Administrative Interaction for Effective Service Delivery: Analysis of UNESCO's Five Functions

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Abstract

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization- UNESCO has created a platform for international cooperation in the twenty-first century. In quest of serving the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups especially women and youth, UNESCO defined five functions. It also serves as a clearing house and global knowledge broker through the involvement of public, private and societal organizations. In the African region, UNESCO tries to ensure human security; fair and comprehensive management of social change; and transformations and maintenance of natural resources. In this perspective, UNESCO assists the international community as a central forum to express the ethical, moral, normative and intellectual issues focusing science and technology especially. There are administrative, financial and societal methodologies for administrative interaction to deliver these five functions of UNESCO effectively. Prioritization of roles, diverse network of national commissions, administrative cooperation, capacity development, knowledge management and communication etc are the key methods for regular interactions among UNESCO Secretariat, Member States, National Commissions and respective field offices of UNESCO to ensure effective delivery of the five functions.

Key words: Administrative Interaction, Capacity-Builder, International Cooperation, Knowledge Management, Communication of Knowledge

1. Introduction

Education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, communication and information are also considered as the five broad areas of UNESCO's activity. There are various priorities for education (Bauman, 2011). With an emphasis on literacy, UNESCO supports basic education for all. UNESCO facilitates teacher's training in African region to put off HIV/AIDS. Upon its beginning, UNESCO enhances worldwide quality education concentrating secondary, technological and higher education. It also tries to promote science and engineering technologies. Focusing natural sciences, UNESCO tries to protect water and the ocean. Social and human science is an important theme of UNESCO.

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UNESCO always expedites basic human rights globally. It also contributes to cultural recognition worldwide by maintaining cultural diversity and protects cultural heritage. Communication and information is the latest working area of UNESCO (Becker, 2006). It is the source of power in the modern time. UNESCO focuses on the free flow of ideas. Through right to use and access to information and knowledge, UNESCO builds a global community of shared knowledge and empowers people. UNESCO always promotes worldwide equal development. It highly focuses the development of African regions from the beginning of the twenty first century. UNESCO identifies specific actions such as alternatives to traditional formal education for them. It also enhances the use of science and technology. Now the scholars and practitioners feel the urgency to identify appropriate means of administrative interaction for effective service delivery based on the five functions of UNESCO.

2. Literature Review

UNESCO's action is structured around the following four objectives. The first one is the enhancement of human capacity-building. UNESCO also focuses the sub-regional level of Africa to make basic education accessible to all. The second one is the promotion of the policy making capacity of African countries to set up a strategy to prevent HIV/AIDS (York, 2009). It is also continuously acknowledging cultural values in the African region. The third one is about promoting exchanges and cooperation with the UN systems, the World Bank, the Organization of African Unity, African sub-regional organizations and the ADB. Ensuring development is also a core objective of UNESCO. Finally, the fourth one is to promote the active participation of communities. Altogether, looking for helping the most helpless and deprived group especially women and youth, UNESCO established five functions (Peters, 2003). Efficient administrative interaction is necessary for effective delivery of these functions. UNESCO has an established administrative set up composed by the General Conference, Executive Board, UNESCO Secretariat, Permanent Delegations of Member State, National Commissions and respective field offices. There are administrative, financial and societal methodologies for regular interaction within the UNESCO agencies to deliver these five functions effectively. For regular administrative interaction among the UNESCO administrative components, prioritization of roles, diverse network of national commissions, administrative cooperation, capacity development, knowledge management and communication etc are the key methods to ensure effective delivery of the five functions. Administrative bodies of UNESCO generally set necessary policies according to the demand of field offices. For example, UNESCO Secretariat can provide guiding principle and training to National Commissions on partnership development. There is the both bottom-to-top and top-to-bottom approach of interaction. The core focus of the regular interaction is to establish a strong partnership among the actors and stakeholders of UNESCO for the effective development of Africa. There are also some administrative and financial problems. Lack of clearness, misinterpretation of roles, resource scarcity, inadequate structures, improper guidance etc are the considerable obstacles in this regular interaction (Spring, 2008). However, UNESCO is now working to remove these obstacles for the sustainable development of Africa. UNESCO operates its functions based on the five themes entitled (1) education, (2) natural

science, (3) social and human science, (4) culture and (5) communication and information. To perform functions properly in the least developed countries (LDCs) focusing the African region, UNESCO formulated five functions.

Associate organizations of UNESCO have started operation intellectually and practically to hold, combine and cooperate with each other. UNESCO has already established worldwide connection (Brown and Lauder, 2006). The core objective is to enhance multi-dimensional development in LDCs of Africa. Researches were conducted about the administrative interaction and five functions of UNESCO. The administrative interaction for effective service delivery is an under-researched filed. This realization helps in identifying the gaps in previous research in this connection. The literature review on administrative interaction and five functions of UNESCO states that many scholars have shown their interest in measuring the importance of administrative interaction for effective service delivery. However, strategies for administrative interaction for effective service delivery through the five functions of UNESCO are not analyzed systematically by empirical research yet.

3. Objectives

The broad objective of the paper is to identify appropriate means of administrative interaction for effective service delivery based on the five functions of UNESCO. Specifically this paper tries to explore conceivable strategies for enhancing administrative interaction for effective service delivery through the five functions of UNESCO.

4. Methodology

It is a exploratory and descriptive study. This study has followed qualitative approach in analyzing data though most of the extant studies are quantitative in nature in this field. However, undertaking more interviews could have provided better information and increasing the sample size could have provided better information about the study. Data from both primary and secondary sources have been used in the paper. In-depth interview by semi-structured questionnaire has been used to collect primary data. However, some questions were close-ended. The participants in this study are 340 BCS cadre officers who are currently working with rural development and e-government activities of the government. Among the respondents, 36% is from BCS administration cadre, 24% is from BCS general education cadre, 10% is from BCS health cadre, 8% is from BCS economic cadre, 8% is from BCS police cadre, 5% is from BCS economic cadre, 4% is from BCS information cadre, 3% is from BCS foreign cadre and rest of the 2% is from BCS taxation cadre. Each interview session lasted approximately 25-35 minutes on average. The questionnaire was designed based on the previous studies. Secondary data were collected from various published documents.

5. Findings and Analysis

Based on the perceptions of the interviewees, the following potential areas have been explored for enhancing administrative interaction for effective service delivery through the five functions of UNESCO.

5.1 Laboratory of Ideas

With regards to the ethical principles, UNESCO has identified appropriate strategies and policies. It is a professional task of UNESCO to gather and expand ideas. Introducing the community as a dynamic actor along with the international partners for social transformations has become an effective idea for pro-poor development strategies. UNESCO has also generated the ideas focusing on the cultural, local governance and advocacy dimensions. It has also entirely taken into account the participation of women and young girl to guide empowerment of the poor. Ideas related to effective participation, decentralization of the processes for regional development and providing access to financial and credit facilities have been facilitated by UNESCO in this context. UNESCO has also put emphasis on the necessity of establishing pro-poor coalitions (Ghosh and McDonough, 2011). This coalition has already involved the public sector (1st sector), the private sector (2nd sector) and NGO sector (3rd sector). New ideas of this UNESCO coalition aimed at- (a) education regarding population and reproductive health; (b) the involvement of communities in the management of development; (c) reaching the unreached; (d) the implementation of micro-credit schemes; and (e) the creation of multimedia community. In the African region, building capacity at the community level by UNESCO has played a significant role to promote preventive education campaigns in order to tackle HIV/AIDS (Kapitzke and Peters, 2007). Combining the ideas, UNESCO has formulated and executed a number of intersectoral and interdisciplinary projects particularly in Africa. Regarding this theme, UNESCO has generated ideas by raising public awareness and involving the mass media. As an output of this idea generation, UNESCO has prepared an educational resource kit for teachers at secondary school level. Formulation of public policies focusing the tourism development of cultural heritage is also necessary for promoting heritage. To that end, UNESCO has generated ideas to upgrade endogenous capacities to enhance sustainable tourism development. Comprehensively, UNESCO generates ideas through four ways. First one is to prepare annual or biannual report (McAndrew, 2007). Second one is to enhance networks. Third one is to hold up capacity-building initiatives. Finally fourth one is to undertake cooperation with NGOs, social actors and Member States of UNESCO.

5.2 Standard-Setter

Despite the cultural and traditional differences, all Member States of UNESCO agree to set some standard rules through various international instruments such as agreement, convention, legal documents, declaration etc. UNESCO attempts to formulate these common standard rules. It develops multidisciplinary exchange of ideas, promotes mutual understanding, defines benchmarks and mobilizes international opinion to formulate universal agreements (Sahlberg, 2006). Focusing the development in African region, UNESCO has promoted policy dialogue among all actors and stakeholders. It helps to modify, adopt or revise these international instruments and enables Member States regarding better practice. UNESCO has helped Member States to make consensus or agreement and mobilized support for education through promotion of open dialogue and better public acceptance regarding educational issues (Stoer and Magalhaes, 2004). Globally, education has been recognized as a public good. UNESCO

tries to promote equity in African region and LDCs through free basic education. At present, educational services are provided by statutory public institutions, autonomous public institutions, private institutions and information-technology services. In this regard, UNESCO acts as a common platform of dialogue between the public and private sector institutions to formulate standard rules for educational goods and services.

UNESCO also continuously provides advice, guidance, suggestions and assistance to Member States of African region and LDCs for a regeneration of education systems. Particularly, UNESCO promotes the improvement of education (Weiler, 2001). However, the emergence of knowledge societies has enhanced the development of making common rules, inaugurating new opportunities and performing responsibilities for UNESCO. Practice of basic sciences and engineering, social research tools such as data collection, monitoring etc are emphasized by UNESCO to formulate effective rules. UNESCO also aims at policy advocacy to develop common tools in order to advance understanding of the modern world. With the intention of capturing the social complexity of the comprehensive developments, UNESCO has undertaken and drawn future-oriented studies to set standard rules. Knowledge societies play a great role here to analyze the main apparatus and processes of equal development as well as designing standard strategies for the development of African region. To establish partnership with specialized international NGOs will be helpful to elaborate policies and strategies in this regard (Suarez-Orozco, 2007). Incidentally, UNESCO has promoted the idea and notion of the educational and cultural dimension of the media.

5.3 Clearing House

UNESCO has a great role in research, exchange of research results and training (Spring, 1998). Information exchange, capacity building and other modalities of international cooperation are the core focuses of UNESCO's downstream role. On the other hand, experience and knowledge can improve work. UNESCO has put particular attention to feedback from field area. According to the feedbacks, UNESCO has addressed educational facilities in the necessary areas of Member States. However, advancing the right to education is a major challenge of UNESCO. It is the duty and responsibility of the governments to ensure education for all. In this context, UNESCO has played a great role as a clearing house to undertake the political commitments of the international community (Reid, Gill and Sears, 2010). As a clearing house, UNESCO has promoted scientific research by encouraging the transfer and sharing findings and knowledge in order to ensure impartial benefits for all societies.

UNESCO is the leading international agency to consider ethical issues and concern. The ethical dimension is the consequent of the rights of each human being. UNESCO is continuously promoting and protecting ethical standard in all its spheres of competence (Peters, 2006). Scientific advancement opens up new avenues for sharing values. However, it is difficult to judge the market value of data, information, knowledge and research findings. Educational, scientific and technological knowledge has opened new avenues for learning, teaching and building knowledge societies throughout the world. It is also a pre-requisite of national progress. UNESCO always plays vital role for promoting worldwide knowledge-

sharing methodologies. It also promotes the exchange of information, knowledge and expertise regarding innovative and pioneering approaches. Solving the local problems through networks is an effective mechanism of UNESCO. All the way through networking, UNESCO has contributed in building institutional a capacity with the intention of developing the educational systems to meet fast changing societal needs (Knight, 2003). With a view to gather better social inputs, UNESCO has emphasized on the intensification of university studies and research. It always encourages the participation of women and youth in science and technology to develop gender sensitive ideas and policy. Further, it promotes cooperation and partnership among universities, research institutes and industries to generate realistic and useful ideas. To strengthen knowledge-sharing networks, UNESCO has also established and developed regional and international cooperation among all partners. Now-a-days, facilitating dialogues among new actors is a major task of UNESCO focusing education sector. UNESCO is also playing progressively more significant role in promoting the participation of young people to protect cultural heritage by sharing knowledge with a sense of belongingness (Hébert, Kowch and Sun, 2004). UNESCO always supports the Member States in formulation of policy to be consistent with ethical considerations. Being the clearing house of ideas and knowledge, UNESCO facilitates human-centred integrated methodology in technological development and promotes the participation. It also promotes collaboration among committees on science and technology, culture, education, communication etc in LDCs to sustain regional networks. This process encourages the progress and development of vulnerable groups (Spring, 2006).
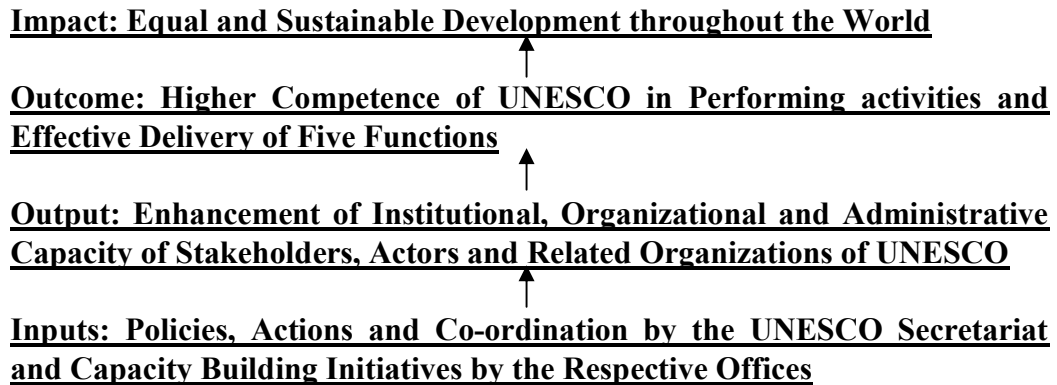
5.4 Capacity-Builder

Capacity building means enhancing abilities, relationships, knowledge and values that enable organizations, groups and individuals to progress their performance and achieve their development goals. It can also be described as the process of initiating and sustaining individual and organizational positive changes. The process of international capacity building refers to the enhancement of cooperation among different groups of society (Crossley and Tikly, 2004). It also equally refers to the positive changes within a state. Here, UNESCO puts emphasis on the following four aspects- (a) administrative capacity building of the associate organizations of UNESCO, (b) institutional capacity building of the Member States, (c) organizational capacity building for effective service delivery, and (d) social capacity building of different groups. It is also known as technical cooperation (Abdi, 2006).

UNESCO promotes capacity of Member States. These are considered as effective tools of capacity building. UNESCO's activities put attention on science-based ecosystem management by integrating local and indigenous knowledge to build capacity of Member State. Ecological monitoring and evaluation activities enhance the capacity of Member State to overcome the problems of global climate change. UNESCO plays fundamental role in promoting capacity building through worldwide knowledge-sharing methodologies. It facilitates the exchange and share of information, knowledge and expertise among the Member States (Anderson, 2001). It has also contributed in building organizational or institutional capacities of Member States with the intention of sustainable social development. It has emphasized on the intensification

of social studies and assists multi-dimensional capabilities (Kumar, 2009). For example, UNESCO has intended to improve the protection of traditional culture and generate a new conceptual as well as legal framework of intangible cultural heritage. With the aim of responding to the rising demand, UNESCO has also undertaken major programmes to encourage participation for physical, infrastructural and technological capacity building. UNESCO has made attempts to carry common vision of capacity building of Member States (Apple, 2005). In this regard, UNESCO has promoted the participation of Member State. With respect to the principle of pluralism, UNESCO builds multicultural communication among the Member States. Derived from best-practice, UNESCO has developed guidelines for participatory pluralism. Thus, UNESCO promotes effective capacity building initiatives for its Member States (Hearn, 2007).

Figure 1: Impact of UNESCO Capacity Building Process

Impact: Equal and Sustainable Development throughout the World

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Outcome: Higher Competence of UNESCO in Performing activities and Effective Delivery of Five Functions

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Output: Enhancement of Institutional, Organizational and Administrative Capacity of Stakeholders, Actors and Related Organizations of UNESCO

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Inputs: Policies, Actions and Co-ordination by the UNESCO Secretariat and Capacity Building Initiatives by the Respective Offices

5.5 Catalyst for International Cooperation

UNESCO always promotes newer methods to develop the quality of education throughout the world. It builds international cooperation to enhance worldwide quality education by improving school's effectiveness. In order to building international cooperation in education sector of LDCs, UNESCO works with the following five major partners- (1) Asian Development Bank (ADB), (2) UK Department for International Development (DFlD), (3) UNICEF, (4) UNDP and (5) The World Bank. ADB has implemented education projects in LDCs (Borg and Mayo, 2005). DFID puts emphasis on improvement of English language. Focusing vulnerable and excluded groups in LDCs, DFID plays important role in funding project to develop pro-poor policy and reduce poverty (Creswell and Merriman, 2010). UNICEF tries to improve the level of primary education through teacher's training, motivating communities and empowering primary schools. To break the cycle of unskilled-employment, UNICEF always promotes education for working children. UNDP launches various projects in

LDCs to strengthen comprehensive education (Benhabib, 2002). World Bank tries to improve the quality of primary education (Apple and Beane, 2007). World Bank also focuses on the quality of teaching and research environment as well as the improvement of quality of secondary education (Collier, 2007).

- **Laboratory of Ideas**: Undertake relevant R & D: review literature, test new methods, etc.

- **Clearing House**: Undertake information dissemination, writing, testing, packaging, etc

- **Capacity Building**: Develop and conduct appropriate training, workshops, discussions, provide TA, etc.

- **Standard Setting**: Undertake advocacy for the use of UNESCO's standard setting instruments, publicize good practices, etc.

- **Catalyst for (International) Cooperation**: Participate / lead networking, conferences, coordinate activities with UNCT, SADC, etc.

- **Management/Administration**: Plan, monitor implementation, manage contracts, reviews and evaluations, reporting, participate in professional development, raise funds, PR, hold meetings, undertake missions, etc.

UNESCO establishes an international cooperation platform, building bridges among disciplines and sectors regarding education, culture, communication, science and technology. In collaboration with partners in developing countries, UNESCO aims to discover adapted technology solutions to convey sustainable development to the maximum number of people (Harding, 2008). Few problems such as scarcity of resources, certain legal set-ups, inadequate structures and contradictions produce uncertainty among the roles and responsibilities of National Commissions as well as implementation of the five functions. It creates problem in further implications of cooperation. However, current approach of knowledge management among the societal actors is also limited in some countries. The ways of information sharing among the actors of UNESCO administration is not completely systematic.

6. Recommendations

This part of the study contains few recommendations for enhancing administrative interactions.

6.1 Enhancing Governing Bodies

Administrative structure of UNESCO has several components. First governing body is the General Conference of UNESCO. It is composed by the representatives from the different Member States. It establishes policies, goals, outlines and budgets for the work of UNESCO. The second one is the Executive Board (Kim, 1999). It is vital to enhance the capability of governing bodies to promote administrative interactions.

6.2 Emphasizing Field Offices

Institutes and Centres of UNESCO etc are considered as the field offices of UNESCO (Longino, 2002). Regular interaction between UNESCO Secretariat and respective field offices is essential to ensure effective delivery of the five functions of UNESCO. Prioritization of roles is an effective administrative method of interaction. One of the objectives of UNESCO Secretariat is to analyze the requirements of each National Commissions and Field Offices.

Figure 2: Interactions of UNESCO for the Effective Delivery of the Five Functions
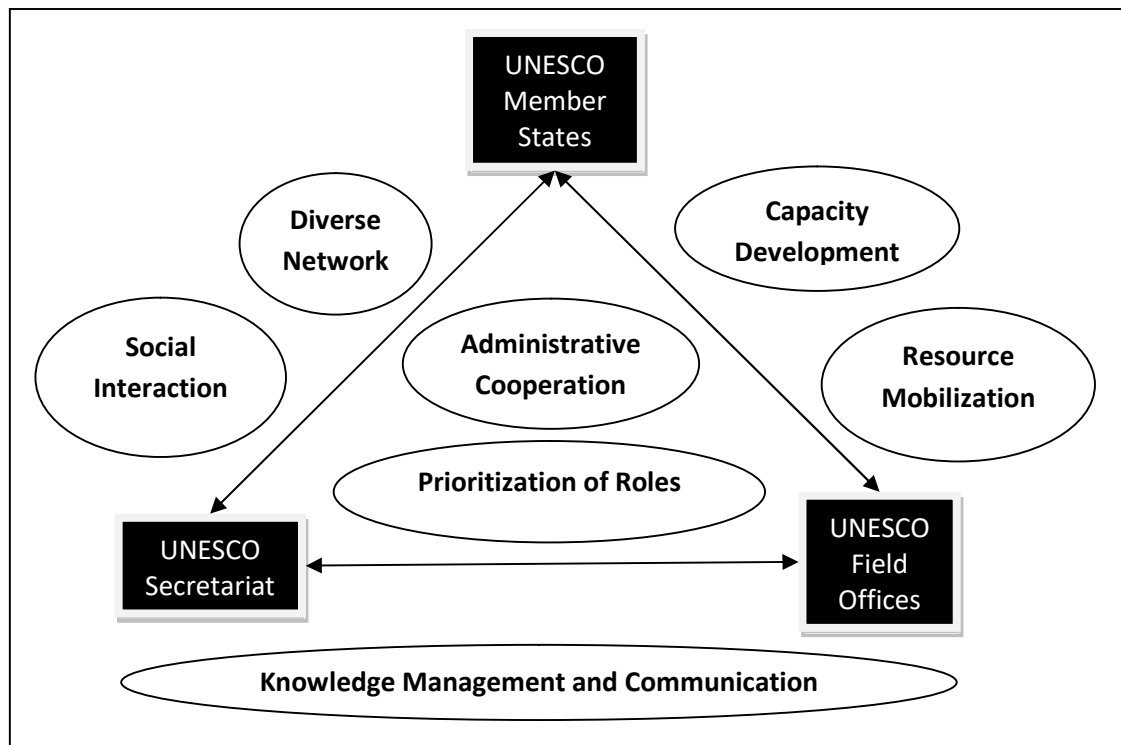
6.3 Strengthening Networking

The Constitution first assigned the tasks to UNESCO National Commissions of advising and interacting with the governments (Olson, 2006). Consequently, these Commissions have to go on board upon a distinct set of priorities. It results interaction among the UNESCO Secretariat, National Commissions and Field Offices in resource mobilization and capacity building. Priorities are normally acknowledged to match with the resources of each National Commission and the capacity of the Field Offices. These are also associated with national priorities and strategies of UNESCO. Hence, the five functions of UNESCO can be effectively implemented. It is an effective administrative interaction to promote the five functions of UNESCO. The administrative interaction through the network of National Commissions can improve both efficiency and effectiveness regarding the service delivery of UNESCO. The proper use of this UNESCO network can inaugurate plentiful potentials (Zajda, Davies and

Majhanovich, 2008). UNESCO's Secretariat widens the mechanisms for better administer of knowledge for the African region. Secretariat and Field Offices construct a capital of interesting insights, ideas, experiences and practices.

6.4 Introducing Knowledge Management

Comprehensive knowledge management mechanism would ensure five things. The first one is about good practices (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). The second one is about challenging the related works of the network which are also systematically identified. The third one is about capacity development. The fourth one is about communication tools such as website, databases etc which are advanced. The fifth one is about communication mechanisms to ensure the exchange of required information in a systematic manner (Stormquist, 2002). Overall capacity development approach for UNESCO's National Commissions and Field Offices is supported by Member States. It is also an effective administrative method for better interaction (Stiglitz, 2002).

7. Conclusion

Administrative interaction is related to one's conscience and a framework of principles for moral guidance. It deals with a person's moral duty and the obligations imposed upon him. From the philosophical sense, it puts obligations on different individuals to choose between good and evil and act morally. However, there is a difference between morals and accountability as morals depend on the consensual view of what is right and wrong in a society, while accountability is a process through which moral standards are sought. It is the regulations that interpret the characteristics, morals or ethos of individuals into daily practices. Administrative accountability is the practical application of moral ideas in public administration. It focuses on an individual's actions, judgment and perception of right and wrong. Performance of the public officials has enormous impact on government and ultimately the society. As a result, ethical practices in administration have become a crucial matter. It has become more crucial in this globalized world, when the states are under severe strains and the public sectors across the globe are undergoing changes responding to both internal and external challenges. Nowadays, administrative interaction is gaining importance in the discourse of governance. The principles of transparency, integrity, rule of law and accountability in administrations during last three decades have enjoyed resurgence. Public bureaucracy must be responsible, accountable and transparent for the functioning of a democratic polity. Focusing the equal and sustainable development in Africa, UNESCO initiates five functions which are basically related to UNESCO's themes and sub-themes. To promote development in Africa, UNESCO tries to endorse intellectual co-operation. Interaction and cooperation among the administrative bodies of UNESCO are crucial for the effective delivery of these five functions as well as themes of UNESCO. Administrative cooperation is itself a method of administrative interaction. Having resources and expertise to execute projects, National Commissions of UNESCO coordinate with the respective field offices. UNESCO Field Offices intend to play

such role necessary for generating cooperation. It is important to ensure good partnership practices by systematically identifying and sharing the overall knowledge management of the network. Coordination between the secretariat and field of information disseminating is simultaneously regarded as a possibility of ensuring 'development with all, development for all' policy. Nevertheless, in reality, the digital divide is found in developing and underdeveloped countries. In such a backdrop, there is a strong need to carry on an in-depth study on the information hubs located at field levels to uncover the ground realities following a standard form of academic pursuit.

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