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EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP: A PANACEA FOR ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is an age-long natural phenomenon that cuts across nations and global communities. Its impacts on organisational structure and culture are quite enormous, such that it cannot be relegated to the background. Effective leadership is the life wire and the cardinal point for the success of every organisation. This is to say that functionality of every organisation is fully dependent on the co-ordination of the activities of the organisation. This research beamed its search light on the administrative behaviours employed by leaders of organisations in driving the goals of the organisation. The paper revealed that effective leadership is a determinant factor for the achievement of organisational goals. It also revealed that administrative behaviours adopted by a leader to a very large extent affects performance, productivity and endlessly strive to ensure better output and success.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Leadership, Organisation, Performance, Productivity.

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of organisations sprang out of the burning desire to achieve optimum productivity. This implies that set goals cannot be realized in isolation of individuals. Organisation is the individual and individual is the organisation. To this end, operations of any organisation are dependent on the leadership and the followership who are guided towards the achievement of the organisation's desire. The aspirations of an organisation abinitio, hinge on the generation of high performance and the management of resources (human and material) to actualize effectiveness and efficiency. This is why effective leadership is imperative as the power line of the organisation. Creating and maintaining sustainable organisation are harculain tasks, which require an understanding of the role of leadership in addressing situations and personal outcomes of employees. Leadership is saddled with the responsibilities of planning, organizing, co-ordinating, controlling,

evaluating and implementation of organisational activities. This basically is on the fact that the development of organisations is based on careful arrangement, analysis of programmes and selection of adequate activities for success. Therefore, effective leadership drives the activities of the organization and strives to achieve them through the application of the right management principles and administrative behaviours in the quest for productivity.

The Concept of Leadership

Leadership is the process of using others to achieve organisational objectives. According to Okoroma (2000), leadership is a means of direction and a product of interactions. It is an input into an organisation which involves inter-personal influence as one initiates structures and acts that result in a consistent pattern of group interaction aimed at productivity and individual fulfillment (Chike-Okoli, 2009).

Reviewing the above, leadership process involves directing and influencing people to willingly carry out tasks for the achievement of a group goal. It incorporates the relationship between a person singled out to co-ordinate the affairs of a group and the task to be accomplished. The central theme of leadership is getting things accomplished through people (Sapru, 2013). It can be assessed from the following perspectives: what the leader has to do, how he does it, the reason for doing what he does and what he will do. From all indications, leadership is the apex and centre of activities in every organisation. These activities metamorphose into productivity through proper co-ordination and direction. This is evident in (Chike-Okoli, 2008), which posits that leadership can motivate employees through the following medium:

- Job enrichment, security and satisfaction; and
- Provision of good working environment and condition.

Effective Leadership

Effectiveness implies having power to produce a required or desired effect. An effective leader is one who has integrity, initiative, creativity, intelligence, charisma and competence to carry people along. Effective leadership is characterised by a strong drive for responsibility and task completion, vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals, venturesomeness and originality in problem solving (Stogdill, 1970 in Okoroma, 2000). For a leader to be effective, there must be followers and situations. It is also worthy to note that the quality of a leader in an organisation makes or mars the success.

Abdussamii (2014) identified the following qualities of an effective leader:

- Knowledge, trustworthiness, honesty, responsibility and accountability;
- Ability, capacity, genuineness, firmness, fairness justice, initiative, creative and assertive;
- Positive, foresight, modesty, clear vision, understanding and broad mindedness;
- Information management, straight forwardness, cheerfulness, nice, accommodating, exemplary, demonstrative and practical;
- willing to admit mistakes and ever ready for amendments;
- Inquisitive, detailed, oriented, competitiveness and flexibility.

A leader who possesses up to half of these qualities must achieve high performance and productivity in the organisation, which ultimately confirms him an effective leader.

Performance

Performance is an act of carrying out an action. Business dictionary (2014) defines it as the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed. Performance is deemed to be the fulfillment of an obligation in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities.

Judging from the above, job performance is the means of reaching set goals in the organisation. It refers to how a worker behaves in the work place and the ability he puts into it. Accordingly, Nwosu (2019) opines that job performance is a work related activities expected of an employee and how well those activities were executed. This concept is an important criterion for organisational outcomes and success which should not be relegated to the background by any leader. For a leader of an organisation to be deemed effective, activation of the employees' performance for productivity is necessary. This requires the employment of administrative behaviours and leadership skills to get the employees committed to the task.

Productivity

Productivity is the relationship between the total input and the total output utilized in the production process. Productivity means using the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources (Nwosu, 2009). It is an economic measure of output unit (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004). It is also the ratio of output to inputs in production and an average measure of the efficiency of production (Udo-Aka, 2003). Productivity is a crucial factor in production performance of firm and nations. It is also a measure of quantity and quality of work done, considering the cost of resources it took to do the work i.e.:

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{Quantity of work} + \text{Quality of work}}{\text{Cost of resources needed to do the work.}}$$

Many activities undertaken by organisations deal with individual or organisational productivity. Pay and appraisal systems, ranging from training, selection, job designs, incentives and motivation are individual and organisational issues concerned with productivity directly.

There are three levels of productivity – individual, organisational and national level. Productivity at the organisational level ultimately affects profitability and competitiveness in a for-profit organisation and total cost in a none for-profit organisation. Individual productivity on the other hand depends on a person's innate ability to do a job, the level of effort he or she is willing to exert and the support given to that person. From the foregoing, it is obvious that effective utilization of resources, physical and human result to high performance and productivity, which is the essence of every organisation. Therefore, the ultimate concern and interest of an effective leader is to harness the available resources using total quality management to ensure success.

Organisation

Organisation is an organized group of people with a particular purpose, such as business or government department. Business Jargons (2019) defines organisation as a collection of people, who are involved in pursuing defined objectives. It could be described as a social system which comprises all formal human relationships. The organisation encompasses

division of labour among employees and alignment of tasks towards the ultimate goal of the company. It could also be referred to as a managerial function that coordinates employees' activities to achieve goals. Organisation is goal oriented, which is pursued through proper planning, coordination, division of labour and authority – responsible relationship among members.

Similarly, organisation is categorized in to two groups: formal and informal organisations. Formal organisation deals with the structure of jobs and positions with specified activities and relationships created by management to attain its objectives. While informal organisations deal with relationship between the employees that relies on personal attitudes, prejudices and interests rather than procedures. The organisation referred to in this context is a formal organisation where the leader is saddled with the responsibilities of gathering and channeling activities of individuals and other resources to achieve goals.

Effective Leadership for Performance and Productivity

Several researchers have investigated into organisational leadership to ascertain the styles and theories that make a leader distinct from other leaders. But it seems that there is no one style that is acclaimed the best. Leadership style being the behavior, techniques, strategies and methods leaders exhibit in coordinating their followers or subordinates differ according to individuals. No two leaders are the same, each one operates and carries the same functions from different perspectives. The function of a leader is to co-ordinate a group towards realizing the organisations goal. Chike – Okoli (2009) avers that the function of a leader is to influence the group towards the achievement of group goals by planning, organizing, directing and integrating the institutional demands and the needs of members in a way that will be both productive and individually fulfilling. This is to say that leadership style of an individual depends on the nature of the leader, the nature of the followers and the nature of the organisation.

There are different types of leadership style namely autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, laissez-faire leadership, charismatic, bureaucratic, task – oriented, relation-oriented, servant, transactional and transformational leadership styles.

Autocratic leadership is characterized by individual control over the decisions and contributions of the followers. He is full of authority and command without consideration of the subordinates except the organisation. The leader is a dictator, arrogant and does not take corrections nor shares ideas with his subordinates.

Democratic leadership accommodates every member of the organisation. It gives room for participation of the employees in the activities of the organisation, including decision making. The employees are satisfied because their ideas, suggestions and opinions are given considerations.

Laissez faire is a carefree attitude of the leader to his subordinate and the organisational activities. No form of control is exercised in pursuit of the organisation's goals. Complete freedom and happiness of the group at the expense of the organisation is his interest. The achievement of the goals depends on the commitment of the subordinate. It is also known as delegative leadership.

Charismatic leadership depends on the possession of some natural traits like personality trait, physical built and other abilities. Such leaders are said to be born to rule or naturally great men. They lead people to accomplish tasks as a result of their qualities which endear them to the people. They are liked, respected and appreciated because of the manner in which they operate. This style of leadership may have negative influence on the organisation.

Transactional leadership promotes compliance by followers through rewards and punishments. It focuses on supervision, organisation and performance. This type of leadership pays attention to followers' works in order to find faults and deviations. It is only effective during emergency situations.

Transformational leadership deals with team work to identify needed change and create vision. It enhances motivation, morale and job performance of followers through a variety of ways. A transformational leader inspires followers and makes them committed to their jobs.

Based on the above, a leader cannot be effective with only one style and theory of leadership. Effective leadership will imply a combination of all the styles and theories, applying them at the appropriate times. This approach is called "synthetic". An effective leader should lead the organisation to greater heights with the adoption of a variety of styles. Okoroma (1999) identified six elements crucial for effective leadership – (i) selfless service, (ii) compassion for people (iii) show of love (iv) reasonableness and moderation v) strength and courage and vi) honesty and purpose. Despite the above elements identified by Okoroma, Duggan (2019) suggests the following factors for leadership effectiveness – motivation, team building, change, mentoring, clarity and good communication.

As a matter of fact, effective leadership has a lot of huddles to subdue to break even. The most difficult resources to manage is human resources, hence, a leader must be one endowed with the above qualities to direct the organisational activities properly. He must be intelligent, innovative; initiative, creative, always ready to accept and correct his mistakes and most of all show compansion and motivation. A leader who motivates and shows compassion on his followers will definitely get them committed to the organisation. It is also imperative to note that an autocratic leader will not achieve high performance and productivity because employees will work under pressure without commitment (eye service). Performance and productivity are integral part of organisations and any good leader should strive to achieve them. This is based on the fact that when the work force is motivated, exposed to open climate, involved in decision making, commitment, performance, productivity and job satisfaction will be ensured.

Theoretical Framework

The search for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the leadership of organisations to produce better results has led to the development of management theories. There are myriads of theories but this study will adopt Behavioural Theory of John (1958), contingency of Ferd (1964), Part-Goal theory of House Mitchell (1974) and Expectancy (Vroom, 1964). The behavioural theory of leadership emerged as a result of the inadequacies of the trait theory. It looks beyond the natural qualities of a leader into his behavioural pattern. This theory emphasizes efficiency, effectiveness and rational use of human and material resources by the leader to achieve organisational goals. The exhibition of different behaviours at different situations cannot also be over emphasized. This theory stresses on the maintenance of cordial relationship with staff (followers), being initiative, co-operative, show of concern, listening ears and asking for information in order to achieve goals. According to Obi (2003), effectiveness and efficiency in an organisation are based on judicious and appropriate combination of initiatives and consideration of the leader towards his subordinates.

Path-goal theory of leadership is likened to expectancy theory of Vroom which is based on the belief that every employee in an organisation has a reason for carrying out the duty that has been assigned to him or her, and that reason is to satisfy his personal desire in the pursuit of the organisational goals. According to Vroom cited in Okoroma (2000), expectancy is a momentary belief concerning the likelihood that a particular act will be

followed by a particular outcome. In line with the above, Cherry (2014), confirms that expectancy theory has been generally accepted as a theory for explaining how individual alternatives make decisions concerning different behavioural alternatives. Path Goal Theory considers situational factors and enjoins leaders to set and clarify tasks as well as establish good relationship with subordinates for attainment of goal.

More also, is the contingency theory which is diagnostic in nature as it tries to examine the organisation with the view to understanding its characteristics and the leadership practice to adopt for better results. It prescribes appropriate organisational structures, values and management practices for specific situations. This model does not have one best strategy or technique for organisational management. The leader is expected to search out the characteristics and peculiarities of organisation and adopt appropriate management practices. Contingency theory is synthetic because it involves the application of all models at different situations. It is concerned with (i) the willingness of members to follow, like and trust the leader, (ii) clarity, performance, result and situations, and (iii) degree of authority to carry out functions.

These theories can provide organisational leaders with frame work for explaining the direction of employees and instruments for highlighting or explaining certain organisational influences that may have effect on employee motivated behavior. It is worthy to note that there are many reasons human beings do things sometimes, individuals are motivated to act because of internal desires and wishes, but at other times the behaviours are driven by a desire for external rewards (Nwosu, 2016). These theories suggest the ways a leader can achieve performance and productivity through motivation, direction, co-ordination and proper diagnosis of the organisation to know the suitable administrative behavior to exhibit. Hence, an effective leader should be able to increase pay-offs of employees, clarify tasks of the employee to enable them attain personal satisfaction and provide necessary guidance and support to help the employees in the achievement of the organisational goals.

Roles of an Effective Leader

The roles of leaders of organisations are quite enormous and auspicious. These roles will not be down played if performance and productivity must be attained. This is based on the fact that the role of a leader can make or mar an organisation as it is powered by planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling and influencing the group towards the achievement of goals. A role of a leader encompasses formulation of plans, policies and their execution. Sapru (2013) postulates the following leadership roles as – coaching, facilitating, handling disciplinary problems, reviewing team/individual performance, training and communication.

Obviously, leaders are faced with a lot of challenges which spring from the forces influencing their personalities, forces in subordinates and forces in the situation. The ability to surmount these forces, brands him effective, on this premise, the following leadership roles are discussed - creation of vision, motivator, definition of tasks and roles, team building, organizing and controlling.

Creation of Vision

An effective leader must have vision as well as techniques and strategies to achieve it. The ability and skills he posses in the management of his followers to a very large extent determine the success of the organisation. He must be creative, initiative, and innovative in discharging his responsibilities.

Motivator

Motivator and work performance are very important in every organisational setting. The dedication and commitment of a worker is a process of reciprocation between him and the organisation. Human beings are more effective and productive when spurred to action. Therefore, an effective leader should motivate his workforce with incentives to achieve the objectives of the organisation.

Definition of Task and Roles

An effective leader must guide employees by defining their roles and tasks in the work process, providing them with the tools needed to perform. Clarity of tasks will provide direction to tackle the problem. This will entail explaining the tasks, provision of ideas, initiatives, direction and availability in assisting emerging challenges.

Team Builder

Effective leader must possess the ability and capability to pull every member of the organisation together towards the actualization of a common goal. As a team builder, his responsibilities include guiding his group towards the completion of a project, develop and implement a timeline for goal attainment and delegate tasks to members.

Organizer and Controller

A functional leader must be able to properly organize and control his group to effectively perform their tasks. Not only should each member have a clear understanding of what is expected of them, but the group should be well structured to facilitate their actions. In the presence of limited resources, the leader must exercise control over the affairs of the organisation, being efficient about getting the maximum results from the available resources. Apart from the above functions, an effective leader should be an involver, objective, a liaison, solution provider, conflict manager, a coach and a developer of employees for competence. It is through these mediums that high performance and productivity of an organisation can be recorded.

Critical Dimension of Effective Leadership

Effective leaders must adjust their styles to fit the demands of the situation they face. Different situations arise in the organisation, creating room for adoption of different approaches to the forms and degrees of participation of subordinates in decision making to suit the circumstances. Bob (2013) asserts that variety of factors have created a growing gap between the leaders we have and leaders we need. He buttressed this assertion by stressing that leaders are like “trees in the middle of a storm and their branches are being blown down by the winds of change which are uprooting them. He steps further to identify six (6) essential dimensions of effective leaders as:

- Physical-- (the agility and stamina a leader requires to face challenges at all times).
- Emotional-- (the possession of confidence, self-awareness and positive emotions such as forgiveness, compassion, love and generosity).
- Intellectual-- (this refers to the possession of intelligence, creativity, initiative goals).

- Social-- (this refers to the transparency, trustworthiness of a leader to strengthen his relationship with his followers).
- Vocational-- (the acquisition of skills and competencies of leaders. Their ability to compete, maintain jobs and fulfill need for success)
- Spiritual-- (this deals with the possession of vision).

However, many leaders in the world have succeeded in their leadership ventures, not because of singular effort, but a corroborated one. The obvious is that without followers, leaders will not emerge. It is the combination of the leaders and followers activities that determine Leadership dimension. These activities may include the attitude of the leader, the attitude of the followers, the situations and the tasks.

Basically, the attitude of the employee in the organisation determines the reaction of the leader. A lazy employee who neglects the success and goals of the organisation may attract a negative attitude of the leader. This may amount to query, sack, withholding of salary depending on the gravity of the offence. In addition, situations, tasks and responsibilities in the organisation also fashion the leader's dimension. It is also agreed that the actions and decisions of a leader in a crisis situation may differ from other situations. Therefore, effective leaders are expected to be strong, agile, intelligent, transparent, trustworthy and competent in harnessing the organisational resource for achievement of goals, no matter the challenge and situation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussions, it has been established that effective leadership is the ultimate in the achievement of quality in every organisation. Organisations being rooted in goal attainment, cannot reach their destination in isolation of leaders, not just leaders but effective ones. This is why absolute carefulness is required in the selection of leaders. Organisations need leaders who will strive in the midst of difficult tasks and situations, through the planning, organisation and coordination of human and material resources to induce productivity.

Suggestions

Having x-rayed the efficacy of effective leadership in organisations for performance and productivity, the following suggestions are adjudged:

- Quality leaders should always be saddled with organizational responsibilities;
- Incentive and motivation are very important tools for inducing performance and productivity; and
- Leaders should adopt synthetic approach which comprises all the styles of leadership.

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