

The Governance of Public Education in the United States of America

Louis L. Warren¹

Abstract

Whogoverns public education in America, andwithwhatresults? That is a complex question to respond to because the governance of public education in the United States is highly politicized, fragmented, and bureaucratic. The federal and state governments have strong voices in directing how the educational systems are to be governed and by whom. Much of the local governments autonomy in how to govern their school systems have been diluted and muddled by the federal and state governments ever increasing presence and policies in how to run their educational system.

Keywords: Public Education, Governance, Policy, Autonomy

1. Historical Background

The governance of public education in America was influenced significantly by the English government. In England, local authorities had the power of governing its education system for each of their local communities. This was the same method of governance for the educational systems in America during the time of being a new nation. Within in each of the system at the local level was As early, as 1647 many English colonies in America had already mandated their own school management laws, which directed that 50 or more families support a school. Immediately after the Revolution Jefferson opted for a newly formed tax enhanced education system, which would go beyond the basics and provide a classical and scientific based education (Jones, 2013). Early in the 19th century, private schools were run by churches that supported the management both spiritually and financially.

Today the education system in the United States has become decentralized and is based on the federal constitution of the United States of America (Shafritz, 2015). The federal government, therefore, reserves power over education to the individual states and other relevant local authorities within each of the states. The state role in the education system is therefore pronounced and more defined according to the U.S. constitution. The state controls many aspects of education ranging from administrative, fiscal, and political functions. Among others at the primary level of governance, the state government ensures that it financially supports the public education it provides for its citizens. This financial support includes the operating costs, licenses of public education along and with the governance of higher learning education. It also provides oversight and guidance to local school boards. Other governance duties of the state include the setting of policies and principles that are used in the setting of standards and assessment of school performance (Simonson, 2014).

2. Multi-State Education Policies

The United States provides the individual states the power, autonomy and responsibility of providing researched information, data, and resources at the state level for their issues and concerns to be dealt with at this level.

¹ College of Education, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858, United States

The Department of Public Education within each state is also aided by other learning offices, which include NCCIC Interactive Map of State Early Learning Offices, which enhances the provision of state public education with funding, and information needed to carry out education policies. NCCIC Directory of State for Early Childhood Standards provides aiding information important for the categorization and enhancement of the standards and guidelines (Balls, 2012). The Directorate for State Head Start Office is a department for issues of children with physical and mental disadvantages in order to prepare them for the school entry. State authorities also regulate and provide policies for the operations of secondary schools, which include licensing of the school and further regulation of parents provision of home schooling. The establishment and overseer of the public curriculum is also a function of the state in controlling of the current literature of the curriculum in secondary and post-secondary institutions (Balls, 2012). They also do proper regulation of different aspects of the secondary school implementation procedures including the management of critical changes in the departments of the school. Regular visits ensure that the panels and board are exposed to the standard of the regulators of education procedures. The management of schools is therefore left to the native council of state school officers, which a national membership considered an important perspective of the professional resource linkages for the empowerment of education systems. There is another definite role of state agencies in the administration of tertiary education.

3. Complexity of Governance in the Administration Of Schools

3.1 The Role of Federal Governments in Administration of Education

Even though education is the role of the state government, the federal government has quite an input in some organizational structure of schools. Since the structure of education has since reflected the predominant roles of the state governments the federal contributions are elementary and do not count to more than 10 percent. The responsibility of the federal government is dependent on the government departmental functions that are attached to the state department of education. Such departments may include the department of health and human services and the school program of the department of agriculture. In a way, the funding from the department of education is also, limited considered to the state departments contribution. Defined appropriately the function of the department of education basis is an emergency response system. It is a means of filling gaps within the department of education that may require extra funding from the federal government. According to Gordon, the mission of the federal government in the aiding of education in the United States is dependent on the leadership capabilities of the secretary of the department and the analysis of the results of the education systems (Gordon, 2015). Through the creation of awareness of challenges of education to the states and the challenges facing the confrontation of the nation, the department may also help the communities and education issues. Most importantly, the department concentrates on the perspectives of goals and objectives through persistent evaluation of administrative programs that range from the instances of preschool education to the research o postdoctoral studies.

3.2 The Role of state governments in Education Administration

State departments of education carry out the role of the state function in the administration and evaluation of education projects in the particular state. It gains its powers and responsibilities from the constitutional statutes, which allows it to be evaluated in the manner of problem solution and innovation of new strategies in the education system. It also enhances the corporate and professional eligibility for the courts and the educational offices. The voluntary service provision that offered by the state governments acts as the core of the local and legislative governments in the realization of the positive improvement and unification of the forces within the specific states. In addition, the specific nature of the state departments of education allows the administration of state services that encompasses the uniformity and efficiency of services. Extension activities of the interscholastic environment determine the nature of the state departments in relation to the discharge of routine educational functions as stipulated in the constitution. In the 21st century, the leadership function of the department of education is considered a mandatory involuntary activity that must be reciprocated by the relevant departments appropriately.

The role of the state department of education in enhancing the education perspectives of the primary and secondary education sector has also been incorporated with formulated laws that help increase the interrelationship between the state department and the activities of the federal government.

Due to this the state departments as the main party in the administration and management of schools is able to be answerable to issues raised by the evaluation and auditing parties. The state departments also face the task of inspiring and stimulating schools to enhance the performance of school systems and the quality of education.

3.3 The Role of Local governments in administration of schools

The role of local government in the enactment of school procedures and administration of responsibilities cannot be understated. Local governments are known to decide the policies of planning structure of schools in with state and local taxes (Thomas, 2014). The basic role of the local government is to provide a basic outline of a curriculum for the dependency of pedagogy. In the lowest end category of American schools, fall the independent schools, which are controlled by the county governments, which are exclusively under the control of the local districts. Since the local governments have the right to collect taxes, that are used in the funding of schools in their jurisdictions. In addition, the extents of support from organizations have promoted the participation of local councils in the administration of schools in their jurisdictions. Due to the decline of support from the federal, state to the schools the local government has been actively in the administration and financing of schools. The local governments depend on the levies given by the collection of taxes in the administration of its duties and the management of schools in the cities and at the levels of their jurisdiction. In addition at the local college levels consideration amount of funding also comes from the local governments. However, the local governments do not support dependent schools both at the primary and at the secondary level. The main function of the local government involves the establishment of schools and provision of outlines and guidelines for the creation of pedagogic curriculum useful for the aid of early childhood education.

3.4 Complexity of Governance

According to Sallis, the inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the performance of schools in the United States are highly attributed to the challenges in governance and precarious in the schools (Sallis, 2014). The need for voice echoing among the hierarchy of state has resulted in multiple elected officials using the platform to promote their political ambitions. The variability of policymaking has been the main influence on the complexity of decision making in the school management. It is important to appreciate that curricula and instructional presumes in the school management plan should be followed with fidelity. Nevertheless, the implementation process of the curricula and instruction have not been successful because of the leadership motives of the management of schools. The discomfort ability of the management of the schools has enhanced the ineffectiveness of school performance and creates a dynamic fail in the success of the students. Local government is forced to follow the laws of the federal and state governments in order to avoid laws and regulation that would ensure they do not take part in the management of the schools. Due to this, the local governments are unable to work independently in the provision of services needed by the schools. In accordance with this, the opportunities and academic prospects of the students do not succeed. Either the hierarchy has resulted in the ingenuity of teacher performance as they feel as left out of the implementation of measures. However, the federal and state governments are not able to oversee the performance of public schools because of their number making their implementation processes almost ineffective. In almost the critique of the failure of the school management and performance, the blame is widely put on teachers who remain accountable for the success or failure of the education initiatives.

4. Teachers and Management of Schools

4.1 Role of Teachers in the Management of Schools

School leadership is based on the role of teachers in the management of the school. A position responsibility of the teacher in a school is an important aspect of school success and defines a varied measure that improves the school's performance index. Among other important responsibilities of teachers in schools, include the duty of supervision and coordination of senior curriculum delivery tools, which engage the students in the application of materials that they learn. Secondly, the teachers do budget allocation and creation of resources within their spaces of responsibility (Cerna, 2014). In addition, management of programs is an important aspect of the responsibilities that teachers perform in the management of the school. Teachers are leading experts in their areas of experience and contribute a lot to the maximization of opportunities and learners.

It is therefore appropriate that teachers are accorded the greatest opportunities in the management of the schools and further direction of their plans for improvement and performance of learners. Teachers in their in-depth of knowledge, of course, criteria take part in the critical analysis of the courses and curriculum development that is offered to the students.

The strategic plan of the plan is highly dependent on the responsible critical analysis of the teachers. They are expected to lead a higher fraction of the school independently in order to allow the observation and analysis of important aspects of these areas that might need change or improvement.

4.2 Consequences of complexity of governance on teacher performance

Educational supervision also described as educational administration refers to the effective and professional management of the plan that is initiated to enhance successful school management. Educational supervision encourages teachers to participate actively in the delivery of effective learning methods in the classroom. This is made up of both administrative organization and educational supervision but is more relevant to the effects of education management especially at the state and federal government levels (Apple, 2013). The effect of bad management of education by the state and federal government on the performance of teachers can be diverse. One of the most known categorical effects on teacher performance is lack of moral, as the teachers would feel left out of the school administration when they bare the core of learning delivery. In this way, most of the teachers would stop the good performance, which would result in inefficient and ineffective dismal performance by the learners. It is believed that this is the main reason for poor performance in case study schools that have shown a decline in school performance and overall improvement. Secondly, poor education management leads to improper use of hierarchy and powers that individuals in the administration possess. This would then lead to lack of cohesion and work ethics, which interferes with teacher performance. Surprisingly, the blames of education failure and school mismanagement is directed to the teachers, which essentially defines the need for creation of teacher management. This helps in the effective administration of school through overhaul management perceptions of the curriculum. In addition, there is need for teacher participation in the scheduling and application of school projects too must be enhanced the to meet the requirements that are useful in the school administration

4.3 Ways of reducing the complexity of governance of education.

Decentralization is one method of equalizing the responsibility posed for the success of school management. It also means the deconcentrating of the school management based on the subsidiary principles of reform strategies, which are meant to reorganize the educational institutions (Niemi, 2016). The method of decentralization reflects on the concepts of public administration with a lot of borrowing from political and democratic participations. Decentralization of the school management policies aims at the improvement of the quality services of the school management. The decentralization of school management requires that consumed become part of the management of the change process. These may include the inter-intuitional relationship that is based on the approaches of the same issue. It also enhances the higher responsibility of participation of the community representative that would enhance the definition of school management. The theoretical perspective of the analysis used in the improvement of the same is dependent on the ideas that have origin from the state departments of education and federal department of education working together with the local government laws. The decentralization of responsibilities increases the chances of reducing the autonomy of the management and brings it new ideas of management to the schools. This structural review is important in exposing the creation of new dimensions in the hierarchical nature of the organization. The complexity of the idea of management is reduced and the introduction idea of communal leadership of education sought. It is a method employed in reduction of hierarchical composition that is prone to risk of competition.

5. National Level Initiatives Versus State/Local Initiatives

5.1 The Initiatives lack Coherency

The interest of the national federal state versus the interest of the federal and local state identifies the kind of complications that is experienced in the delivery of efficient and excellent learning processes (De Lissovoy, 2015). Segregation of schools is an important aspect of the initiative that the national federal government creates to have a responsibility in the education sector. This is done in order to mandate equal educate chance to all students across the nation. In addition, this is an attempt provide students with disabilities a conducive environment where they can enhance their skills. It is also based on the exposure of resources in which individuals are able to distinct the income of different states and accord education opportunities deservingly. A conflict inherent in the central tenets of the nation's charter on education has become the center of the federal government in its bid to solve the issues of the impartial distribution of government education resources. Earlier the federal government took part in the distribution of the transformative design in the analysis of the basic terms of education (Armstrong, 2016).

It is important to realize that the need for the existence of the government in the comprehension of equitable education in the country has become a major boost to the need for states to offer education that can be seen in the face of the country. The federal oversight of schools is a part of the organizational structure analysis that the federal government does to ensure that the curriculum another learning activity is accessible to all students of the United State of America. In the federal funding of the schools and the education management throughout the country, the government is able to monitor the essential distribution of resources in the country.

The federal; state governments in the performance of their responsibility lack coherency with the federal government hence this affects the delivery of educational needs. This has an automatic effect on the success of the implementative plans that are desired by both levels of the government. The acquisition of corresponding plans by the federal government that has no consultation for with the national government is a devastating attempt to take over the function of the state governments in education, which has been their constructional right. Due to these important opportunities of the government services towards education has been lost because of non-communication between the federal and the state government. It is more important however to analyze the extent of the effect of the activities of the federal government and state government in relation to their effect on the performance of students at the primary and secondary levels of education. Participatory criteria chosen by both levels of government in the delivery of aspects of educational management policies and financial, legal, and human resource aids must be well analyzed to reduce chances of conflict and hierarchical power struggles. Finally, it is important that further analysis is done in order to distinguish between the need of the schools in terms of administration and management to enhance the clarity between the federal and state governments in respect to delivery of efficient and quality education. The most important aspect of education management is to enhance the quality of education.

5.2 The effect of tradition and multilevel governance on education policy creation

Policies and formulation of education in certain aspects of academic distributions are affected by culture and traditions of given societies (Deal, 2016). This is evident in the United States of America management of education, which has become majorly dependent on the individual state formulation of practices and bills. Cultural biases and independent education procedures have been initiated in most states of the country and have been defined to inhibit the creation of national education management policies. While in other countries this topic is based on practices such as girl and boy education, in the American states some education policies depend on cultural evidence of the evaluation of particular set groups that are considered focused on the same educational initiatives. Most importantly, the nature of cultural diversity has equally affected the results of analysis on educational management as per the use of curriculum and key observational instructions are concerned.

Conclusion

It is important that the governance of the educational systems in the United States are critically observed and seriously analyzed in order to bridge the functional gaps and responsibilities among the federal, state, and local education systems in the United States. Further analysis of the responsibilities of education stakeholders should also be incorporated in order to ensure compatibility of the systems in relation to the improvement of education strategies within America.

References

- Ball, S. J., & Junemann, C. (2012). *Networks, new governance, and education*. Policy Press.
- Cerna, L. (2014). Trust: What it is and Why it Matters for Governance and Education. *OECD Education Working Papers*, (108), 0_1.
- De Lissovoy, N., Means, A. J., & Saltman, K. J. (2015). *Toward a new common school movement*. Routledge.
- Deal, T. E., & Peterson, K. D. (2016). *Shaping school culture*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Gordon, H. R. (2014). *The history and growth of career and technical education in America*. Waveland press.
- Jones, G., & Sallis, E. (2013). *Knowledge management in education: Enhancing learning & education*. Routledge.
- Sallis, E. (2014). *Total quality management in education*. Routledge.

- Apple, M. W. (2013). *Education and power*. Routledge
- Shafritz, J. M., Russell, E. W., & Borick, C. (2015). *Introducing public administration*. Routledge.
- Simonson, M., Smaldino, S., & Zvacek, S. M. (Eds.). (2014). *Teaching and learning at a distance: Foundations of distance education*. IAP.
- Niemi, H., Toom, A., & Kallioniemi, A. (Eds.). (2016). *The miracle of education: The principles and practices of teaching and learning in Finnish schools*. Springer.
- Thomas, R. M., & Kobayashi, V. N. (Eds.). (2014). *Educational technology-Its creation, development and cross-cultural transfer* (Vol. 4). Elsevier.