A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF CHARACTER AND MANAGEMENT IN ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The basic thrust of this paper is on the character evaluation and management of leaders in organizational setting. The obvious causes of poor character leadership and its attendant effects were lucidly discussed. The paper is categorized into: introduction, conceptual clarification, etc. The centrality of the paper is anchored on its objectives which include the following; Assess the relationship between character control and management, establish relationship between character control and organizational leadership, and identified the nature of character and activities of leaders in organization and the consequences of bad character on the stability of organizational setting. The study adopted the Human relations theory as theoretical framework, and the qualitative research analysis method. This enabled the researcher to show interest in critical observations, case studies among others. The findings include the following: bad character leads to poor organizational management, poor productivity arose from lack of character control in organizational setting etc. The paper submits that appropriate recommendations were suggested and the paper contended that for existing institutions to achieve its goals, leaders of such organizations/institutions should have sense of belonging, organizational drive anchored on good character and other leadership qualities.

Keywords: Organization; Management; Leadership; Character.

INTRODUCTION

The existence of organization is to assist government (both public and private sectors) to harness the goals of government expectations. It is therefore sacrosanct to acknowledge that in order for goals of this magnitude to be attained, the character of the leader in charge of such organization must be geared towards the genuine pursuit of goals by the leaders. It further requires the effective and resourceful drive of the leader, working in tandem with the personnel of the organization in order to achieve these objectives. Strategies that are environmental friendly should be such that are adopted and acceptable to both the leader and the led. The essence of this

approach is to ensure that productivity which is the fulcrum of the organization do not suffer. According to Okoh (2005), "attitude to work is a critical determinant of productivity in any organization, public or private. It has to do with the feeling, habits and beliefs that affect the individual behaviour at work. These may pre-dispose a positive or negative attitude to work.

Over the years, organizations all over the world (be it public or private) as governments agencies, assist to formulate and implement government policies and programmes since government cannot do it all by itself. Therefore, the functionality of these organizations depends on the availability of leaders whose objective is to direct and co-ordinate the activities of the organization (structures, personnel, resources etc) towards goal attainment. University institutions, police service commission, the Army, local government service commission, Shell petroleum, Agip petroleum, Hospital Management Board, just to mention a few are all in the vanguard of assisting existing governments in tackling issues of productivity and services that are expected of government.

As insightful as the collective approach may seem toward goal attainment, some organizational leaders for reasons that this paper intend to explore hinder the process which consequently distort organizational output and further frustrate the efforts of government. This is because some heads of institutions (organizations) do not always meet up with goal of organizations with basic administrative functions that are character bound. Often time, the master/servant approach is always adopted towards the pursuit of the organizational goals. The use of incessant queries to subordinates even when it does not call for it is the most welcomed approach on the part of some heads towards achieving results. Agree that it yield some results at the end of the day but not in all cases. Again, some heads of institutions may not even give punishment to erring staff of the organization, either because they have a strong affinity with the affected staff or they are afraid of sanctioning them. The efforts and offenses of workers are not directly related to rewards and punishments" (Ejiofor, 1987). This is because according to Okok (2005), "favoritism towards ethnic men, secret cult members, the opposite sex, Club members and other extraneous factor create laxity and flexibility in the implementation of rules and regulations, such that workers are not punished when they err and are rewarded even when their work performance is low.

Character control and management of organizations is built on ego which consequently retards the pace and progress of organizational output. An organization that is out to complement the effort of the government should be headed by a leader that is not egoistic conscious. More often than not, such leaders should see himself/herself as part of the people he is leading. The master/servant relationship approach should not get into his head. By so doing, the goal of the organization is guaranteed. This is because, these subordinates will not even see him as a boss but rather as one of them. In order words, the human relation approach or behavioural approach as suggested by Elton Mayor should be adopted. "For in this may, by making the employees happy, the organization would obtain their full co-operative and effort and thus increase its efficiency. The leadership can achieve this objective without necessarily losing its bearing in terms of the goal of the organization or establishment. (Ibodje, 1999).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Considering the sensitivity of this topic, as it cross across the fields of human endeavor, so many theories including, structural change theory, system theory, elite theory Megregor group theory X and Y, just to mention a few would have sufficed for this study. But, we have decided to adopt the human relations theory because of its peculiarity and suitability to the topic.

The Human Relations Theory

The Human relations theory, alternatively referred to as behavioral theory was developed by Elton mayor. The basic thrust of the theory is anchored on the smooth relationship between the leader and his subordinates in course of goal attainment in an organisation. Elton Mayor is of the view that for every organization to attain its goals and objectives there should be cordial relationship between the leader of the organization and his personnel. It was on the strength of this he came up with a study that has to do with "The Ban wiring Room study" where the supervisor in charge of the work created an atmosphere of cordiality between himself and the workers to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. According to Ibodje (2000), "It was found that the supervisor was in fact under great pressure to confirm to the norms of the group of which he was supposed to be in charge". The point to note is that organizations achieve its goals faster and quicker when the master/servant relationship as it is most seen and recognized in some organizations is jettisoned. So, the Elton Mayor theory will help to enhance and smoothen the relationship between the leadership and its subordinate in the pursuit of organizational goals given its peculiarity.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Over the years most organizations were designed by successive governments to help pursue and achieve the goals of government. So, these organizations/institutions are headed by leaders that would help key into the belief and expectations of government in order to achieve these objectives. For clearer understanding and interpretation of these goals, a clearer definition and meaning of some these concepts are very necessary in this aspect of the paper. Concepts such as organization, management, leadership and character requires some analysis and explanations. The idea is to see how these concepts works in synergy to achieve government expectations as well as aspirations in existing organizations/institutions.

Organization

Organization implies a setting, accommodating human and material resources geared towards achieving an objective. It can equally be seen and regarded as institution set up by government to collectively assist in the formulation and implementation of government directives or policies. Nwachukwu (1988), opined that an organization is a group of people bound together to provided a unit of action for the achievement of predetermined objectives. Similarly, Isibor (2002), sees organization as the process of combining the work which individuals and groups have to perform with the facilities necessary for its execution; that the duties so performed provide the best channel for efficient, systematic, positive and co-ordinated application of available effort. In the words of Sherlekar (1984), organization is a "conscious combination and a systematic arrangement of various economic resources otherwise known as the 6ms-namely men, money, machine, materials and management". Corroborating the above concept of organization, Oyibo et al (2000), conceptualized organization to mean "social institutions which have been in existence since the beginning of civilization.

Different interpretations and meaning can be used for the concept of organization. What is imperative is its objectives and goals. Thus there are private organizations that has similar objectives of government or public organizations. There are private organizations that requires the back up of government in the execution of its policies and programmes. Perhaps, it is in the light of this Sharma (1984), cited in Oyibo et al (2000) defined organization to mean "the

rational coordination of the activities of a number of people for the achievement of some common explicit purpose/goal, through division of labour and function and a hierarchy of authority and responsibility.

Management

Management unlike organization is the act of influencing and directing people in an organization to achieve the objective of that organization. In order words, management involves coordination, directing, controlling etc of the subordinates by the manager or supervisor (leader) in order to achieve the objective and goals of the organization. According to Obiora et al (2018), management is the administration of an organization, whether it is business, or not for profit organisation or government body." In line with the above, Grifin (1997) opined that "management is a set of activities (including planning and decision making, organizing, leading and controlling) directed at an organizations resources (human, financial, physical and information) with the aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient and effective manner.

However, what becomes very important to note here is that management and organization share common similarity in terms of goal or objective attainment. That is, the two complements each other. According to Ibodje (2000), "Organization and management go together just as the physiological structure of a snail and the biological process which enables it to function and produce some specific pattern of action go together. He went further to say that while organisation (as a structural framework) can assume some definite form and thus be static within a given period of time, management as the invisible operationalisation of the framework can be dynamic with production, regards to production of outputs or results depending on the changes in the inputs of experience and others with which the structure is run. So, these two concepts depend on each other to achieve the objective of every existing organization. This is because according to Okoli et al (2002), "attitude of an employee towards organisation goals or towards authority exercised over him is very closely related to the attitudes of the person who work with him."

Leadership

A leader is one who has the innate potential and idea to direct, and co-ordinate the action of others in organisation in order to achieve a desired goal or objective. According to Obiora (2020), a leader can be defined as a person that leads or hold a dominant or superior position within his field and is able to exercise a high degree of influence over others. It can also be seen as a person who influences a group of persons towards the attainment of a goal." In the same vein, Sapru (2013), sees leadership as "the process of directing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishments of some objectives." Again, Ezeh (2013), opined that leadership is a social and influencing function that involves influencing people in order to attain the goals of an organization. In line with the above, Ivancenvich et al (1994), considered leadership as the process of influencing other people to attain organizational goal.

Character

Character implies good behavioural conduct. It has to do with the behaviour and manner an individual parade himself particularly in his relationship with people. More fundamentally, his action in pursuing one goal or the other as it relates to organizational setting. There are individual with poor and nauseating character (behaviour that affects the goal of an organization,

be you a subordinate or a leader. Once you have this type of people in a group arrangement or organization, the objective or goal of that organization suffers. This is obviously because the character of the individual in the organization leaves much to be desired. Thus, the good behavioural conduct of the individual towards organizational goal can be termed organizational behaviour. The good behaviour of personnel or leader of the organization help in many ways to harness the achievement of the organization. According to Okieruovo (2018), organizational behaviour often abbreviated as OB is a field of study that investigates the impact that individuals, groups and structure have on behaviour within organizations for the purpose of applying such knowledge toward improving an organization"s effectiveness. It is logical to conclude that a good character that is anchored on organizational behaviour can bring about job satisfaction and realization of organizational goals. So, both the leader and his subordinates need this variable as a therapy to achieving the goals and objectives of organization.

From the concepts, analyse so far, the effectiveness and efficiency of institutions/organizations depend primarily on the availability of the leader to help government actualize its expectations and objectives. This is obviously because government cannot do it alone. It therefore requires the character of a good leader to be able to ensure that these dreams (objectives) are realizable given his sense of character evaluation regarding the job. Human capacity has become a critical index of competition in the world of business, unsatisfied employees produce unsatisfactory results, therefore, it is very vital for top management to take care of their employee to ensure that they are satisfied with their jobs; when they are satisfied, they strive to attain the organizations" goals and objectives (Eguan, 1998). Quereshi et al. (2007), concluded that HRM practices are positively correlated with employees" performance. Performance appraisal as HRM practice as opined by Shahzad et al. (2008) showed "a formalized process for monitoring workers and is intended to be a management tool to improve the performance as well as productivity of workers.
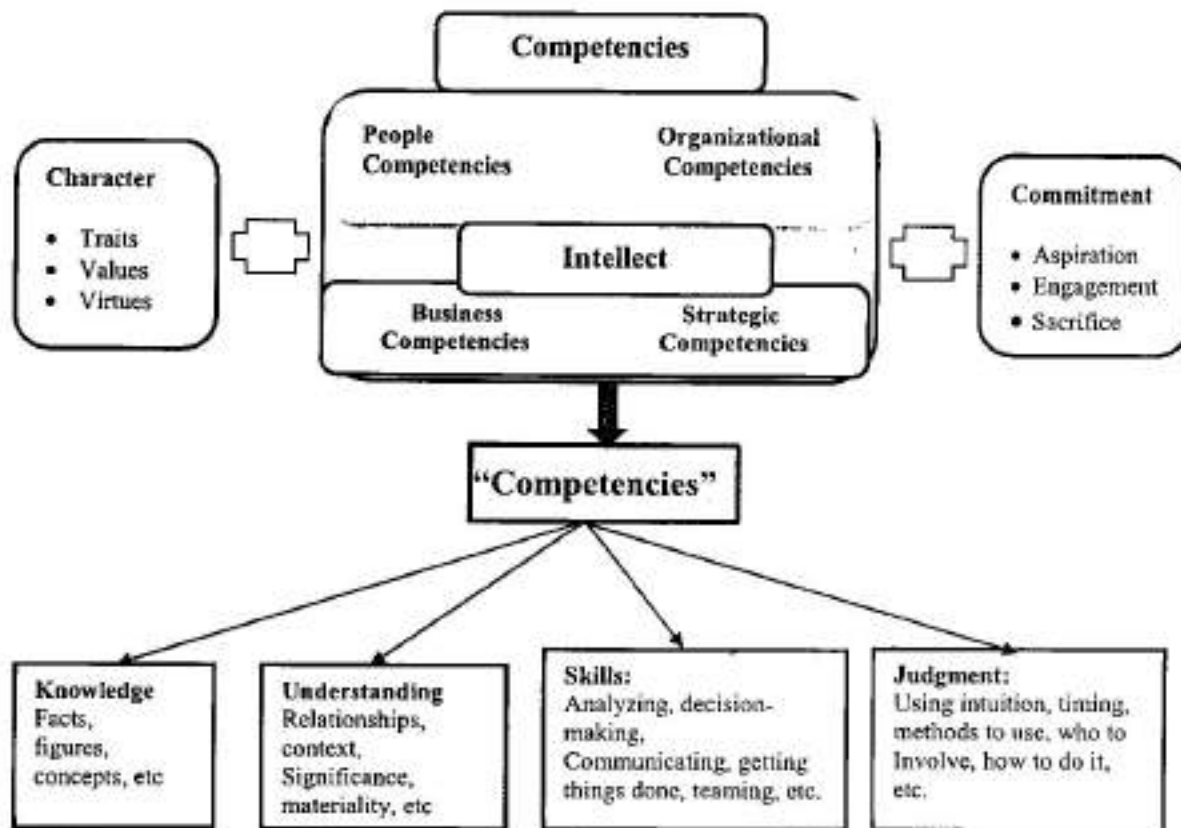
The summary of this part of the literature review is for the heads of these organizations to apply some semblance of rationality in dealing with the subordinates in order to be able to achieve the desired goals and objectives of the organization for existing government. The reality is that; government can"t be everywhere. Therefore, the onus is upon the individual heads to use their talents, initiatives to create a better work environment that is devoid of acrimony and hatred. Motivation, inspiration and good neigbourliness" (relationship) will promote and sustain productivity in institutions or organizations.

Role of Character and Management in Organisational Leadership

An organization that is headed by a leader should be such that the leader of the organisation should as a matter of necessity influence the subordinates to achieve the goal of the organization. The diagram below reflects an organization of competencies where individual character is clearly defined by traits, values and virtues. The point to note is that for the organisation to attain its goals, apart from the aforementioned character traits the average organizational worker is expected to possess, the diagram revealed that with the competent as well as strategies that will assist in achieving results, some levels of commitments that are anchored on aspiration, engagement and sacrifice, as shown in the diagram must be seen to be displayed by both the leader and the workers. To this end, competence that is embedded in knowledge, understanding (that has to do with traits of relationship, significance etc), skills and judgments would have helped to accelerate organizational output and productivity. So, the leader requires some of these variables to achieve objectives and goals of organizations. The use of intuitive, timing methods,

who to involve, how to involve the staff or personnel of the organization should be sacrosanct in the mind of the leader so that the pursuit of goals is guaranteed.

Fig. 1 Diagram depicting a leader's strategies in work organizational setting.

Competencies

People Competencies   Organizational Competencies

Character
- Traits
- Values
- Virtues

Intellect

Business Competencies   Strategic Competencies

Commitment
- Aspiration
- Engagement
- Sacrifice

"Competencies"

| **Knowledge** Facts, figures, concepts, etc | **Understanding** Relationships, context, Significance, materiality, etc | **Skills:** Analyzing, decision-making, Communicating, getting things done, teaming, etc. | **Judgment:** Using intuition, timing, methods to use, who to Involve, how to do it, etc. |

Source: Gandz et al. (2010).

From the analysis of the diagram provided in figure I above, it goes to show that character of a leader vis-à-vis his subordinates should be built on traits, values and virtues. In agreement with this, competencies of personnel with its leaders should equally be anchored on aspiration, engagement and sacrifices. More often than not, it has been observed that most organizations do not make the much anticipated achievements probably because of the absence of sacrifices, lack of commitment to organizational goals. Perhaps, because it is not their personal business.

It is therefore fundamental to acknowledge that from the diagram above, competencies of leaders and their subordinate should be sustained by knowledge, understanding skills and judgment. These attributes mentioned becomes necessary for the leader in order to be sure of his goals and objectives. As contained in the diagram, judgment is very fundamental. The ability to use the right persons, time specification for an existing job and some levels of intuition are necessary ingredients for an effective and efficient job performance and organizational output.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this paper is built on the fact that leaders of organization or governmental institutions should as a matter of necessity relate well with their subordinates in course of pursuing organizational goals. In the diagram mention in the discussion, it was clearly seen that goals as well as objectives of the organization were realizable borns out of good traits of

character in working organization. The competencies of the leaders among other variable helped to accelerate the degree of productive output. Therefore, the human relation"s theory that places much emphasis on good relationship between the boss and the subordinates towards organizational goal attainment should be encouraged. Mcgregor theory "Y" that makes the average organizational worker to see work as if though he is resting or playing should equally be seen as a therapy for successful goal attainment leaders should at all times work in tandem with their staff to achieve results. According to Obi (2004), during a two-year research, the researchers discovered that to some degree the results they were obtaining were influenced by the fact that researchers themselves had become part of the experiment. In other words, the preference of the researcher was affecting the results because the workers enjoyed receiving attention and being the subject of study and were willing to co-operate with the researcher to produce results they believed the researcher desired.

Suggestions

The following suggestions are made in the light of the foregoing discussion:

- The leaders should adopt the Mc Gregor theory „Y" in the work organization.
- Adopt the Elton Mayor "Human relations theory. That is the boss should see himself as a worker among the subordinates she or he is leading.
- Better and friendly working environment should be created to motivate workers.
- Suggestion boxes devoid of victimization should be put in certain positions within the organization for workers to express their minds in order for the boss to know their feelings and how he/she leads.
- The boss should device a strategy to show some empathy on people who are bereaved and more importantly to check on those through a Committee on those who may not be favourable disposed to come to work the previous days.

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