AFRICAN JOURNAL OF

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

TEAM COHESION AS IMPERATIVE FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN ENHANCING EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Oparinde, Olayiwola Raheef
Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Education
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife
Email: ooparinde@oauife.edu.ng

Abstract
This paper looked at school management with a focus on team cohesion with a view to achieving effective service delivery in educational institutions. This was for the purpose of determining appropriate strategies for improving the quality of service delivery system in Nigerian educational system. The paper submits that team cohesion is very important to the success of any organization. People are referred to as a team because they have similar objectives and determined to pursue them together as a team to achieve the desired results. The paper also examined the ability of school administrators/teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behaviour of their students which is considered critical to achieving positive educational outcomes and build cohesion among the staff as well as the students. Problems within a team are unavoidable, hence, the paper as well focused on strategies for handling problems within the team before they escalate so as to ensure effective service delivery. There is no doubt that cohesive groups offer advantages in terms of social support for group members, they also present some risks, such as lack of cooperation among team members, lack of reward and recognition for individual contributions to accomplish team goals as well as selfish interests on the part of team members. The paper, therefore, recommended that all team members should embrace the spirit of togetherness for successful task accomplishments regardless of individual differences among members; and that classroom-management strategies should be executed effectively such that teachers minimize the behaviors that impede learning for both individual students and groups of students, while maximizing the behaviors that facilitate or enhance learning and promote team cohesion and effective service delivery.

Introduction

Team cohesion is the strength and extent of interpersonal connection existing among the members of a group. It is this interpersonal bond that causes members to participate readily and remain motivated to accomplish the set goals. It is the measure of how well team members work with one another. When a team is cohesive, it means everyone understands their role, embraces their strengths, and is committed to the overall team goals. Rosh, Offermann and Van Diest (2012) noted that the notion of team cohesion has been a basis of management practices since the early 1950s. Within a team atmosphere, having a cohesive workplace allows employees to work well together, ensures effective service delivery and they contribute to the overall success of the group.

Service delivery in this context refers to organization's capability to deliver on the promises that were made and being able to stand over any key performance indicators or service agreements. Service delivery is all about people, process and procedures and the right infrastructure to deliver those services correctly. As such, when employees are in a cohesive work environment, they focus more on the group goals than their individual success, becoming motivated by the team's efforts.

According to Otoum (2018), the School of the 21st Century requires the school principal to take additional steps to manage the school's democratic pathways through planning and setting goals, or identifying the appropriate procedures for implementation and follow-up through participation, discussion and various meetings within and outside the school with a view to achieving team cohesion for effective service delivery. School administration is a set of operational and technical processes that are carried out through collaborative collective humanitarian action with the aim of providing the intellectual, psychological and material climate that helps to stimulate motivation and the desire for active and organized work; individually or collectively to solve problems and overcome difficulties. The educational and social goals of the school are fulfilled as the society seeks them (Zubaidi, 1988).

In this context, school management refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class. When classroom-management strategies are executed effectively, teachers minimize the behaviors that impede learning for both individual students and groups of students, while maximizing the behaviors that facilitate or enhance learning. Generally speaking, effective teachers tend to display strong classroom-management skills capable of enhancing effective service delivery, while the hallmark of the inexperienced or less effective teacher is a disorderly classroom filled with students who are not working or paying attention.

Emmer and Stough (2001) noted that the ability of school administrators/teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behavior of their students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes and build cohesion among the staff as well as the students. Although sound behavior management does not guarantee effective instruction, it establishes the environmental context that makes good instruction possible. Reciprocally, highly effective instruction reduces, but does not eliminate, classroom behavior problems. School/Classroom Management is a term administrators/teachers use to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly without disruptive behavior from students compromising the delivery of instruction. The term also implies the prevention of disruptive behavior preemptively, as well as effectively responding to it after it happens. It is a difficult aspect of teaching for many teachers. Problems in this area cause some to leave teaching.

Different educational programs are offered in schools to meet the needs of the students, parents and society. There are experienced and well trained instructors capable of helping students achieve desired results through various techniques that place the educational institutions above other social services. In actualizing all these, the significance of team cohesion cannot be underestimated because it is important that a group of people must be in unity while pursuing a common goal together regardless of whatever differences that may be existing among them outside the team. However, this does not just happen as there are certain procedures to be followed in building a team.

This paper, therefore, looks into the activities of educational institutions with a view to establishing a performance plan in school/classroom management with focus on team building and effective service delivery. It also examines team cohesion as well as identifying the strategies for handling problems within the team with a view to achieving excellent school/classroom management in educational institutions with a view to ensuring effective service delivery.

Statement of Issues
Rufai and Igwe (2012) noted that the high rate of mass failure of students in most of the National Examinations, lack of skill acquisition and the culmination of antisocial behaviours among young school leavers have become a serious problem to the society, and that these unpleasant experiences are being attributed to lack of team cohesion and the poor teaching service delivery in the schools. Given the challenges of resources constraints in low income countries like Nigeria, delivery of education services remains a major concern to the government, all education services providers and the public in general. For any educational institution or organization to achieve desired results, it is important for such organization to build cohesion within the system among other salient issues to be considered. Essentially, therefore, this paper examines the need for building team cohesion in educational institutions for effective service delivery.

Relevant Prior Contributions

Some School/Classroom Management Strategies
Classroom management involves actions taken by teachers to establish and sustain an environment that fosters students' academic achievement as well as their social, emotional, and moral growth. In other words, the goal of classroom management is not order for order's sake, but order for the sake of learning and for smooth service delivery. Guido (2021) identified a number of school/classroom management strategies. These classroom management techniques have shown to improve classroom behavior, build relationships for a better classroom community and foster a positive classroom environment where student

learning is the number one collective goal through effective service delivery. These strategies include:

➢ **Model ideal behaviour:** It is important for teachers to make a habit of demonstrating behaviour they want to see, as <u>many studies</u> show that modeling effectively teaches students how to act **i**n different situations. A straightforward way to model certain behaviours is holding a mock conversation with an administrator, other teacher or student helper in front of the class. Talking about a test or other relatable topic, through the use of polite language, maintenance of eye contact, uninterrupted class session and respecting other people's opinions.

➢ **Let students help establish guidelines:** Encourage all students to help you build classroom expectations and rules, as you will generate more guidelines than just telling them what they are not allowed to do. This is especially essential for new teachers. Near the start of the school year or during the first day of a semester, start a discussion by asking students what they believe should and should not fly in terms of appropriate behavior. At what points are phones okay and not okay? What are acceptable noise levels during lessons? Having a discussion should lead to mutually-understood and -respected expectations for your classroom culture.

➢ **Document rules:** Do not let your mutually-respected guidelines go forgotten. Similar to handing out a syllabus, print and distribute the list of rules that the class discussion generated. Then, go through the list with your students. Doing this emphasizes the fact that you respect their ideas and intend to adhere to them. And when a student breaks a rule, it will be easy for you to point to this document. You will likely want to post these rules up in your classroom for occasional reference.

➢ **Avoid punishing the class:** Address isolated discipline problems individually instead of punishing an entire class, as the latter can hurt your relationships with students who are on-task and

thereby jeopardize other classroom management efforts. Instead, call out specific students in a friendly manner. For example:

- "Do you have a question?", **not** "Stop talking and disrupting other students"
- "Do you need help focusing?", **not** "Pay attention and stop fooling around while I'm talking"

  This basic approach will allow you to keep a friendly disposition, while immediately acknowledging inappropriate behaviour.

➢ **Encourage initiative:** Promote growth mindset, and inject variety into your lessons, by **allowing students to work ahead and deliver short presentations** to share take-away points. Almost inevitably, you will have some eager learners in your classroom. You can simply ask them if they would like to get ahead from time-to-time. For example, if you are reading a specific chapter in a textbook, propose that they read the following one too. When they deliver their subsequent presentations to preview the next chapter on your behalf, you may find that other students want a bit more work as well.

➢ **Offer praise:** Praise students for jobs well done, as doing so **improves academic and behavioural performance**. Such praises can inspire the class, improve a student's self-esteem, reinforce rules and values you want to see. Perhaps more importantly, it encourages students to repeat positive behaviour. Let us say a student exemplifies advanced problem-solving skills when tackling a math word problem. Praising his or her use of specific tactics should go a long way in ensuring he or she continues to use these tactics. Not to mention, you will motivate other students to do the same.

➢ **Use non-verbal communication:** Complement words with actions and visual aids to **improve content delivery,** helping students focus and process lessons. Many differentiated instruction strategies and techniques are rooted in these communication methods. For example, running learning

stations -- divided sections of your classroom through which students rotate -- allows you to deliver a range of non-spoken content types. These include videos, infographics and physical objects such as counting coins.

➢ **Hold parties:** Throw an occasional classroom party to acknowledge students' hard work, **motivating them to keep it up.** Even if it is just for 20 or 30 minutes, they should be happy with snacks and a selection of group games to play. Clarify that you are holding the party to reward them and they can earn future parties by demonstrating ideal behavior, collectively scoring high on assessments and more.

➢ **Give tangible rewards:** Reward specific students at the end of each lesson, in front of the class, as another **motivational and behaviour-reinforcement technique.** Let us say a few students are actively listening throughout the entire lesson, answering questions and asking their own. Before the class ends, walk over to their desks to give them raffle tickets. So others can learn, state aloud what each student did to earn the tickets. On Friday, they can submit their tickets for a shot at a prize that changes each week -- from candy to being able to choose a game for the next class party.

➢ **Make positive letters and phone calls:** Keep students happy in and out of class by **pleasantly surprising their parents,** making positive phone calls and sending complimentary letters home. When the occasion arises, from academic effort or behavioral progress, letting parents know has a trickle-down effect. They will generally congratulate their kids; their kids will likely come to class eager to earn more positive feedback. This can also entice parents to grow more invested in a child's learning, opening the door to at-home lessons. Such lessons are a mainstay element of culturally-responsive teaching.

➢ **Build excitement for content and lesson plans:** This one works well no matter the grade level: elementary school, middle school or high school. Start lessons by previewing particularly-

exciting parts, **hooking student interest from the get-go.** As the bell rings and students settle, go through an agenda of the day's highlights for the whole class. These could include group tasks, engaging bits of content and anything else to pique curiosity. The goal of this classroom management technique is to immediately interest students in your agenda and thereby dissuade misbehaviour.

➢ **Offer different types of free study time:** Provide a range of activities during free study time to **appeal to students who struggle to process content in silence, individually.** You can do this by dividing your class into clearly-sectioned solo and team activities. In separate sections, consider:
- Providing audio books, which can play material relevant to your lessons
- Maintaining a designated quiet space for students to take notes and complete work
- Creating a station for challenging group games that teach or reinforce standards-aligned skills
- Allowing students to work in groups while taking notes and completing work, away from quiet zones
  By running these sorts of activities, free study time will begin to benefit diverse learners. This should contribute to overall classroom engagement and effective service delivery.

- **Write group contracts:** Help student group work run smoothly and effectively by writing contracts that contain guidelines, having everyone sign. Group contracts should be based on expectations that students have for each other, and you have for them. You can gather the class's thoughts by holding a discussion about what the ideal group member does, and how he or she acts. Once you have written the contract, encourage students to come up with consequences for violating expectations. By having them sign a fresh version of the contract before each group task and project, you're empowering them to hold each other accountable.

- **Assign open-ended projects:** Encourage students to tackle open-ended projects -- projects that do not demand a specific product -- to allow them to demonstrate knowledge in ways that inherently suit them. This starts by giving the class a list of broad project ideas, asking each student to choose one. Be sure to provide a rubric for each project that clearly defines expectations. By both enticing and challenging students, you should notice they will work and learn at their own paces, engage actively with appropriate content and demonstrate knowledge as effectively as possible. With these benefits, students may actually look forward to taking on new projects.

Task-Oriented Practices of Team Cohesion

Team cohesion occurs when a group of individuals feels connected and driven to achieve a common goal. A large part of team cohesion is maintaining unity throughout a project and being able to feel that one has actually contributed to the group's success. Group members don't just respect one another. There are some task-oriented practices capable of ensuring team cohesion and effective service delivery, among which are:

Share a Common Purpose: To achieve team cohesion, and of course effective service delivery in education, people within the organisation must be all aligned to the same mission. According to Thiss (2017), part of the task-oriented practices of team cohesion is the group sharing a common purpose. Teams with a common purpose share specific characteristics such as mutual goals and objectives. Groups that share a common purpose celebrate achievements when tasks are accomplished. The goals of the team are very detailed and include objectives for the year, thus allowing each team member to understand the intended outcome of the team's purpose.

Supportive Leaders: Supportive leaders are part of task-oriented practices for team cohesion and effective service delivery. Leaders guiding teams is a way to nurture individual abilities. Typically, according to Hinton (2010), many people are not born to be leaders but leadership skills, such as vision, integrity, and compassion, can be learned and developed. Trust between team members will encourage

the involvement of the individuals and help foster willingness to complete a task; therefore, it is important for a leader to share the power and to trust teammates to use gifts and talents.

Group Efficacy and Success: As noted by Thiss (2017) group efficacy and success make up part of task-oriented team cohesive practices. The team must work together to meet goals and objectives, and teams must be trained effectively. Role-clarification gives each team member a clear definition of any responsibilities shared as well as defining individual roles. Each member of the team should know what the expectation or purpose is for all members of the group (Aga, Noorderhaven and Vallejo, 2016). Clarification of roles increases communication amongst team members and increases the chances of meeting the goal at hand (Aga et al., 2016). Role clarity not only increases group efficacy and success but also uses individual strengths amongst team members.

Trust Within the Team: Trust is a significant part of task-oriented practices of team cohesion. Marcus (2017) suggested that building trust by engaging the team gives individuals the opportunity to feel safe in the work environment and to trust that leadership will follow through with promises made. Team meetings offer golden opportunities to model trust and support of a team. If colleagues do not trust the members of the team or leadership, outcomes can be diminished or decreased. Thiss (2017) suggested open, honest and complete communications to achieve trust within a group.

Commitment to Objectives: Commitment to objectives is a task-oriented practice of team cohesion. Multi-functional groups build rapport by utilizing team-building strategies to settle on a common purpose, team responsibilities, communication methods, and comparable features of work. Team cohesion also has worth for each participant by maximizing the team's contribution to the organisation and incorporating individual goals with the establishment's goals. Commitment remains imperative for team cohesion and success, whether applying commitment to the team as an individual or collectively.

Respect of Group Members: Group members must respect each other to form team cohesion. For team interdependency or trust to occur, team-building should emphasize strengthening performance instead of focusing on the environment of the team. When teams have a specific goal to achieve, success is more evident (Lynn and Kalay, 2016). Team-building requires a purpose which merits the investment put into the team.

The Concept of Service Delivery

Service delivery refers to the extent to which the services provided meet or exceed the expectation of the beneficiaries (general public). In this context, service can be described as work done for the customers of an establishment, often with regard to whether it pleases them or not. The term delivery can also simply be defined as the transfer of something such as mail, goods, services that have been paid for to a person or address. In education, the manner in which a teacher, or staff member delivers a programme is what is termed quality of delivery. An effective public service delivery mechanism would ultimately lead to good governance.

Educational services can be explained as the training or instructions given on different subjects. The way education services are delivered contributes to increasing social cohesion, stabilizing systems, and building individual and community resilience. To improve service delivery in education, programs should address basic literacy and numeracy, relationships, health, civic engagement, and livelihoods as well as appropriate technical and vocational skills.

Effective service delivery is one of the key building blocks in any education system. Only if services are effectively delivered with certain quality, will learners access and use them and ultimately improve their knowledge and skills status. All these are expected to be done according to standards or doing the right thing in the right way and at the right time. Given the challenges of resources constraints in low income countries like Nigeria, delivery of education services remains a major concern to the government, all education services providers and the public in general.

Education services are expected to be provided in a safe and supportive environment that is responsive to the needs of the recipients, with a strong focus on livelihoods and community, in

addition to education. Elements of effective service delivery include school location, effective school management, access to materials in languages that teachers and learners understand, conflict-sensitive teaching and pedagogy, healing classroom tools, and the use of appropriate technology.

Effective service delivery focus on identifying, implementing and maintaining the best instructional and organizational practices that ensure appropriate services to clients for positive education outcomes. According to Nyirenda (n.d.), effective education service delivery should be guided by several principles:

a. Focus on the client: service should be designed so as to meet the needs (both education and others) and expectations of clients (learners) and communities;

b. Focus on systems and processes: providers must understand what needs to be done, which steps have to be taken and in which order;

c. Focus on provider: education workers (teachers, heads of schools etc) need support from the system, such as clear job descriptions, clear and immediate feedback on performance, equipment and supplies, good working environment, recognition and motivation in the frame of regular supportive supervision;

d. Focus on teamwork: quality and effectiveness are best achieved through a team approach to problem solving and performance improvement;

e. Effective communication: this entails sharing or exchange of information, ideas, knowledge, emotions and skills between people. Effective communication is essential for ensuring the effective education service delivery and satisfaction of users;

f. Routine supportive supervision: this is very crucial in improving performance and quality of education services. To make supervision more effective, a situation analysis needs to be conducted on regular basis in all schools, and identified problems discussed and address with all stakeholders involved, including community members; and

g. Use of data: evidence based practice requires correct and current data

Building Team Cohesion in Educational Institutions for Effective Service Delivery

Building Team cohesion is very important in every organization as this afford members to stay together to pursue a common desire through membership interactions and spirited activity performed together. It is a level to which members of a team are connected together and remain united in pursuing similar goals of interest. Team cohesion, according to Thye and Lawler (2002) suggests that a group of people must be in unity while pursuing a common goal together regardless of whatever differences that may be existing among them outside the team.

It is important to bear in mind that people are not just brought together as a team if they are not of the same common goals; hence, people are referred to as a team when they have common objectives and determined to pursue them together as a team. The spirit of success is usually the bond linking members of a team together as well as linking them to the theme of the team. Hence, forming, storming, norming and performing have been identified as phases of team formation.

Service delivery in education is conceptualized as teaching effectiveness and research output as the two major functions performed in education industry all over the world. The ability to perform these services effectively and efficiently will in no small measure raise the quality of education thereby achieving the goal of manpower development.

As noted by Rufai and Igwe (2012), the high rate of mass failure of students in most of the National Examinations, lack of skill acquisition and the culmination of antisocial behaviours among young school leavers have become a serious problem to the society, and that these unpleasant experiences are being attributed to the poor teaching service delivery in the schools. Such a growing impression informs a compelling need to evaluate the teachers' service delivery with a view to determining their proficiency. In a similar vein, Obebe (1985) and Igwe (2007) submitted that the role of teachers' in the schemes of quality service delivery cannot be overemphasized as they can make or mar any educational programme regardless of the quality of its design. Ignoring this and other factors would leave a yawning gap between the goals of quality teachers' service delivery and the continued search for effective implementers of curricula in schools.

Effective teaching is an aspect of teaching and is influenced by a combination of teacher characteristics, such as clarity, inter-personal relationship, team work, capacity to motivate the students and to help them in the study of his topic, ability to organize the lesson also with exercises and handouts) physical aspects of the classroom or laboratory and class characteristics (such as students characteristics; gender, age, high school of origin, mark obtained at the end of compulsory or high school, faculty attended by the student, or class size.

Ganser (2000) opined that decision makers and analysts choose different points along the service delivery chain to identify indicators that measure the effectiveness of an education system. Some consider inputs as evident of effective service delivery. These inputs may compose material inputs, such as blackboards, utilities, and textbooks, and less tangible inputs, such as the curriculum, teacher quality, pedagogical practice, classroom organization, and the school management structure. In all these, team cohesion is held sacrosanct to achieve the stated objectives of education. That explains that team cohesion should be ensured if quality service delivery would be achieved as there is a connection among teacher educational programmes, teachers' professional development, the educational activities teachers engage themselves in, cooperation among colleagues and students and the quality of teachers' services delivery. However, some impediments to this include lack of retention of teachers, inadequate teaching facilities and aids and most importantly teachers' general condition of service.

Goal setting is another hallmark of developing team cohesion and ensuring effective service delivery. It is a process that involves the development of a document which lists and details specific actions to be undertaken in achieving stated objectives. Goals represent ideas of the future or desired results that a person or a group of people hopes, plans and are committed to achieve. Goal setting, therefore, is the idea of coming up with an observable and measurable end result achievable within a time frame. Goal setting involves analyzing future desired result that a person or a group hopes to achieve through joint efforts of the team members.

For effective team cohesion and service delivery, it is important to identify and assess the operational system of the team. This in essence is referred to as performance monitoring and it enables the

organization to determine the performance of the team against the organizational objectives. By monitoring performance, the organization shall be able to identify, assess and effectively handles performance issues. In this process, the management and employees in schools need to work together to plan and review work of the team members and their contributions to organizational goals. It is recommended that the institution should assess the performance of each team member, at least, once in a year.

Educational institutions should, as a matter of necessity, recognize differences among the team members and give importance to such, bearing in mind that a lot could be gained from people's diversity. At the school should be a conducive work environment that recognizes and respects individual team member's differences as well as be conscious of the contributions that these differences among individuals can bring to the organization. Pooling people from different backgrounds and races together as team members could strengthen team cohesion (Towler, 2019).

Ayopo (2011) observed that workers work as a team for the attainment of organizational goals. Building a cohesive team is very important for workers to work together and to ensure improved participation, performance and effective service delivery in education. This could be achieved in all educational institutions using different strategies, parts of which are:

- Organizational plans that give rooms for team inputs
- Adequate briefings of the happenings within the organization through newsletter/bulletin
- Clarification of roles and expectations
- Manpower development through capacity building
- Selecting appropriate team members
- Identification of team objectives
- Open Communication
- Promotion of trust among team members through openness and exemplary conducts
- Conflict Resolution within the organization before it degenerate to serious problems

If the above strategies are identified and followed, areas to be impacted include the quality of work output at all levels of educational

institutions, the general work performance and the psyche of the group members. It is hoped that management, staff and students are going to be impacted as well.

Policies and Procedures in Team Building

Building a team does not just happen without following certain policies and procedures. Policies and procedures in building a team allow any organisation to systematically review and improve the quality of workgroups and teams. It is, therefore, important that educational institutions make use of the following policies and procedures in building a team in all schools:

> ➢ **Employment Practices and Placement** is a human resource policy that support and enable Human Resource strategies and processes for managing people performance. To recruit and retain the right employees, it is essential to use effective employment practices and this involves all the actions or processes of advertising for positions/vacancies in both internal and external publications. After recruitment, what follows is placement at work. Here, the school is expected to guide against job discrimination and give equal rights and recognitions to all workers not minding their colour, language, religion, tribe or sex. For an organization to get the best out of her staff, such organization must embrace the principle of equality at work and equal opportunities for all. When workers feel they are not been discriminated against in terms of fair treatment arising from liberal dispositions to race, sex, religion and language, they tend to put in their best for the growth of the organization with strong sense of belonging and commitment.

> ➢ **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:** For any educational institution to get the best out of her staff, it must embrace the principle of equality at work and equal opportunities for all. When workers feel they are not been discriminated against in terms of fair treatment arising from liberal dispositions to race, sex, religion and language, they tend to put in their best for the growth of the organization with strong sense of belonging and commitment. Discrimination is a deliberate preferential

treatment of some employees essentially as a result of some factors bordering on colour, language, race or sex. It is an unjust distinction among employees and a manner of favouring some employees more than others for some biased reasons. Discrimination is treating a category of people negatively at the expense of others because of tribal, religious or any other reasons (Schmitt, 2021).

➢ **Diversity Policy:** Lambouths, Scarborough and Holbrook (2019) opined that diversity is quite essential for the success of ant team successful teams because the team will have access to many people with different skills and experiences. This goes beyond race and ethnicity in workplaces which is equally relevant at all educational institutions. Team members are people of different features, different religions, beliefs and sex. The organization should be able to pull from all the experiences of these people to achieve the goals of the organization.

➢ **Conflict Management Policy**: Conflict within a team might be unavoidable because a typical team involves a group of people with different interests and beliefs. Conflicts may arise as a result of quarrels among team members, struggle, lack of compatibility and many others and this may impact negatively on the organization. Barki and Hartwick (2001) noted that the management of such conflict is very important for the success of the organization and this could be achieved by:
   ❖ Putting of heads together within the team to deliberate on issues that may impact negatively on the organization
   ❖ Analyzing a number of issues and concerns and requesting for comments from team members on how to move the organization forward
   ❖ Identifying individuals with concerns and discussing such with him/her for probable solutions
   ❖ Coming up with different options for resolution of concerns and distributing same for comments among team members
   ❖ Capacity building through training and development

When conflict related issues are appropriately identified within a team, management becomes easy as the team will know what options to discuss and determine actions to be taken. The process of identifying issues, concerns and problems as identified by team members can also be used as a form of feedback in a review. It is important for the team to realize that all inputs are important and needed for the accomplishment of the organizational goals.

Performance Management Policy is the process of promoting and improving employees' efficiency and effectiveness. All stakeholders work together to monitor and review employees' overall contributions to the organization in line with the goals of the establishment. As submitted by Amiri (2016), performance management is responsible for the layout of well-defined approaches to effectively and efficiently achieve the desired objectives of the organization as it enables individuals or teams identify the mission to be accomplished within a given period.

Strategies in Handling Team Problems

Team cohesion usually decreases the amount of conflict within a group and it reflects the degree to which members are committed to one another in the achievement of team goals. Factors that are purported to contribute to team cohesion include number of team sessions, amount of time in the team, team size, team accountability and rewards for success. However, problems within a team are unavoidable, but it is necessary to handle such appropriately before they escalate. In doing so, it is important to note that when the origin of a problem is known, it becomes easier to determine what happened and why it happened. This will enable the organization to work out how to prevent its future occurrence by coming up with probable solutions. Some strategies that could be used, as identified by Habas (2019), include the following:

  - Identifying the problem and the likely causes
  - Developing possible solutions in solving the problem
  - Discussing with other team members on possible solutions already identified
  - Choosing the appropriate solution among alternatives for the challenge at hand

- Implementing the chosen solution

Risks for implementing changes

There is no doubt that cohesive groups offer advantages in terms of social support for group members, but according to Thye and Lawler (2002), they also present some risks, among which are:

- ➢ **Groupthink:** This is a situation whereby team members are not willing to express dissenting views so as not to cause disharmony within a cohesive group. They considered opinions held by the majority or by key group members as unanimous and sacrosanct, while dissenting or minority views are discouraged. Such attitude can lead to poor or unreasonable decisions and may affect the organization if not well managed.

- ➢ **Not willing to Change:** When a change occurs, especially when such is driven by external forces, members of the group find it difficult to change their values, actions or behaviours as they rely heavily on each other within the group for inputs. Even if an individual member of the group is convinced of the need for change, he may find it difficult to put into practice due to the strength of the group dynamic.

- ➢ **Following Group Norms rigidly:** There are norms within every group. These are ways of conducts and behavioural patterns of the group. Members do follow these norms rigidly at times such that it affects the team's performance. This is because some norms enable the group to function more effectively by encouraging everyone to participate in decision-making, but low performance norms can be detrimental to group productivity. Where for instance, the norm is to work at a steady pace, a cohesive group members may not be willing to put in extra effort to meet a deadline not minding whether or not such will affect the organization.

Others include lack of cooperation among team members, team goals not being shared by everyone on the team, lack of reward and recognition for individual contributions to accomplish team goals, as well as selfish interests on the part of team members. All these could be addressed with spirit of togetherness for successful task accomplishments regardless of individual differences among members.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has examined the need for building team cohesion in educational institutions for effective service delivery. The goals of education are attainable with effective team building and principles to service delivery to improve teaching, learning and research activities and output. The fact still remains that the quality and quantity of the material, physical and human resources needed for the enhancement of education are lacking in these institutions and as such their quality assurance cannot be guaranteed. However, effective team building and cohesion can have impact on teachers' service delivery and effective school/management.

Arising from the discussion above, the following recommendations are made:

➢ All team members should embrace the spirit of togetherness for successful task accomplishments regardless of individual differences among members;

➢ classroom-management strategies should be executed effectively such that teachers minimize the behaviors that impede learning for both individual students and groups of students, while maximizing the behaviors that facilitate or enhance learning and promote team cohesion

➢ Whatever problems noticed within the team should be appropriately and adequately handled before such degenerate to an uncontrollable level;

➢ Possible risks that may affect the school and threaten team cohesion should be identified and handled appropriately.

References

Aga, D. A., Noorderhaven, N., & Vallejo, B. (2016).Transformational leadership and project success: The mediating role of team-building. *International Journal of ProjectManagement, 34(5),* 806–818. doi:10.1016/j.ijproman.2016.02.012

Amiri, M. (2016). *A Study on performance management as a System in BG Shirke Construction Technology Company Ltd, Pune*. Diss. Bharati Vidyapeeth

Ayopo, L. (2011). Effect of teamwork on employee service delivery. *Public Productivity and Management Review*, *29,* 256-277.

Barki, H., & Hartwick, J. (2001). Interpersonal conflict and its management in information system development. *MIS Quarterly, 25,* 195-228.

Emmer, E. T., & Stough, L. M. (2001). Classroom management: A critical part of educational psychology, with implications for teacher education. *Educational Psychologist, 36(2),* 103–112.

Ganser, T. (2000). Professional development for teachers: The vision. *National Association for Scholarship Pedagogy (NASP),* 84(2), 9 – 14.

Guido, M. (2021). *20 Classroom management strategies and techniques.* Retrieved online from www.prodigygame.com › main-en › blog › classroom-management-strateg... (8/4/2021)

Habas, C. (2019). *5 Conflict Management Strategies.* Retrieved from smallbusiness.chron.com ›Human Resources › Managing Conflict (10/8/2021)

Hinton D. (2010). Medical assistant forum. Building a winning practice team. *Dermatology Nursing, 22(2),* 32–33.

Igwe, R.O. (2007). Teachers' perception of professional development programmes for quality education in Cape Coast. *The Social Educator,* 3(1), 153.

Lambouths, D, Scarborough, W & Holbrook, A. (2019). *Who supports diversity policies? It depends on the policy*. Retrieved from hbr.org › 2019/10 › who-supports-diversity-policies-it-depends-on-the-pol.. (14/7/2021)

Lynn, G. S., & Kalay, F. (2016). *The effect of vision and role clarity on team performance. VİZYON VE ROL AÇIKLIĞININ TAKIM PERFORMANSI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ.,* 17, 175–196.

Marcus, I. (2017). Build team trust. *Business Today, 222,* 1–3.

Nyirenda, M. (n.d). Quality service delivery key to education system. Retrieved from *https://www.academia.edu› Quality_service delivery [24/10/2022]*

Obebe, B.J., 1985. Preparing teachers for multicultural education in Nigeria. *Journal of Research of Curriculum Joric* 3(1), 12.

Otoum, N. N.A.M. (2018). Modern school management and its impact on the academic achievement of the students of the basic stage in Jordanian public schools. *British Journal of Education 6 (6),* 73 - 85

Rosh, L., Offermann, L. R., & Van Diest, R. (2012). Too close for comfort? Distinguishing between team intimacy and team cohesion. *Human Resource Management Review, 22*(2), 116-127.

Rufai, S. A. & Igwe, R. O. (2012). An evaluation of teachers' service delivery in Nigeria: measures for programme accountability and improvement. *Humanity & Social Sciences Journal* 7(2): 121-127.

Thiss, B. (2017). A delphi study: Identifying practices used to build cohesive teams in a virtual setting (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.brandman.edu/edd_dissertations/ [14/03/2022]

Thye, S.R. & E.J. Lawler, E.J (2002): *Group Cohesion, Trust and Solidarity (Advances in Group Processes),* 1st edition. Emerald Publishing Limited, Retrieved from www.amazon.com › (10/8/2021)

Towler, A. (2019). *The importance of team cohesion for team effectiveness*. Retrieved from www.ckju.net › dossier › importance-team-cohesion-team-effectiveness on 14/8/2021

Schmitt, B. (2021) *Cognizant—equal employment opportunity policy*. Retreived from www.cognizant.com›dam› cognizant_foundation › resources › equ... (02/06/2021)

Zubaidi, S.A. (1988). *Trends in child-rearing.* Amman: Anas House Publishing.