

| CHAPTER EIGHT |

E. O. NWADIADOR'S PRACTICE OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION IN TANSIAN UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

E. O. Nwadiakor played a significant role in the administration of Tansian University as the administrative head of the school. E. O. Nwadiakor was responsible for managing the inputs, process and output of educational resources in the University for the purpose of meeting the University's goals and objectives. E. O. Nwadiakor played the role of a leader in the school system and it was his duty to oversee all of the activities taking place in the school. Globally, the issue of leadership has been shown to be of great significance in determining the performance of students, teachers and the school in general (Arbabi & Mehdinezhad, 2015) and the E. O. Nwadiakor is central to all of these activities. There are several administrative tasks that are carried out by E. O. Nwadiakor ranging from the management of school finance, personnel, assets, records among others. Therefore, on regularly basis, E. O. Nwadiakor have a lot of issues to deal with in the process of administration of the University for goal attainment.

Leadership cannot be disconnected from organizational goal attainment (Eseyin & Wagbara, 2021). The business of school administration has continued to change in line with regulatory, social and global changes. Badaracco as cited in Ang'ana and Chiroma (2021:18) stated that "leaders today face major responsibilities to guide their teams and organizations to greater success and this calls for an expanded repertory of skills and

attributes amidst the uncertain, and highly competitive, and complex business environment”. The issue of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), introduction of the single treasury account (TSA) some schools and social issues such as insecurity are among some of the developments that have continued to affect how E. O. Nwadiakor carried out their administrative functions in order to meet with the expectations of different educational stakeholders and achieve national educational goals and objectives. This is essential for effective administration of the school system.

E. O. NWADIADOR'S CONCEPT OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLADMINISTRATION

The concept of school administration is one that does not have a generally accepted definition. This is why some scholars in education scholars use school administration and educational administration interchangeably. However, while both concepts may be related, they are actually different in context. School administration has to do with all the managerial activities that are put in place to ensure that the school is able to meet its daily objectives. Aslanargun (2012) stated that school administration is a value addition process as it focuses on adding value to the activities carried out in the school for the purpose of achieving educational goals and objectives.

Broadly speaking, school administration relates to all school operations carried out on regular basis to assist the school achieve its short and long term objectives. The process of school administration requires the support of all relevant educational stakeholders for quality education to be achieved and as pointed out by Haruna and Omuya (2022), Government, administrators, academics, non-academics, student, and community engagement or service interactions all contribute to quality, and this is essential for effective school administration. School administration is everything that relates to the academic institution and how it can be managed for the actualization of its goals and objectives.

School administration includes all the planning, staffing, budgeting and other managerial functions that are carried out regularly by a school administrator and other personnel to ensure that the school achieve its set goals and objectives.

Drawing from Nwadiakor's perspective, effective school administration is an administrative process that ensures that outlined goals and objectives are achieved. In his perspective, Nwadiakor ensures that the right calibre of staff is assigned to areas where they have comparative advantage so that the goals and objectives of the school are achieved. He equally ensures that resources are available for the discharge of assigned responsibilities and this accounts for the successful actualization of several of his projects and programmes as an administrator.

E. O. NWADIAKOR'S CONCEPT OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

The issue of collaborative leadership is still at its cradle stage in the business of educational administration. More specifically, collaboration is used in the area of learning where students come together to solve existing educational problems in and outside the classroom. However, due to the increasing complexities in the area of school administration, there is increasing need for collaboration in the area of school administration. Generally speaking, there is no clear definition of collaborative leadership as it is often used in context specific scenarios. However, the context in a lay man's language will imply the process by which leaders within the same or different organizations that may or may not be related come together to address existing administrative

Furthermore, Maalouf (2019:140) stated that “collaborative leadership entails getting the right mentality, reducing operation charges, viewing beyond the boundaries of the company, developing harmony, and maintaining the capability to connect smoothly with others, and in managing contradictions”. It is the process by which people with the competencies required for

solving a collective or identified problem in a system bring their leadership prowess together for the achievement of a common goal. On the other hand, Tangidy and Sowiyah (2020:364) indicated that collaborative leadership is “the process of engaging collective intelligence to deliver results across organizational boundaries when ordinary mechanisms of control are absent with the aim that together smarter, more creative, and more competent outcomes can be achieved”. Collaborative leadership enables an organization to be bring leaders together who can reason out better solution to organizational challenges irrespective of existing boundaries.

In Nwadiakor's understanding, collaborative leadership is simply an open system of leadership where other members of staff are free to contribute ideas that will move the organization forward. There are several cases where Nwadiakor has ensured that quality suggestions even from subordinates are implemented for the common good of the institution. Nwadiakor also believes in competence and this saw several younger but talented employees holding strategic positions that contributed to the success of the school. This is the style of collaborative leadership that he adopted for the administration of the school.

E. O. NWADIAKOR'S FACTORS THAT DRIVE COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLADMINISTRATION

The development of collaborative leadership system requires the coming together of individuals and institutions that meet certain requirements some of which includes the following:

Competence of Team Members: According to Harris (2010), redefining leadership roles and responsibilities, building new teams, and dispersing leadership more widely are the best ways to encourage the growth of flourishing schools. However, collaborative leadership cannot be very effective when the team of leaders do not have certain competencies that they are bringing

together otherwise it will be merely a participatory leadership system. Collaborative leadership is based on the fact that the different leaders have something to contribute to the team so as to make it strong enough to achieve its goals and objectives. The competence of each team member is therefore a factor that drives collaborative leadership and makes it to be effective in achieving intended goals and objectives.

Clarity of Group Objectives: One of the factors that drive collaborative leadership is the clarity of the objectives of the group. Hughes and Pickeral (2013) stated that in order to successfully demonstrate and foster an educational environment that meets its goals, there is need for collaboration of experienced people and other participants in a shared mission that enhances expected outcomes especially that of learners and the school needs to recognize and develop leadership among a variety of people representing every aspect of education in this regards. Collaborative leadership works better in organizations where there is unity of goals that the team members are expected to pursue. Establishing collective objective is essential in the process of building teams that will carry out administrative functions in an organization. Collaborative leadership is therefore more likely to succeed when team members are guided by common goals.

Proper Communication and Dialogue: Establishing group goals and norms, participating in discussion and dialogue, resolving conflict, developing concern and decision-making strategies, ensuring that all voices are heard, thinking through and communicating clearly with one another are all necessary for one to become a collaborative leader (Harper, 2018). Communication and dialogue is essential is important for collaborative leadership. It is important for administrators who make up the team to be able to come together to discuss on the purpose of the team and the mode of operation for achieving outlined goals and objectives. Team members in the leadership process must also engage in meaningful communication and share feedbacks that will make

group interaction more result oriented and ensure that the goals of the team are achieved as outlined.

E. O. NWADIALOR RELEVANCE OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP TO EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Collaborative leadership is of importance to school administration in ways that include but are not limited to the following:

Possibility of Cross Functional Leadership: Cameron and Green (2015) noted that group effort makes it possible to advance organizational duties that may be challenging to complete individually. One of the benefit collaborative leadership is that it provided an opportunity for leaderships from different spheres of expertise to come together to proffer professional solution to educational administrative issues. The convergence of experts from different fields allow for job rotation which is makes it possible for an organization to groom expertise in different areas which makes it easy building a competent workforce that can easy attend to any challenge that may arise in the organization.

School Development: The advancement of any school system is faster and more efficient when leaderships from close and distant boundaries come together to address administrative issues that is in the interest of all. School development across all fronts; financial, social, economic and so on is more achievable when experts come from different areas to drive the process. The development of the school is owing to the fact that every unit with a representative head are able to bring their skills and ideas together on how to make the units succeed and this contributes to overall success of the school both in the short and long run.

Collective Decision Making: Hafeez and Akhtar (2022) noted that collaborative learning is essential as stakeholder interests to participate in school decision process for positive and sustainable change in education sector is guaranteed. The participation of different leaders in the administration of the school contributes to

collective decision making which is owned and enforced by all. It has been established that leaders identify more with decisions that are collectively made and this makes programme, policy and project implementation easy in any institution.

Social Wellbeing: Binaguiohan and Bolofer (2022) stated that Collaboration, which is what moves organizations forward, is based on trust and leaders can also establish trust with staff members through small gestures and questions, like asking about their wellbeing and household and there is no doubt that such gesture contributes to meaningful and collaborative leadership for effective administration. People contribute more and support institutions that are concerned about their wellbeing. Collaborative leadership contributes significantly to the social wellbeing of members as the interest of all leaders are protected in the process (Nkengbeza, et al., 2016). When leaders are provided the opportunity to contribute and drive educational activities their social needs such as need for belongingness, confidence and social interaction are further strengthened. In fact, several leaders hold and participate in leadership positions not only because of the economic but also social benefits that are available through their participation. Collaborative leadership therefore contributes to the social need of leaders making it easy for them to contribute to the aspirations of the organizations or units that they represent.

Resource Management: Njenga (2018) Effective utilization of resources is essential for the advancement of any organization in the face of scarcity in essential resources required for meeting organizational goals and objectives Resources can be better managed when experts with sound understanding of administrative issues are brought together from different organizational settings. Resource maximization can be guaranteed when people with different leadership orientation come together to discuss how available resources can be utilized for meeting the need of all and this contributes to judicious utilization of resources in meeting larger organizational outcomes.

Skill Development: Krasniqi (2021:909) asserted that “various scholars underscore that one of the primary tasks of a leaders is to create an environment that fosters professional improvement leading to better educational outcomes”. Maalouf (2018) noted that leaders are today's faced with complicated new roles in their places of work and one of the ways to overcome these complexities is to leverage on the competencies of other experts who make the team of leaders within or outside the organization. Leaders are able to develop new skills, values and knowledge by participating in collaborative leadership activities that will drive knowledge and skills sharing and in this process, leaders are able to develop new skill sets that they can adopt in their various areas of administrative responsibilities which contribute to organizational performance as a whole.

E. O. NWADIALOR'S EFFECTS OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Collaborative leadership is significant to different aspects of school administration and this includes but not limited to the following:

Improved Working Condition: One of the benefits that can be derived from collaborative leadership is that it contributes to the development of an inclusive working environment where everyone can explore and maximize their potentials while contributing to organizational goals and objectives. Cordial relations is essential to building a healthy work environment where everyone can contribute to the success of the organization and this can only be developed through collaborative leadership system.

Personnel Professional Development: The professional development of workers is one of the benefits that organizations can acquire from practicing collaborative leadership (Buske,

2018). According to Fullan (2014), the best performing educational systems encourage and promote instructors to participate in a variety of educational endeavors that will advance their professional development. This system of leadership provides a platform for leadership excellence to be transmitted down the organizational hierarchy and this makes it easy for competence to be developed down the organizational ladder. The effect of this is that workers who are competent in their areas of endeavours are developed across all segment of the organization both at the top, middle and lower level.

Resource Mobilization: Leadership is all about management of human and material resources for the achievement of organizational goals and objectives and organizations stand a better chance of acquiring relevant resources for the advancement of the organization through the collaboration of all the leaders. Collaborative leadership makes it easy for the organization to be able to harmonize relevant resources from different sources that will contribute to the effective administration of the school.

Proper Planning: Effective planning emanates from the joint effort of different stakeholders who come together to chart a way out for an organization to achieve its goals and objectives and this is one of the benefits of collaborative leadership. This system of leadership makes it easy for leaders to harmonize their expertise and plan on how the organization can achieve its short and long terms objectives. Quality planning that will contribute to effective administration of any school system is likely to be the product of collaborative leadership among affected leaders who are willing and ready to collaborate for the success of the organization.

CHALLENGES TO COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

There are several challenges that limit the application of collaborative leadership in the process of school administration in schools and some of these hindrances include but are not limited to

the following:

Differences in Team Competencies: Bettini et al., (2016) and Lieberman and Miller (2011) stated that in order to manage a realistic workload, balance individual strengths and weaknesses, and improve communication with coworkers, teamwork is beneficial for all employees and this is premised on the fact that workers do not have equal technical competence in any organization. Despite the fact that collaborative leadership goes a long way to sharpen the competence of team members, one of the major limitations is that the team is likely to experience slow advancement as a result of the differences in the capacity of team members. Collaborative leadership no doubt brings together leaders with different capabilities and this sometimes makes it difficult for organizations to move forward as a result of the inability of some of the members of the team. The incompetence of some leaders in the collaborative leadership process has the capability of hindering the success rate of the organization in administrative issues.

Conflict of Interest: According to Aefsky (2015), the interactions between leaders and the people they influence are defined by the values and ethics of leadership. Collaborative leadership can result to conflict of interest in formal organizations if not properly managed due to difference in values among staff of even the same organization. Individuals, departments and leaders in different administrative roles have their different expectations for and from the organizations they represent and the difference in their expectation from the goals of the group can be counterproductive. When team goals are at variance with individuals' goals, it can result in conflict of interest which can override the goal of the team. Similarly, the assembling of different leaders with different expectation can make school administration more complex as a result of variation in interest.

Prolonged Decision Making: The fact that collaborative leadership results to quality decision making cannot be jettisoned.

However, one of the major obstacles to collaboration in decision making is that it results to prolonged decision making process. When leaders come together to make decision about the management or administration of the school system, the suggestions, ideas and inputs of all members are usually sought before administrative actions are taken. The implication of this is that decision making process is prolonged and this makes collaborative leadership unfit when emergency actions need to be taken to address any administrative issue affecting the administration of the school. Collaborative leadership therefore leads to a longer decision making period which affects school administration generally.

Goal Determination: Collaborative leadership works better when the leaders are from within the same leadership sphere. The implementation of collaborative leadership can be difficult when the leaders represent different interests. In such a situation, goal determination becomes difficult making it difficult for administrative actions to be built and taken when necessary. Goal determination in collaborative leadership settings is thus complex as a result of difference in perceptions and this makes it difficult for leaders in a collaborative agreement to be able to harmonize their expectations into a single goal that will guide all leaders for administrative effectiveness.

E. O. NWADIALOR: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLADMINISTRATION

The following suggestions are worthy of note in the building of collaborative leadership for effective school administration:

Support Leaders Capacity Development: One of the ways to maximize the benefits of collaborative leadership is by building the competence of the leaders in areas that will support the goals of

the team (Brroadhurst et al., 2021). Every leaders needs to be supported in different areas of leadership in order to be able to contribute to educational administration more effectively. The leader is usually the head in an organization but may not be the most experienced and as such require will need to be trained on how to be an effective leader that can contribute to the wellbeing of the organization. Support for leaders who will function well in the collaborative leadership scheme may not be limited to providing training programmes for the leader alone but may also require some material assistance that will enable the leader deliver better services in the team.

Recruitment of Quality Leaders: One of the best ways of strengthening collaborative leadership in the school is by ensuring that quality leaders are recruited into the school from the onset. Leadership is a serious business and the government as well as other school owners need to be more professional in the process of recruiting leaders for the school as this is essential for effective school administration. For collaborative leadership to function appropriately for effective administration of the school system, quality leaders must be recruited across all levels in the school so that the cooperation of these leaders will lead to better outcomes for the school both in the short and long term.

Power Distribution: Power distribution is important for effective collaborative leadership that will contribute to better educational administration process. Abreh (2016) stated that different stakeholders must be brought together in order to play their various and collaborative roles through the decentralization of authority and bureaucracy in the education system for any success to be recorded in the administrative process. In order to avoid conflict of interest which can slow down administrative processes and procedures, there is need for clarity in the boundaries of power and authority that each leader is expected to control. Setting power boundaries makes it easy for each leader to recognize and determine their rights and obligations for the effective

administration of the school. Determining power limits in any organization is essential to avoid complications the leadership process that can affect the smooth administration of the school

Determining Required Skill Set: Kelloway (2022) noted that creating a list of leadership skills needed in an organization is essential for the success of any organization. Leadership can only be successful when the leader possesses the required skills, knowledge and attitude needed for the success of the organization. Therefore, depending on the intended goals of the organizations, it is important to identify the skills required by the leaders for effective school administration. Determining required skill sets in an organization is important for the selection of the right leaders who will be able to drive the administrative functions outlined by the organization. Advance skill determination will therefore aid the selection of the right leaders who can make relevant contribution in the collaborative leadership possess for effective school administration.

Conclusion

Collaborative leadership is essential in solving some of the administrative challenges confronting administrators in today's 21st century school. However, the leaders who make the team must be willing and ready to work together by developing the needed qualities that will make it more valuable to work as a team than alone. E. O. Nwadiakor was able to identify the objectives that are to be pursued and achieved as this will inform the kind of leaders that need to collaborate in proffering solution to any identified problem.

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