is not well corrected it will become a stigma with dire consequence on graduates and future students who may consider enrolling there.

The psyche is a single unified awareness derived from the sensory processes while a stimulus is present hence the belittling of affected universities has a perceptible invocation on its management, lecturers and students. Good public relations are necessary to overturn negative perceptions of educational institutions if they are to maintain their reason for the establishment as centers for developing minds.

B. JOB PROSPECTS OF GRADUATES FROM AFFECTED UNIVERSITIES

The public relations activities were also aimed at forestalling a possible affront of prospective employment of graduates from the affected

university. Employers are likely to threat those graduates as second fiddle to their colleagues from other universities because of the bad press of 'lecturer qualification upgrades'.

Most employers would employ graduates from top notch universities therefore if a university has fallen foul of the standard then the repercussion could be gigantic. Good public relations were therefore required on the labor front to uphold the standard of the university. Whiles employers were communicated with via the mass media; they also met leaders of industrial unions and high employing organizations to create linkages for future graduates of the affected university.

C. STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION

Communication with students becomes a key factor in educational crises. A broken down communication between students, lecturers and management can lead to students' uproar consequential to the detriment of students, lecturers and management. The responsibility of effective communication in educational institutions lies more with managers of educational institutions and national education policy makers.

Knowledge in social psychology reveals behavior in crowd individuation is less influenced by self-awareness of personal norms of right or wrong, and more by that part of self-awareness that relates to one's social identity and group, or crowd norms [11]. Educational managers attempt to solve students' problems will be to first meet with student leaders and subsequently entire student body. This is to ensure that the student leaders will hold the students front to maintain order. The students' leadership is expected to hold one-on-one or group talks with their colleagues not to break-away from the negotiation process. Effective communication is necessary to get students understanding so as to team up with management for solution.

D. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Management will incur a lot of financial cost in sending its affected lecturers to school to acquire the qualification prescribed by the NAB. Where an affected university does not offer PhD lecturers will enroll at other universities for their qualification.

Contractual agreement will be necessary between management and lecturers of the affected university

before enrollment so that they continue to lecture for stipulated years during and after their qualification before they could resign from the university. An agreement of such nature has lots of ramifications and an exit strategy is required for both parties. But as experience has shown, affected lecturers will be vulnerable in such negotiation. Maintaining their lectureship job and getting a PhD may not be a bad thing to do.

The negotiation may be in a way that either management pay for the cost of the lecturers further qualification and deduct a monthly percentage of their salary or pay the full fees and commit the lectures to a compulsory number of years of teaching after qualification. The financial implications in such process can be daunting. There are risks for management likewise affected lecturers but in any case the task is necessary.

The affected university's management role in the risk process includes:

- Identifying and evaluating the significant risks faced by the university lecturers' qualification upgrade financial;
- Implementing policies on financial risk management and internal control of upgrading affected lecturers qualification;
 - Provision of adequate information in a timely manner on the status of risks and controls in the lecturers' qualification upgrade;
 - Undertaking an annual internal control review of the effectiveness of the lecturers' qualification upgrade.

V. CONCLUSION

I have discussed some necessary features of management in educational institutions and enumerated extensively on them; adherence to change management features will promote the development of Ghana's new universities and also contribute significantly to the globalization of education. My proposition of these features does not claim sole responsibility for educational development rather it constitutes some pre-conditions for successful education.

My identification of necessary key areas to be tackled by the management of Ghana's new universities in lecturers' qualification upgrade is contextualized and may not apply to other universities in other

jurisdictions even though a clue can be taken from my exposé.

My knowledge of management in educational institutions proves that educational change is complex and there are no quick fix already made solutions. Therefore for an appreciable result to be yielded in educational change management, it requires determination, efforts and hard work on the part of educational managers, policy makers, and students respectively. The unrelenting effort to educational success must be the work of all responsible for quality education.

Identifying possible features to be tackled in educational development is one thing and conscientiously working on those features to achieve desirable results is another. In the case of the affected universities, possible educational development features were identified and enumerated.

Working on the identified features to achieve good results may take some time since human behavior varies and usually unpredictable, therefore allowing some errors, though not intentional errors but situational errors that are necessary for educational transformation.

While we keep working on identifiable education development features, we must remain alert to trends in international education development in our nation's education development.

Our collective aim should be to achieve better education with professed knowledge in developing society and opening up vistas for exploration, discoveries and developments in the globalization of education.

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