



## THE LAW, ETHICS AD VALUES AS PANACEA FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA.



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### **Abstract**

*In the school system effective school administration is essential. One of the means for accomplishing educational goals and objectives is through effective school administration. To achieve effective school administration in Nigeria schools, adequate application of the element of laws, ethics and values is imperative and therefore warrants serious attention. The paper reviewed the concepts of law, ethics, values and school administration. Various ways by which laws, ethics and values can improve school administration were advanced and discussed. It was concluded that adequate application of the ingredients of education laws, professional ethics and values in school administration is a panacea for effective school administration. Finally, the paper suggested among others that the education agency should from time to time review the existing code of ethics and laws as they relates to school administration to meet the prevailing circumstances.*

*Keywords: Adequate, Effective, Ethics, Law, Panacea, School administration, Values.*

### **Introduction**

The issue of application of laws, ethics and values in our school system and the contemporary society has come to its sorrowful point as the school administrators grope in confusion, in search of quality education. The trend has resulted to colossal loss of genuine application of laws, ethics and values in the school system. Some observers and analysts of contemporary issues have called attention to this ugly trend, especially in terms of school administration.

There is, therefore, the urgent need to refocus and re-direct a strong sense of application of laws, ethics and values by the school administrators through the agency of well integrated, equipped, staffed and funded education system. Since laws, ethics and values are very vital in the school system, their partial or total absence could be dangerous, dehumanizing and disastrous to the system.

Given this circumstance, the imperative for adequate application of laws, ethics and values cannot be over emphasized as they aid in character molding and shaping good moral behavior. Therefore, anchoring on the above background this paper explores the concepts of laws, ethics and values in relation to school administration in Nigeria.

### **Clarification Of Concepts**

#### **Law**

Every human group conducts in the society are regulated by law. Law is an essential element of organizations and life of man. As Brown and Sukys (1997) aptly put it, law consists of rules of conduct established by the government to maintain harmony, stability and justice within a society. Blackstone, an English jurist, (as cited in Igwe, 2003, p.4) define law as “a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power in a state, commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong and any aberration is visited with punishment”. Koko and Nwiyi (2006) contend that law is a set of rules generally accepted and having backing of an authority which serves for the regulation of lives and properties of a nation or group of people.

A classical definition of law was given by The Encyclopaedia World Dictionary as “the principles and regulations emanating from a government and applicable to a people whether in the form of legislation or of customs and policies recognized and enforced by judicial decisions”. Generally



speaking, the concept of law “presuppose the existence of rules and regulation which govern the orderly conduct of members of a given society and channel their behavior towards the attainment of the goals and aspirations of that societies” (Agi & Adiele, 2015, p.226). Within the definition of the term law are implied concepts like: constituted or supreme authority, rules and regulations, prescribed code of conduct or social behavior and prohibited modes of action and behavior. All these are all part of the general understanding of what a law is.

Implicit in these definitions are the ideas that law provides a framework for group relations and serves as a vastly complex mechanism or system for social control. It permits, regulates and prohibits certain conducts for the purpose of achieving harmony in society. It thus delimits individual liberty for the protection of social interest. That is to say those laws are made for the limiting of individual rights and for justice. A law dictates and stipulates some standard by which justice and injustice, right and wrong, propriety and impropriety, etc can be measured, determined and sanction applied for any proven breach (Amirize, 2003).

The purpose of law is to achieve order, equity, justice and peace. Ideally, Okeke (2009) remarks that the two primary objectives of law are to maintain justice and harmony. However, he furthers by saying that in everyday life, the balance between these objectives is not easy to maintain. Often, justice must be sacrificed for harmony. All good laws as distinct from other rules of conduct in Igwe (1998) view are enforceable and often are punished in accordance with the degree of the offence committed as stipulated by the law. Okeke (2009) posits that law is not a descriptive of happenings but prescription of human conduct. To him, it is concerned with regulating human relations, defining man's permissible and required conduct to each other.

Laws are developed through long and painstaking processes based on facts and valid evidences. They could be repealed or amended, subjected or amended subject to new evidences or expediencies. Law are expressions of the will and policies of the people. The law is essentially used upon the notion of public good, social order, interest of all and justice. In reality, Amirize (2003) opined that law has to do with application of justice in all human engagement and interactions. Law also includes regulations emanating from a government or any of authorized agencies and made applicable to specific persons or situation. In Amirize (2003) opinion what constitutes law would be defined by various factors such as shared geographical, political and cultural ones.

Law permits rules and regulation but prohibits certain improper conducts that can breach peace and harmony amongst people every act of transgression of law attracts punishment of a sort. This is actually where the power of law lies. Therefore, there is the tendency to keep away from contradicting or transgressing the law so as to avoid punishment. Law gives individuals and organizations rights to conduct and protect interests. However, law also imposes corresponding duties on persons and organizations from violating these rights. One thing generally accepted, however, is that the law is pervasive, that it is an integral part of our society and that it affects practically almost all known human activities and all persons in the environment, directly or indirectly, in order to ensure order, peace and stability. The idea of law emanates from group conduct, without a group there can be no law. People are commanded to do or obey what is right while they are also prohibited from doing what is wrong according to the values, beliefs and traditions of that particular society, organization, system or institution.

The importance of laws cannot be overstress. Law is a tool for settling dispute, obtaining justice and remedies amongst the people. Law is the instrument of controlling human conduct which to a large extent prevent dispute. In order words, when law is properly adhered to or obeyed disputes are prevented. This is because law regulates, guises and evaluate human conduct and therefore helps society determine the extent to which specific acts and omissions conformation acceptable standards of behavior in that society (Asuru, 2010). Laws are also decisions and provisions for the establishment and protection of fundamental human rights. Laws are intended to regulate the relationships and associations between individuals, groups, organizations and institutions. Harmonious coexistence and interaction even in the pursuit of divergent interests and aspirations can only occur when there is respect for the rule of law. This implies that behavior must conform to recognized principles and standards of conduct that have been laid down by competent authorities within the society or organization.



Park (1968, pp.1-2) categorized the sources of Nigeria law into three, namely;

1. English Law (the Received English Law) particularly the Common law, equity, and statutory law)
2. The products of the local institutions established originally by the British authorities namely (a) local legislation, (b) Nigerian case law.
3. Customary law variously designated as "native law and custom", "native custom" or "local custom".

Exploring the body of literature, laws governing human actions in the societies are derived from many sources. These includes Customs and Tradition, the Constitution, Common law, Statutory law, Ordinance, Codes, Decrees/Edicts, Legislation or statute law, Bye-laws, Judicial precedent, Works of authority or Works of eminent jurists, and Convention.

There are a number of ways of classifying law. The following is commonly preferred: Municipal law and International law; Civil law and Criminal law; Private law and Public law; Substantive law and Procedural law; Written law and Unwritten law; Common law and Statutory law. Amirize (2000) listed the following as qualities of a valid law and conditions which determined such; Legitimacy: That is the law must emanate from an authority with a jurisdiction and competence to make relevant laws.

Jurisdiction: That the law or regulations made are within the schedule of duty and range of authority of the sources.

Competence: That the authorities is competent to make such regulations.

Consistency: A valid law does not contradict itself or undermine already existing rules, but should complement and support them. It should reflect reason and logic on sound basis.

Relevance: A valid law must protect every body's interest and addresses current problems based on the relevant needs and priorities of the environment where it applies.

Justice: A valid law should address, promote, and protect justice.

Review process: It implies making provisions for review as needs and circumstances arise.

Fair hearing: Any law must make provision for fair hearing and opportunity to be heard, because guilt is pronounced on offender.

The prominent role played by law in the society includes:

It promotes order, peace, stability and mutual co-existence in the society, otherwise life would be brutish, nasty and short.

It specifies the structure, framework and the order for all aspects of life in the society, whether it be the structure of government, education etc.

It is a means of seeking redress over injustices done, resolving and settling disputes peacefully through the establishment of a court system.

It provides the environment that enables individuals and society to live, operate and to realize their ambitions and to reach their fullest potentials.

It is an instrument of political, economic and social change and stability, and thus becomes the basis for discipline, progress and development in the society.

It is a guarantee against arbitrary use and abuse of power, authority or position.

It protects citizens from those who are criminally minded and help them to enjoy their properties.

It restrains us from causing harm to others and serves as a means of sanction for breach of the law.

It ensures that there is justice and equity in human transactions by establishing standards by which we determine rights from wrong.

The followings are the features of law:

Law is a body of rules.

Law dynamic in nature.

Law has an element of coercion.

Law is man-made.

Law has territorial limitation.

Law is normative in character.

Law is a code of conduct.



## **Ethic**

All organizations are usually guided by certain dos and don'ts which act as official guidelines, rules and fundamental principles which regulate the actions of members of the organization. These rules and regulations which guide the conduct of members are referred to as ethics in any profession. Therefore, ethic is a system of moral philosophy or science of morality, which seeks to establish guidelines by which human character and actions may be judged as good or bad, right or wrong (Nwamuo, 2007). It has to do with moral conduct of members. In education sector, ethics exists in the teaching profession. In order to check abuse, certain actions are sanctioned against by the profession and such actions or conducts judged unbecoming of a member are called professional misconducts.

Ethics seek to resolve questions dealing with human morality, concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime. Ethical behavior is based on written and unwritten codes of principles and values held in any profession or organization or the society. An ethical behavior is behavior that conforms to generally accept social norms. While unethical behavior is behavior that do not confirm to generally accepted social norms. Ethical principles of values serve as a guide to behaviors on personal level, within professions and at the collective organizational level.

The importance of ethics in any profession is that they regulate actions and conducts of members. Ethics generally protect the reputation of the profession and society and the competent and experienced practitioners from unjust attacks. Equally, ethics also make it possible for the unaccepted members to be prevented from practicing the profession. One good purpose is the guidance it provides for layman and neophytes to understand professional conducts and misconduct. Ethic acts as a guide for making decisions consistent with our values in a wide range of circumstances and moral dilemmas. The role of ethics is to translate values into conduct.

Strike, Haller and Soltis (as cited in Roskoski, n.d.) noted that two ethical principles guide decision making principle. The Principle of Benefits Maximization and the Principle of Equal Respect. The principle of Benefit Maximization states that the most just decisions is the one that the results in the greatest benefit for the most people. While the principle of Equal Respect states that people should be the end or goals and not means to further a policy, that the freedom of ethics must be respected and that all people are of equal moral values. These two principles are the key in helping the school administration to make complicated ethical decisions.

However, the expectations for ethical conducts are often based on the following fundamental principles:

- Respect for the dignity of persons.
- Not willfully harming others.
- Integrity in relationships.
- Responsible caring.
- Responsibility to society.
- Respect for self-determination.

Professional ethics usual go with professional ethical codes. Code of ethics is formal, written principles and ethical standards that guide and specify the accepted behavior or actions of members of a professional organization or body. The code of ethics guides the actions of practitioners and informs the public of expected standards of professional practices and behavior. To a professional body, code of ethics serve as basis of the deciding what is wrong or right. They help to guide the action and conduct of members of the profession, for improvement of the profession and to formulate policies.

Code of ethics usually addresses such ethical issues as: Human resource management; Occupational health and safety conditions; Conflict of interest; Appropriate use of resource and facility; Provision of accounting reports to stakeholders; How to deal with competitors of any kind; Privacy of information; and Encouraging ethical practice within organization. It is pertinent to note that professional ethics have both philosophical and sociological implications. The philosophical view involves questions of morality which are primarily concerned with what is right or wrong. The sociological perspective of professional ethics is therefore concerned with the questions of professional



self-regulation and self-control (Igwe, 2013). To him, the degree of development and operation of code of professional ethics are measures of cohesiveness of the profession.

In education parlance, the ethical codes expected of school administration as identified by Demirtas (2010) includes justice, honesty, professional competence, objectiveness, equality, respect, transparency, consistency, responsibility, avoiding discrimination, determination, professional development, love, empathy, respecting differences, avoiding prejudices and patience. Rebores (2001) listed 10 codes adopted from the American Association of School Administrations (AASA) which school administrator's must conform:

Makes the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision making and actions.

Fulfills professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.

Supports the principle of due process and protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.

Obeys local, state and national laws and does not knowingly join or support all organization that advocates directly or indirectly, the overthrow of the government.

Implements the governing board of education's policies and administrative rules and regulation.

Pursues appropriate measures to correct these laws, policies and regulations that are not consistent with these sound educational goals.

Avoids using positions for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic or other influence.

Accepts academic degrees or professional certification only from duly accredited institutions.

Maintains the standards and seeks to improve the effectiveness of the profession through research and continuing professional development.

Honors all contracts until fulfillment or release.

Strict adherence to these codes of ethics will indeed facilitate the job of the school administrator. A good work ethics leads to doing each job well, it makes him to pursue new goals with zeal.

## **Values**

In the content of societal dealings, value is a moral principle or standard which relates to what is good or bad. Values connotes something that is qualitatively cherished something that provides satisfaction or sense of achievement (Wokocha & Okujagu, 1999). According to Bolarin (2009) values mean trait, practices, acts, ideals, beliefs, attitudes, and principles that a group or society considers to be of merit, worthwhile, dear, acceptable and right. Similarly, Madunagu (2012, p.12), defined values as "the standards by which we judge or express preferences with regard to behaviour, attitudes, objects, state of affairs and so on". In a simple manner, value refer to moral principles or rules or beliefs that we hold and cherish as important and worthwhile, and which possess intrinsic quality or having positive effect on human's life. That is why our decision and actions are mostly influenced by our cherished values.

Values can be positive or negative, good or bad. Certain positive values have been fundamental to human existence such as love, sanctity of human life, respect for constituted authority, honor, handwork, honesty, peace, justice etc (Abraham & Jaja as cited in Abraham, Durosaro, Aguba, Kpee, Bua, & Okpa, 2017). There is hardly any human action that cannot be traced to a value base explicitly or implicitly. Values are the yardsticks by which individuals validate their actions, express beliefs and they provide meaning and give direction to life (Wokocha & Okujagu, 1999). They maintained that there is hardly any society that can hold together for long without a comprehensive set of values jointly shared by its members. Values are thus standards of conduct, efficiency or worth that the society endorses, maintains and transmits to future generations.

There are universal and core values. Universal values are universally accepted while core values are specific to different groups or profession. For instance, the universal values are based on the requirement necessary for the survival of the society (Nwamuo, 2007). Thou shall not kill is a universal value and it rest on the principle of malfeasance which says do not harm or do the least harm. Love, honesty, the obligation to tell the truth, freedom is also based on societal survival. Core values on the other hand are specific to individuals, groups or profession. The core values are used to frame and



resolve ethical issues because the core values can represent all dimensions of structure and purpose of morals.

The extent to which something or values is desirable is determined by a particular society, country, an individual or a religion. If it is not desirable, then it is not a value. Values are enshrined and rooted in society/people's cultural norms, state's/country's laws, individual's principles and religion's doctrine. Value, thus, vary among societies, countries, religions and individual. In spite of the variations, there are however, universal values. For instance, respect for elders, general hospitality, joint responsibility of bringing up children, respect for constituted authority and obedience to law of the land, sincerity to fellow human being, dedication to service and duty, honesty etc, within the society disregard for value usually attract certain level of sanction.

Values are important components of behavior. That is why by observing a student or an individual's behavior, it is possible to know what values an individual has. Values are ending beliefs personally held or socially preferred that prescribe how an individual ought to behave in a certain situation. In other words, values are internalized guides to human behavior and action. Value influences the people orientation towards what they do. According to Eboh (2001,p103) in the absence of values, we cannot make choices and decisions and our society will lack the basic foundational principles on the basis of which we can convincingly face the vicissitudes of life and other exigencies.

Values as social standards are fundamental beliefs that help to distinguish right and wrong for humans being. Adding balance and meaning in life, values enable individuals to live together within a society. Values are not innate, however, they are learnt and transmitted through observation and interaction. Values are moral principles and belief that direct, influence, choice and the decisions we make. It determines our likes and dislikes. Values are affective that guide and influence the behavior of individuals and societies. Values propel people to action, influence attitude, character, behavior and personality in general. Values are used to frame and resolve issues because such values can represents all dimensions of structures and purpose of morality.

Values are deep seated beliefs that influence people's actions and rules by which they make decisions within their society. This implies that values are the acceptable standards or the ideal principles for the evaluation of human actions or things generally. Hence, value judgments are carried out in terms of human conduct or behavior. This position is predicated on the consideration of values in the moral sense. The implication of this is that without values there would be lack of acceptable standards of carrying out value judgments. If there are no objective standards to rely on to make value-judgments then for sure, mankind will retreat to the era of the sophists where man was subjectively, the measure of all things.

Values are standards of conduct, efficiency or worth which a society endorses, maintains and even transmits to her members. However, Denga (1989) argues that value is a philosophical issue which helps an individual to judge how reasonable, truthful and appropriates his actions and relationship with formation. According to him values may be expressed in these ways:

Values may be chosen freely, not imposed. This implies that neither the society nor school should decide what values to be imposed on the individual.

Values must be prized and cherished. This implies that values must be consistently respected.

One must be willing to publicly state ones values. This means one should let others know ones values.

An individual should consider his values in relation to those of the society in which he lives.

Values may change with economic, political and cultural changes.

In African tradition, there are certain values which formed the foundation of the traditional African society. For instance, Akinpelu (1983, p.36) identified "honesty, integrity, chastity, vivacity, modesty, tolerance, truthfulness, self-discipline, brotherliness, honor, humility, patience, industry and self-control as being among the contents of the common traditional African "bag of virtues". These could form some of the basis of good value system in the modern society. It is worth mentioning at this juncture that values that inspire and are inspired by a society can function both as a measure as well as something that are measured. In essence, values should be regarded as positive entities since honesty" is a value; "intricacy" refers to lacking it. Values guide people as abstract entities that ordain people with



ideal thinking and behavioral aspects such as being hard-working all the time. Hence, values are belief-based narratives that shape our approach to stuff and events (Ülgener, 1991).

There are different kinds of values. Mkpa (as cited in Anyaogu, 2017) in his study on values classified Nigerian values into five main groups as follows: spiritual values, moral values, personal values, family values and social values. Others kind of values are national values, global values, aesthetic values, economic values, political values, scientific values, educational values, societal values, and traditional values. Factors that promote good value system includes: consistency, tolerance, fairness, integrity, trust, and commitment.

Fichter (1990) outlined six functions of values as follows:

Values show the ways of thinking and behaving ideally.

Values are used as means in judging.

Values make people focus on useful and important cultural objects.

Values play a role as a guide to adopt and realize social roles.

Values perform as social control and restraint tools.

Values provide solidarity.

Other functions of values include:

Values provide standards that guide behavior in various ways. For instance, values may influence our attitudes and our commitment to particular ideologies, religious or political.

Values are used as standards to guide the way in which we present ourselves to other people, and as a basis for judging our own conduct and the behavior of others.

Values are central to the study of the social comparison process, because comparison of self with others in regard to competence and morality presupposes some standards on which comparisons can be based.

Values serve as standards in the preservation process and in social influence generally since they provide a basis for determining what is worth arguing about or whether it is worth trying to influence others in order to effect a change in their opinions.

Values provide a basic set of standards that guide thought and action, that is, it guide the way one rationalize thoughts and actions that would otherwise be that one's feelings of competence and morality can be unaffected and one's self esteem maintained or even enhanced.

Value systems can be use as general plans that can be used to resolve conflicts and as a basis for decision making.

Values express basic human needs and in the final analysis, they are the conceptual tools and weapons that we all employ in order to maintain and enhance self esteem.

Values are important part of lives because they influence and determine what we believe, hold to and stand for in the following ways:

Values direct our behavior, attributes and our relationship with other people.

Values control our behavior and helps give direction and purpose to our personal lives and society as a whole.

Values increase good behavior, attitude and feelings.

Values influence our attitude, actions, reactions and feelings towards other people.

Values help us in taking decisions, and set personal standards for our behavior.

Understanding and believing our values give a sense of fulfillment, happiness and contentment.

Values ensure and enhance self-esteem, feelings and good behavioral relationships.

Understanding and recognizing our societal values helps us to resist the pressure to conform to other people's values that are not acceptable.

Our knowledge and understanding of our personal and societal values ensure peace, harmony, progress and development in society.

### **School Administration**

Every organization is goal motivated and directed and consists of individuals, groups and materials to realize the predetermined goals. As a social system, these component parts are in continuous interaction, inter-relatedness and inter-dependence to achieve the organizational goals. To



organize and manage these goals call for administration. Administration is simply regarded as the process of working with and through people to get things done effectively towards the achievement of the goals of such organization.

School administration is an essential part of education system that promotes the quality of teaching, learning, research and community service. School administration as defined by Abraham (2003) is the coordination of the human and material resources within the school for the optimal achievement of the pre-determined objectives of education. According to Agi and Adiele (2015) school administration is the field operation charged with use of available resources (material and human) to prosecute policies and programs in education. To them, school administration is realized through efficient planning, organizing, coordinating and control of the various activities of the educational programs.

Similarly, school administration is a systematic process of managing and utilizing both human and material resources for quality service delivery (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2015). However, a working definition of school administration refer to the systematic process of planning, organizing, supervising, coordinating, directing and evaluating every aspects of the school system through adequate utilization of human and material resources to achieve pre-set educational goals and objectives optimally. This definition directly points to the fact that school administration is a process of achieving the educational goals and objectives through proper utilization and management of human and material resources in the school system.

Administration at the school level is derived from the principles of educational administration which is extensive and broader than the school administration (Abdulrahman, 2013). To him, school administration is at the micro level of administration, operational within the school setting. Therefore, whatever that constitutes school administration must have its source from educational administration. School administration at whatever level of operation focus on those activities and series of decisions that will cause the full realization of educational goals. Taking cognizance of the fact that school administration is a social process, full of series of activities and decisions, concerns people in interaction, involves materials and procedures to acquire the desired educational goals and objectives. Certain administrative responsibilities are assigned to a school administrator such as student personnel service, staff personnel administration, facility management, financial administration, management of public relation, professional responsibilities, time management, general routine office duties and organizing school programs.

In every school, the school administrator, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupil/students make up the human component of the school. While the material resources of the school include all the buildings, equipment, facilities, the school farm, lawns and furniture etc. All these resources must be brought to harmony for the achievement of the goals of the school. Thus school administration is a positive response to the management and administrative efforts/actions with the knowledge and skills to enhance individual and school progress. School administration oversees the school's development and the welfare of its students. More often, they are the only entity that bridges the relationship between the school and the community.

School administration must involve the teacher, students and their parents. School governance therefore, has to bring together all the above groups for the purpose of creating an environment in which children can effectively learn. Thus, the process of establishing good teaching and learning conditions in school for the purpose of getting school children well educated and bringing about the interaction of human and material resources is the main concern of school administration. Corroborating to the above view, Muzaazi (1982) noted that school administration is specifically concerned with pupils, teachers, the rules, regulations and policies that govern the school system.

### **Rationale for Effective School Administration in Nigeria.**

The purpose of school administration is to enable the school administrator, staff and students to work together as a team in order to achieve the desired goal and objectives of the school. The goals and objectives are teaching and learning to produce well educated citizens who will serve effectively in all the sector of the economy where their services are needed.



In more specific term, Abraham (2003) highlighted the reasons why effective school administration in Nigeria is necessary. They are:

The times and society is changing:

The changing nature of the society as well as the school in terms of curriculum, teaching methods, education policies, societal needs etc. Call for a dynamic and effective school administration to meet with the demands and pressures on the school from the society.

Change in instructional facilities:

As the society changes, the school curriculum, methods of instruction etc change with it. The facilities with which teaching and learning takes place also change. Such thing like electronic instructional aides (the computer, over-head projectors etc) is typical example of changes in the classroom. This is due to emerging technologies, if teaching and learning must flourish, then there is need for effective school administration.

### **The need to ensure good character development:**

Students spend more of the productive hours weekly in the school. The school apart from the academic lessons also ensures that pupils/students imbibe desirable behavior patterns. School administration must be effective to be able to ensure proper character development of pupils and students.

Efficient utilization of resources:

Resources that the school requires for its existence are limited in supply. They are never adequate in the public school system. To achieve some meaningful goals, effective school administration becomes imperative.

### **Principles of School Administration**

Principles of school administration is the generally accepted tenets or primary truths which serve as general guides to possible action, thinking and on-the-job-practices of school administrators in specific situation (Peretomode, 1995). To him, principles are guidelines which school administrator might apply as they perform their multifarious functions. As “fundamental truths” or “primary assumptions”, they form the basis of chain of reasoning and guide the school administrators.

The relevant principles of school administration as highlighted by Peretomode (1995) are:

Scientific management principles of school administration, Leffingwell’s principles of effective school administration, Universal principles of school administration, Humanitarian principles of school administration, Prudential principles of school administration, The tempo principles of school administration, Single executive, Exception principle, Principle of continuing development, Principle of span of control, Principle of Gangplank, Principle of report-writing, The principles of sound purpose, The principles of effective organization, The principles of brevity and clarity, The principles of timely scheduling, The principles of justified cost, and Peter principle.

### **Prerequisite for Effective School Administration**

According to Idu (2003, p.24) for a school administration to be effective and efficient, the following must be available:

The necessary human resources i.e. professionals and experts in that discipline.

Capital equipment teaching resources e.g. both print and electronic media etc.

Financial resources necessary for procurement and maintaining of the equipment, personnel or resource persons.

The staff must be given incentive/motivation e.g. salaries and fringe benefits, training and workshop etc must be provided.

Furthermore, Agi and Adiele (2015, pp.10-13) outline conditions for effective school administration as follows:



### **Judicious use of scarce resources.**

Scarce resources require judicious deployment and this is a fundamental condition necessary for effective school administration.

### **Knowledge of theory and practice of school administration.**

The possession of background knowledge in school administration is important to effective school administration. In recruiting school administrator, emphasis should be placed on those who have received training in educational management.

### **Prudent management of resources.**

Prudent management of available resources is one thing that makes for effective school administration. The resources (Human and materials) require to be deployed timely, appropriately, effectively and efficiently to achieve school goals and objectives. Poorly managed staff, finance, school plant and goodwill could create problems that lead to chaotic school environment.

### **Administration-staff relationship.**

A conducive working environment is important to the realization of school objectives and itself, in turn for effective school administration. In the view of Hoy and Miskel (2008) a harmonious working relationship engendered by trust, confidence, cooperation professionalism and respect is most likely to create atmosphere for effective school administration.

### **Collaborative leadership.**

Leadership of an organization such as the school should involve subordinates and others in solving problems and in decision- making on issues that affect school. Extensive consultation will imbue sense of belonging amongst teachers.

### **Motivation.**

The administration of the school organization should ignite a driving force capable of making school workers (teaching and non-teaching) produce quality service and performance. Recognition and reward for hard work, avenue for personal achievement within school organization, and person-organization fit, are some sources of motivation that they may combine to affect running of school positively.

### **Organizational discipline.**

Discipline is crucial in the school organisation. Adherence to standard specifications in productive performance, psychological distance in position relationship and accountability are hallmarks of discipline in the school and are essential for effective administration. For example, undefined task schedule or non-adherence to curriculum content constitutes snags to achievement of school goals.

### **External environment.**

The external environment of the school is very crucial to its smooth running. Community members, parents, voluntary organizations and philanthropists are all useful in contributing in diverse ways to effective running of the school. Their contributions may be materials, financial and human. Often such organizations and spirited individuals have helped school with transfer of teachers, donation of buildings and equipment, intervening on behalf of school as well as providing amenities such as water and electricity.



### **Effective communication.**

Communication is a very vital tool in administration of an organization, Effective communication network in the school enhances relationship between school administration and the other critical components such as staff, students, parents and general public as well as government which owns the school.

#### **Problem of School Administration in Nigeria**

In Nigeria school administration is confronted with numerous problems. For instance, Idu (2003) identified three main factors that serve as constraints to school administration as lack of finance, lack of personnel and lack of physical facilities and equipment. Similarly, Okeke (2001, p.26) identifies the following as barriers to effective school administration:

Lack of commitment to school goals.

Lack of regular supervision of staff.

Lack of knowledge and information management.

Funding constraints.

Resistance to change and innovation by administrators.

Absence of democratic principles would create apathy.

Absence of well-articulated utility policies for schools.

Absence of student personnel policy that assists in effective management of students with respect to their overall development.

Writing about the problems of school administration in Nigeria, Abraham (2003, pp.6-13) explains the following responsible factors:

Problems of effective Curriculum development.

Problems of effective staff-personnel administration.

Problems of effective student-personnel administration.

Problems of effective school-community relationship.

Problems of finance and financial management.

Problems of school administrator not co-opted in the formulation of education policies.

Problems of inadequate funding.

Problems of lack of infrastructure.

Problems of interference from parents/guardians and members of the society.

Problems of discipline.

In his contribution Abdulrahman (2013) posits that the problems in school administration includes: poor leadership, lack of administrative involvement, weak community relations, favoritism, ethical issue of conflicts of interest, and conducting inappropriate relations with other individuals.

### **Ensuring effective school administration through adequate application of law, ethic and values.**

#### **The Law**

The importance of law in the school system cannot be over emphasized. The reason is that without it, the school will not achieve its goals and objectives. In every school of learning, certain rules, norms and regulations, are established to regulate and protect the behavior of all members of the school community as well as protection of property rights. There is relatively little that school administration can do that is not in some way, concerned with, and often specifically controlled by a law. Hence, to ensure effective school administration adequate application of law is necessary.

Consequently, application of law will enhances effective school administration in following ways:

Adequate application of law in school administration will boast the knowledge of school administrator to be cognizant of the legal implications of his actions or inactions in the course of his duties, and impact such implications have on students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and the educational system itself. School administrator need to have enough knowledge of the education law to recognize when to seek legal advice, to evaluate, and to know how to apply it in school administration in order to maximize the quality of education.



Adequate application of law in school administration will effectively regulate and direct school activities and behavior of school personnel. That is law provides rules and regulation that guide the behavior and activities of staff and students of educational institutions as well as promoting compliance to rules. This will prevent anarchy and lawlessness.

Adequate application of law in school administration will ensure judicious utilization of available educational resources. That is it helps in the control of ways and manners in which school administrators and teachers utilize available schools human and material resources.

Adequate application of law in school administration will help in protecting teachers and students. That is law acts as protection for both teacher and students in the maintenance of their rights and privileges.

Adequate application of law in school administration will act as checks against crimes for the fact that school system is protected by human activities it is obvious that crime will occur from time to time. It is therefore the role of administrators to use law to eradicate such crimes for the smooth running of the school system.

Adequate application of law in school administration will reinforce the principle of authority and obedience which students get accustomed to and transferred to the large society.

Adequate application of law in school administration will ensure that standard and quality of education is not compromised.

Adequate application of law in school administration will define and enhance understanding of the relationship between the various providers of education such as the government, the parents, the teachers and others.

Adequate application of law in school administration will promote and execute legitimate educational policies.

Adequate application of law in school administration will aid in maintenance of orderliness and progress in the entire school system. This enables school system to be devoid of litigation capable of disrupting the school's climate.

Adequate application of law in school administration will expose and broaden the understanding and knowledge of school administrators relating to the legal implications between staff and students on one hand and between education agencies and educational authorities on the other hand. Adequate application of law in school administration will enable school administration to identify and highlight those desirable legal variables which promote and strengthen harmonious working relationships in the administration of school institutions.

Adequate application of law in school administration will promote the course of justice. One of the things school administration can do to promote the course of justice and to prevent an incident of double jeopardy is to ensure that the delivery of justice is hastened and conducted in a thorough and decent manner.

## **Ethics**

The school administrator is the head of the school who is usually appointed as a result of qualification and seniority. It is his duty to oversee the proper running of the school in terms of staff and student welfare, development and implementation of educational programs, provision of proper instruction, school-community relations, discipline and proper keeping of school records. In course of carrying these tasks, it is expected that he recognize and act within the realm of stipulated ethical standard that guide the school system.

Therefore, application of ethics in school administration will enhance effective school administration in following ways:

Adequate application of ethics in school administration will provide a guide for making decisions consistent with our values in a wide range of circumstances and moral dilemmas. The role of ethics is to translate values into conduct.

Adequate application of ethics in school administration will improve employee and organization morale.



Adequate application of ethics in school administration will encourage a culture of making decisions based on ethics.

Adequate application of ethics in school administration will fosters increased productivity and teamwork among employees.

Adequate application of ethics in school administration will encourages accountability and transparency in decision making.

Adequate application of ethical principles in school administration will serve as a guide to behaviors on personal level, within professions and at the school organizational level.

Adequate application of ethics in school administration will help to regulate actions and conducts of members of the school community.

## **Values**

Values are embedded in educational practices, they do not exist in isolation, but rather form an entangled element in educational activities. It follows that in school administration all aspects of value system need to be employed and adhered to.

Thus, application of values in school administration will enhances effective school administration in following ways:

Adequate application of values in school administration will help school administrator to be able to make valid choices.

Adequate applications of values in school administration will provides opportunity for the school administrator to shun ideas and actions that will not guarantee the just survival of the school system.

Adequate application of values in school administration will provide opportunity for the school administrator to practice the necessary values at all times and in relevant situations.

Adequate application of values in school administration will direct and guide the ways of our thinking and ideal behavior.

Adequate application of values in school administration will serves as social control and restraint tools.

Adequate application of values in school administration will provide standards that guide behavior of members in the school community.

Adequate application of values in school administration will provide a basic set of standards that guide thought and action, that is, it guide the way one rationalize thoughts and actions that would otherwise be that one's feelings of competence and morality can be unaffected and one's self esteem maintained or even enhanced.

Adequate application of values in school administration will help in resolving conflicts and as a basis for decision making.

Adequate application of values in school administration will increase good behavior, attitude and feelings. It influences our attitude, actions, reactions and feelings towards other people.

Adequate application of values in school administration in terms of knowledge and understanding of our personal and societal values will ensure peace, harmony, progress and educational development.

## **Conclusion**

The paper examined the application of laws, ethics and values in school administration. These three fundamental elements are essential to the administration of schools. In that regards, the paper advanced various ways by which laws, ethics and values can enhance school administration. It was concluded that adequate application of the ingredients of laws, ethics and values in school administration is a panacea for effective school administration. It therefore behooves on the school administrator not to view the ingredients of laws, ethics and values discussed in this paper as a mere process, but to see it as a mindset involving habits of thinking, analysis and practice.



## Suggestions

The following are suggestions are proffered.

The education agency should from time to time review the existing code of ethics and laws as they relates to school administration to meet prevailing circumstance.

All school administrators should make themselves available during induction and orientation, or seminars or conferences where education laws, code of ethics and values system will be adequately discussed.

There should be constant evaluation of the activities of the school administrators to ensure that they upheld and put into practice the standard stipulation of education laws, professional ethics and values on routine basis.

There should be sanction to any school administrator that seen to consistently deviate from the provision of the laws and professional ethical practice.

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