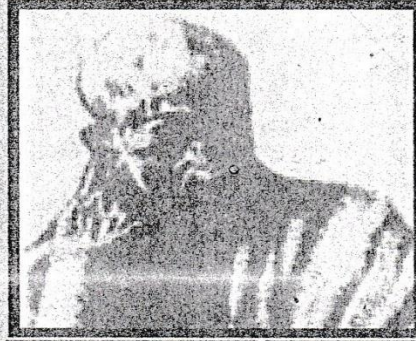


ISSN: 0794 - 3458



JOSE

**JOURNAL OF SUSTAINABLE
EDUCATION**

**A Publication of the Educators Forum of Nigeria
Vol. 1 No. 2 November, 2005**

Remaking Teachers of Human Kinetics: Leadership Competences for Effective Programme Implementation in Nigerian Schools

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Abstract

$P=F(CS+HS+TS)$ There's no gainsaying that the demands being put on the school system is intense. In the pursuit of a better method to improve the kinaesthetic awareness of the youths, efforts must be relentless in the search to improve the teachers' relationship competencies. In this article, compelling pre-requisites that would provide the cutting edges of performance excellence for human kinetics teachers are pulled to view. The triads are conceptual, human and technical skills. The rubrics of the general are respectively; an insightful understanding of work operations, teamwork for mutual group allegiance and a dynamic awareness of the discrete and total professional cognate scene. The paper ascribes to the post-modernist philosophy that the acquisition of new idea is indissociable from the old view, but the edge is that the acquisition of new idea is leading from the front. The point that the best of both theories are advocated if they are purpose-driven, that is, aimed at effective and efficient leadership for high job performance. The postulation is summed-up in the formula, which explains that job performance (p) is a function (f) of three interrelated leadership categories; conceptual, human and technical skills, abbreviated as CS, HS & TS respectively.

Introduction

The short period of time between 1760 and 1810 was very significant in world history. That was the era of the Industrial Revolution, (I.R.). The I.R. could be distinguished from previous evolutionary periods because of the enormity of the impact of the attendant change, which took place, and because of the inventions and innovations that led to rapid world major transformational improvements. While the period is generally acknowledged merely in terms of the inventions and resulting mass production potential, in reality, it was a culmination of multi-sectoral events forming a major movement, which resulted in an overall change in the structure of our society. One of the paradoxes of consequence of the revolution was labour liberalization, which led to educational diversification and specialization. Human kinetics (HK) was one of the academic disciplines, which entered the educational lexicon. Zeigler (1975) describes human kinetics as a core educational discipline because of the emphasis on mind-body unity. Nonetheless, HK like its academic counterparts entered the Nigerian education "stock-market" with a chronic deficiency.

The pioneers of western education in Nigeria were the European missionaries. Their aim was to train the youths on how to read and write –the making of burlesque aristocrats. HK was introduced under the reprobate title; physical training. The set-up

then characterized a frill tagged onto the school curriculum to make the learners sweat, get poised and remain alert for "important academic work" in the classroom. That was the in official profile of HK until the 1969 national curriculum conference which gave birth to the 6-3-3-4 educational system in Nigeria, (FGN, 1998). With the Federal Government of Nigeria new educational innovation, the Colonial Education Deficiency Legacy (CEDL), remains a malignant and a quintessential albatross around the educational neck of the nation.

Teachers of human movement studies are in a sense subject technocrats (S.T.) with the complex, difficult and enormous responsibility to groom, nurture and raise the learners to become reputable citizens. But adept observers of teacher education programme in Nigeria may realize that the pressing concern, is on pedagogic training, pedantic thorough-breeding with none or very little emphasis on leadership foundation. The root of the leadership formation freeze could be traced to the CEDL enmeshed in the teacher preparation canvase of the nation. In the process, the schools produce sapient graduands but who demonstrate insipience. The consequence is the attendant increase in "men of letters" (ML), literally, "grammarians" in our society and the conspicuous decrease of "philosopher kings", and Plato's metaphor for "Leaders of the Republic". The phantom of the CEDL has to be isolated from the educational psyche of the country so that the scions of the new, 6-3-4 educational system may have a new outlook.

The purpose of this article is to suggest what would be a more rewarding leadership attributes of the teacher of HK to enhance his expertise in sports administration. It is good at this point to note some of the traits of the archetype administrator as widely acknowledged particularly in the service industries. Briscoe and Gorton (1973), identified good judgment, Austin (1990), enlisted a good plan of action, which ensures unity, continuity, flexibility and precision. In a related contribution Glassman and McAfee (1990) observed that enthusiasm is most appropriately a strong motivational factor, which fires passion. On the other hand, the virtues of the teacher as an administrator in the school organization are presumptuous. Readily the high-rated qualities of the teacher administrator are such "worn-out" phrases as; good teaching ability, love of children, dedication to duty and discipline (Daragani, 2004). These time-honored stereotypes are satisfactory but they tend to ellipse the modern day realities.

Administration: The word administration is construed as leadership. In this context leadership is based on the germane administrative skills the human kinetics teacher (HKT) can exhibit for job effectiveness. Skill is pragmatic. It is developmental and may not be genetic. The bottomline of administrative skillfulness is positive results. The literature on leadership is loaded with quality trademarks of the ideal leader. In their contributions, Uduk (1985), identified job satisfaction, Covery (1992), pointed out goal oriented, Katz (2000) mentioned respect for others and Maxwell (2000), referred to charisma while Tomey (2004), came up with clearly defined vision and tasks as wells resourcefulness.

The meeting point of the leadership criteria is human behaviour or character-quality. Maxwell (1999) captured it succinctly when he wrote, "leaders are effective because of who they are on the inside in the qualities that make them". Viewed through the prism of character-quality, leadership is the capacity to inspire confidence and to rally men and

women to a common purpose. The important departure of this contribution is considering leadership as an adoption of mutually complementary trilateral categories to weave the human structural and economic elements of an organization toward an envisioned goal. As a result of the paradigmatic shift, the concept leadership is substituted for the more conventional term administration.

Matters related to efficiency, dedication and improvement of teaching quality have always been considered as part of the problem of the Nigerian school system. So often it appears any action is restricted to standard operating procedures manifested in lame complaint of falling standard of education. Today when the ugly situation is apparently exacerbated, it is well to take a new look on what can be done to check the decline so that we can specifically administer school human kinetic programme for improved and increased efficiency. As a matter of fact, if we do not work toward efficiency in the classrooms we are working toward oblivion. For Nigeria to achieve greatness and remain great, is to stop the "falling standard of education mystique" as a national moral responsibility. To act now is strategic as the educational system is comatose or terminally ill, before it is certified dead.

Peter Drucker, the doyen of modern management thought, in a keynote address to the international management congress at Tokyo, Japan in 1969, said: "management... is generic, properly handled will stand for the quality of life of a society as much as for its standard of living, (Briscoe and Gorton, 1973). Mr Drucker was correct. This provides a fresh verification of his prediction. If means are not found to expedite the development of a new genre of teachers, the quality of life and perhaps the standard of living of society are almost certain to go down.

Performance Factor: This suggests the categories of effective leadership. Three unique but inter-related performance factors supports effective leadership as a concept. The model obviates the one-way behaviour related approach but provides a three-factor (trilateral) process approach in understanding leadership. It is assumed that leadership, and in this context the human kinetic teacher (HKT), is the one who (i) directs the learning activities of students and (ii) undertakes the responsibility to achieve the mission of the school. Enveloped within this rubric, leadership is considered to rest on three fundamental skills, namely: conceptual, human and technical. Though they are interrelated there is merit to examine each skill independently.

Conceptual Skill Conceptual skill (CS), as used in this articles involves the ability to have a holistic view of the operations. The HKT recognizes the inter-dependent functionality of the mutually exclusive components of the enterprise. The ability to understand the miniscule details of the operational logistics facilitates the comprehension of the matrixes. Reinforced with a corporate insight, the HKT can visualize the cause and effect, actions and reactions, social, psychological, political and cultural forces in the operating milieu.

The recognition of the inter/interrelations and sensitivity to the significant elements of the prevailing kaleidoscope enhances flexibility, clear vision, focus and sensible interpretation of policy swings. The cryptic cliché, "the sum of the parts are bigger than the whole", may illuminate the imagination of the teacher-administrator. The point is the

more the HKT can accurately synthesize the overall relationships implications of policy thrust the higher his efficiency coefficient. Consequently, excellence in conceptual skill is a plus-factor in administrative sensing. In other words, HKT with a keen conceptual skill is versatile in corporate personality analysis which is a dependable leadership potential. What does this add-up to? The HKT with penetrating conceptual skill is clairvoyant in administrative logistics, which is a lofty pro-establishment asset.

Human Skill: This is the second of the trilogy of performance skills. The possession of human skill, (HS), is the ability to work affectively with the staff and students (including community members) to build bridges of cooperation in the system. The more the HKT is imbued with HS, the more confidence is inspired among the members of the system. The more confidence inspired the more passionate is the followership and cooperation. The teacher leader who wields a positive influence in human components in the organization readily carries stakeholders along towards the organizational vision. The point made here is that, the HKT with a highly developed human skill is disposed to appreciate and understand the attitudes, assumptions, feelings and viewpoints of others (superiors, co-equals and subordinates) in the establishment. And his sensitivity to the needs and motivations of the system operators is not in doubt. As a result, it creates an atmosphere of approval openness and solidarity—a necessary ingredient of participatory leadership.

The HKT should not in dealing with others become vulnerable to a selective and random application of human skill. Human skill must be natural. It should not be a "sometime thing". To be effective the skill must be unconsciously yet consistently demonstrated in the teacher's actions and demeanor. Human skill must remain as integral part of the teacher's whole being. Human skill is the "human relations image" of a leader. A positive image increases the institutional operations and the reverse holds for a negative image. The point is, human skill sets the operational tone in the establishment. It represents the "human face" in the trilogy.

Technical Skill: Technical skill is the third of the performance skills for effective leadership. The placing does not suggest any prioritization of the skills though some research studies, (Bass, 1981; Gardner, 1984 and Tappan, Weiss and Whitehead, 2004), rank conceptual, human and technical skills in the reverse order. Although all three are important at any level of leadership the consensus is that conceptual skill is emphasized for top level; administrators, human skill, middle level and technical, lower level.

TS is demonstrable and pragmatic. It implies an understanding of proficiency and skillfulness in activities particularly those involving methods, processes, procedures, dexterity and kinesthetic awareness (techniques). TS involve specialized knowledge and analytical process within that specialty and facility in the use of equipments and supplies of a specific game/play or activities. TS is concrete though ostracized in aesthetics. It is developed through practice, use, repetition, and perfected through spatial efficiency. TS is indispensable for an effective psychomotor operations. It is the distinct capacity every HKT should possess that keeps him ahead of "conventional" teachers. HKT with a generous technical skill is able to care for and refine the whole body of the "clientele", caress their soul and stimulate their mind while sculpturing their body.

Conclusion

This work is on job performance. Precisely it is on performance categories necessary for improved leadership thrust in educational organizations and the allied agencies. Good organizations either educational or manufacturing pay a good deal of attention on improved job performance of its members Pringles and Blumberg (1986) averred that there are more behavioural science theories relating to the determinants of job performance than to any other aspect of human behaviour in organizations. This vindicates the claim that high job performance is about the most demanded attribute expected of staffers in organizations. The article presents and emphasizes three interacting job performance attributes human kinetics teachers should be imbued with as a prerequisite "energy" for effective leadership drive.

Effective leadership is innovative and crucial to the success of the organization. Leadership is a developmental process of implementing organizational goals through executive guidance. Effective leadership is an essential ingredient in the successful conduct of great enterprises. If human kinetics is to remain relevant in Nigerian schools being confronted with the "great challenge" of diminishing patronage, HKTs have to rise to the occasion through creative leadership or they will run the risk of becoming irrelevant. This paper proffers competency-based leadership bench-marks the HKT can utilize to remain focused and have a strong in the league of academic disciplines.

The point is that, more than clairvoyance is required for high job performance. A look is taken at three pre-eminent leadership categories that are known to influence ability and capacity to comprehend the operational matrixes in unity. This is referred to as conceptual skill. The second has to do with the teacher's capacity to wield a strong solidarity of support for constructive group action and coordination, which is the essence of human skill. Third category is technical skill. This category is unique to the human kinetics teacher. It is the capacity to demonstrate high manual dexterity and deftness in a wide repertoire of kinesthetic operations.

In sum, all the three categories: conceptual skill (CS), human skill (HS), and technical skill (TS), must be possessed by the human kinetics teacher for high job performance to occur. The idea could be expressed as an equation: $P=f(CS+HS+TS)$ or as a model, figure 1.

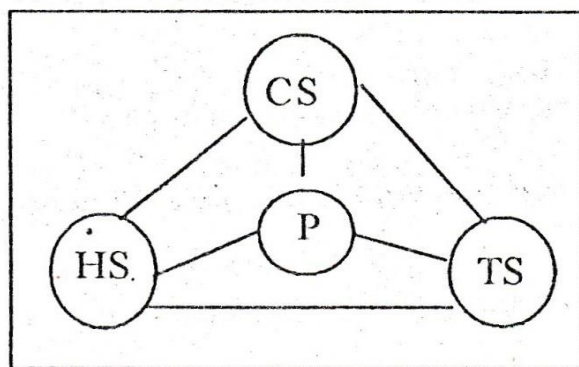


Figure 1
The determinants of high job performance

This equation and model show that performance is a function (f) of three interacting leadership categories; conceptual, human and technical skills. If any of these categories is missing or is rated low in value, job performance or leadership effectiveness declines. It is cautioned that the HKT must deliberately and carefully create and maintain an environment that encourages, promotes and facilitates learning if they hope to remain solvent in Nigeria educational enterprise.

Leadership practices, as we know it today did not exist during the I.R. However, I.R. could be said to have provided a means for bringing together the antecedents of administrative idea, as the environment for the development of leadership seed was provided. The world is today gripped with forces of leadership momentum as we move more and more towards ultra-specialization. Of course, specialization is needed if humanities hope of advancing knowledge and improving society would be realized.

There is however a kind of self-limiting aspect of the drive towards specialism. It does not of itself produce competent leaders. McFeely (1968) shared this view on posting that "the disparity between the twin need for specialists and board-gauged leaders will become increasingly apparent in the years immediately ahead. It is pertinent to fill this leadership gap by developing "new concepts" instead of continuous massive doses of the familiar nostrums. The new direction is not intended as a rap against established administrative theories. Indeed, an eclectic mixture of the best of the different pathways is advocated provided the outcome is quality learning for efficiency.

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