



EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS (ORGANIZATIONS) IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The paper surveyed and explored the concept of effective leadership vis-à-vis employee motivation in the university organization in Rivers State. It identified effective leadership as essential or spring board to employee productivity and creativity in any organization, the university not an exception. It emphasizes that for employees to be carried along by employers, means they are given free hands in decision making, making inputs in organizational policies, their promotion and welfare are considered. However, there must be discipline and adherence to rules and regulations by the organization. There should not be double standards in organizational policies. The paper therefore recommends explicit definition of rules and regulations, allow employee freedom of expression, participation in policy formulation of the organization, promotion as at when due, regular increment of staff remuneration and conducive working environment should be provided if employees are to be motivated adequately.

Keywords: Leadership, Effective leadership, Motivation, Employee Motivation, Productivity.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership can be exhibited in a variety of ways and circumstances. It is a very important aspect of personnel administration because the nature of leadership provided determines the degree of staff motivation. A well-managed company can motivate and retain its employees and in so

doing, enjoys the following competitive advantages: reduced turnover; an increase in productivity; reduced absenteeism; increased revenue, and improved performance.

Performance is a combination of knowledge, skill, and the availability of the basic resources that have impact on the worker's attitude (motivation) to reach the goal of the organization. Furthermore, it is very crucial for the employers to provide a good environment for the employees to be motivated and as well as for boosting up the job satisfaction. Motivation on itself is a set of energy forces that originates both within and outside an employee, initiates work-related effort, and determines its direction, intensity, and persistence. Motivation is a critical consideration because effective job performance often requires high levels of both ability and motivation. However, to scrutinize the impacts of effective leadership on the employees' motivation has a great significance to our contemporary society. Few leaders understand the full significance of how influential their leadership is on the performance and satisfaction of their employees.

It is observed that in some schools, some teachers are not willing to teach, they are not eager to correct erring students. Even when they (students) fight, teachers' attention is drawn and they (teachers) will say "let them fight, when they are tired, they will stop". When students call them to teach, they will hiss, lesson note, they will not write. When duties of checking the students are assigned, they will not execute it. For examination, they will refuse to supervise, to enter continuous assessment or exam scores in the result sheet, they are angry. If one asks them the reason behind their nonchalant attitude towards work, they will say that there is no motivation; no promotion, no salary increment, no conducive learning environment, no chair in the office, no ventilation, sometimes no chalk. So effective leadership should consider the welfare of employees; give them sense of belonging, hear their voices in policy making, ensure that salaries are paid and increased as at when due, promotion effected, give them incentives and conferences and workshops organized. If the employees' interests are catered for, the realization of the goals and objectives of the organization would be realizable because, all hands will be on deck having motivated employees adequately.

CONCEPTUAL VIEWS

Leadership

The word leadership has been used in various aspects of human endeavour such as politics, business, academics and social works. Adams (2017), conceived leadership as a process where one or more people influence a group of person to move in a certain direction. The leader of the company or organization has well important role on the performance of its followers and his or her organization by motivating them. Also, Okoroma (2000) cited in Ordu (2018) views leadership as the force needed to translate human and material resources into effective utilization. Therefore, leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal setting and goal achievement.

Effective Leadership

Effective leadership is always the main and primary driver of growth, development and innovation. It is much more meaningful, impactful and profound. It is all about executing the company's vision and setting the culture for the organization. Bernard (2016), sees effective

leadership as the process of motivating people to work together and cooperate with themselves and in some cases, other teams, to achieve a certain goal. Njoku (2017) perceives it as the means of creating and planning, securing resources, and looking out for and improving errors.

Characteristics of Effective Leadership

Bernard (2016) opines that a leader should step into the shoes of the subordinates and view things from subordinate's angle. He should empathize with them during difficult times. Empathizing with their personal problems makes them stronger-mentally and emotionally. A meaningful and challenging job accomplished inculcates a sense of achievement among employees. The executive must make their employees feel they are performing an important work that is necessary for the organization's well-being and success. This motivational aspect drives them to fulfill goals. Remember, to become an efficient leader, you must be self-motivated. You must know your identity, your needs and you must have a strong urge to do anything to achieve your goals. Once you are self-motivated, only then you can motivate others to achieve their goals and to harmonize their personal goals with the common goals of the organization.

Chan (2017) listed out the characteristics of an effective leader to include:

- An effective leader is clear about what needs to be done;
- He/she expresses vision of a desirable future in simple language;
- An effective leader is an idea generator;
- He/she inspires others to follow them;
- He/she challenges assumptions;
- An effective leader accepts and uses conflict as needed;
- He/she is imitated by others;
- He/she is also persistent about getting results;
- When an effective leader speaks, others listen to them (even their detractors);
- An effective leader is always convincing;
- He/she recognizes and utilizes the unique value of others;
- He/she tackles difficult problems;
- An effective leader can accept not being liked; and
- He/she is not paralyzed by mistakes; he/she moves on.

Leadership Styles

Jonas (2018, p. 152) presented a comprehensive explanation of the leadership styles. They include:

Democratic Leadership (Commonly Effective)

Democratic leadership is exactly what it sounds like—the leader makes decisions based on the input of each team member. Although, he or she makes the final call, each employee has an equal say on a project's direction. Democratic leadership is one of the most effective leadership styles because it allows lower-level employees to exercise authority they will need to use wisely

in future positions they might hold. It also resembles how decisions can be made in company board meetings. For example, in a company board meeting, a democratic leader might give the team a few decision-related options. They could then open a discussion about each option. After a discussion, this leader might take the board's thoughts and feedback into consideration, or they might open this decision up to a vote.

Autocratic Leadership (Rarely Effective)

Autocratic leadership is the inverse of democratic leadership. In this leadership style, the leader makes decisions without taking input from anyone who reports to them. Employees are neither considered nor consulted prior to a direction, and are expected to adhere to the decision at a time and pace stipulated by the leader. An example of this could be when a manager changes the hours of work shifts for multiple employees without consulting anyone—especially the effected employees. Frankly, this leadership style stinks. Most organizations today cannot sustain such a hegemonic culture without losing employees. It is best to keep leadership more open to the intellect and perspective of the rest of the team.

Laissez-Faire Leadership (Sometimes Effective)

If you remember your high-school French, you will accurately assume that laissez-faire leadership is the least intrusive form of leadership. The French term ‘laissez faire’ literally translates to ‘let them do’, and leaders who embrace it, trasmit nearly all authority to their employees. In a young startup, for example, you might see a laissez-faire company founder who makes no major office policies around work hours or deadlines. They might put full trust into their employees while they focus on the overall workings of running the company. Although laissez-faire leadership can empower employees by trusting them to work however they would like, it can limit their development and overlook critical company growth opportunities. Therefore, it is important that this leadership style is kept in check.

Strategic Leadership (Commonly Effective)

Strategic leaders sit at the intersection between a company's main operations and its growth opportunities. He or she accepts the burden of executive interests while ensuring that current working conditions remain stable for everyone else. This is a desirable leadership style in many companies because strategic thinking supports multiple types of employees at once. However, leaders who operate this way can set a dangerous precedent with respect to how many people they can support at once, and what the best direction for the company really is if everyone is getting their way at all times.

Transformational Leadership (Sometimes Effective)

Transformational leadership is always ‘transforming’ and improving upon the company's conventions. Employees might have a basic set of tasks and goals that they complete every week or month, but the leader is constantly pushing them outside of their comfort zone. When starting a job with this type of leader, all employees might get a list of goals to reach, as well as deadlines for reaching them. While the goals might seem simple at first, this manager might pick up the

pace of deadlines or give you more and more challenging goals as you grow with the company. This is a highly encouraged form of leadership among growth-minded companies because it motivates employees to see what they are capable of. But transformational leaders can risk losing sight of everyone's individual learning curves if direct reports do not receive the right coaching to guide them through new responsibilities.

Transactional Leadership (Sometimes Effective)

Transactional leaders are fairly common today. These managers reward their employees for precisely the work they do. A marketing team that receives a scheduled bonus for helping generate a certain number of leads by the end of the quarter is a common example of transactional leadership. When starting a job with a transactional boss, you might receive an incentive plan that motivates you to quickly master your regular job duties. For example, if you work in marketing, you might receive a bonus for sending 10 marketing emails. On the other hand, a transformational leader might only offer you a bonus if your work results in a large amount of newsletter subscriptions. Transactional leadership helps establish roles and responsibilities for each employee, but it can also encourage bare-minimum work if employees know how much their effort is worth all the time. This leadership style can use incentive programs to motivate employees, but they should be consistent with the company's goals and used in addition to unscheduled gestures of appreciation.

Coach-Style Leadership (Commonly Effective)

Similar to a sports teams coach, this leader focuses on identifying and nurturing the individual strengths of each member on his or her team. They also focus on strategies that will enable their team work better together. This style offers strong similarities to strategic and democratic leadership, but puts more emphasis on the growth and success of individual employees. Rather than forcing all employees to focus on similar skills and goals, this leader might build a team where each employee has an expertise or skillset in something different. In the long run, this leader focuses on creating strong teams that can communicate well and embrace each other's unique skillsets in order to get work done. A manager with this leadership style might help employees improve on their strengths by giving them new tasks to try, offering them guidance, or meeting to discuss constructive feedback. They might also encourage one or more team members to expand on their strengths by learning new skills from other teammates.

Bureaucratic Leadership (Rarely Effective)

Bureaucratic leaders go by the books. This style of leadership might listen and consider the input of employees—unlike autocratic leadership—but the leader tends to reject an employee's input if it conflicts with company policy or past practices. You may run into a bureaucratic leader at a larger, older, or traditional company. At these companies, when a colleague or employee proposes a strong strategy that seems new or non-traditional, bureaucratic leaders may reject it. Their resistance might be because the company has already been successful with current processes and trying something new could waste time or resources if it does not work. Employees under this leadership style might not feel as controlled as they would under autocratic leadership, but there is still a lack of freedom in how much people are able to do in their roles.

This can quickly shut down innovation, and is definitely not encouraged for companies who are chasing ambitious goals and quick growth.

MOTIVATION

Motivation is a goal-oriented characteristic that helps a person achieve his objectives. It pushes an individual to work hard at achieving his or her goals (Ojo 2015). Denga (1996) cited in Robert-Okah (2014) sees motivation as that inner force that ignites, propels, pokes, spurs or energizes, directs and sustains behavior towards goal achievement. As a result, lack of motivation is manifested in workers' lack of interest in performing a task because he/she has no goal to attain.

Approaches to motivation

Robert-Okah (2014, p. 102) opined that there are two basic approaches to motivation. They are;

- **Intrinsic motivation:** This is a situation where the job to be done is arranged in such a way that it becomes interesting, challenging and fulfilling. The nature of the job provides rewards.
- **Extrinsic motivation:** On the contrary, extrinsic motivation involves the use of external rewards such as; increased wages/salaries, promotion or praises to enhance better performance on the part of employees.

The Need for Motivation in Institutions:

Anugwom (2005) avers that employees need to be motivated in organizations to help them willingly carry out their functions. It is imperative they work with zeal and high morale in order to accomplish the tasks. For instance, in the educational institution, some factors have contributed in adequate motivation of employees. They include;

- The growing importance of education as a key to national development.
- The increasing cost of education in terms of the amount of resources invested in education.
- The growing social demand for education which has resulted in phenomenal growth in school enrolment.
- The influence of economic and social factors on employees themselves, etc.

Ways through which employees can be motivated:

Ray (2016:87), opines that employees can be motivated through the following;

- Remuneration, accommodation, security and social needs are to be fairly met. Salaries and allowances should be paid as at when due. Accommodation such as office space, staff common room should be provided.
- The work environment should be made free from tension and antagonism. The administrators/managers should try to maintain a cohesive work group where fairness and equity prevail.

- Employees with special or outstanding contributions or performance should not only be recognized but rewarded.
- The type of job given to each employee should be interesting, challenging and meaningful.
- Performance standard has to be clearly stipulated upon which promotions, increment of salaries and the satisfaction of cherished needs have to be made contingent.

Robert-Okah (2014, p. 112), added that:

- Since every employee values job security, the managers should avoid such threats that would dampen the motivation of staff;
- More of participative leadership should be adopted. Employees ought to be involved in some administrative processes like decision-making. This will increase the employees' sense of responsibility, thereby boosting their ego and personality;
- Disciplinary actions such as suspension with or without pay, termination or outright dismissals should follow administrative procedures, to give victims opportunity to defend themselves;
- With regards to social needs, deliberate attempts should be made by employers to carry every employee along in organizational activities. Such unnecessary discriminations based on sex, age, ethnicity, tribe and religion should be de-emphasized. Everybody should be seen as a member of a larger family (organization);
- Ego and esteem needs can be accomplished through delegation of duties to employees. By so doing, the skills and talents are also discovered. Employees become participants in the decision-making process and through this, identify fully with the policies and decisions of the organization.

Effective leadership as ingredients of motivation:

Amara (2014) opines that the success of every organization depends on the employees' drive to thrive through their efforts, commitment, engagement, practice and persistence. The roles of effective leadership on employee motivation according to Anugwom (2005) include:

- Effective leaders guide and direct the behavior of the employee. They instill pride in the employee to perform better.
- In terms of assistance in achieving organizational goals, the effective leader discusses the goals and plans of the organization with the employees. This instills confidence in the employee and paves way for greater productivity.
- The effective leader has a strong sense of purpose which encourages the employee to trust the leadership vision demonstrated by the leader.
- The effective leader gives direction to the employee on how to achieve the set targets of the organization.

Also, Ray (2016, p. 87) added that:

- Effective leaders take care of employees' remuneration, accommodation, security and social needs. This motivates the employees and spurs them to greater productivity.

- They provide conducive environment that is free of tension and antagonism.
- Effective leaders recognize and reward employees with outstanding performance. This encourages competition among employees and paves way for increased productivity.

Robert-Okah (2014, p. 113), added that:

- Effective leaders delegate duties to employees to discover their skills and talents. This boosts the ego of the employees and makes them feel among.
- In terms of social needs of the employees, the effective leader makes sure that everybody is carried along in organizational activities. There is be no discrimination of any sort.
- An effective leader follows administrative procedures in taking any disciplinary action against any employee.

CONCLUSION

There is a positive relationship between effective leadership and employee motivation. Effective leadership which is a means of creating and planning, securing resources and looking out for and improving errors plays an essential role in motivating employees. An effective leader defines rules and regulation explicitly, allows employees freedom of expression, allows them to participate in policy formulation of the organization, promote them as at when due, increase their remuneration regularly and provide a conducive working environment for employees. All these put in place motivates the employees and spurs them to greater job performance and productivity.

Recommendations

For employees to be motivated adequately, the paper recommends thus:

- The employees should be given freedom of expression;
- Participatory decision-making; the opinion of the employee should be considered;
- There should be explicit definition of rules and regulations;
- Employees should be promoted regularly;
- There should be regular increment of employee remuneration and prompt payment; and
- Conducive working environment should be provided.

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