Implications of Effective Leadership and Human Resources Management on Organizations' Performance

Ettah Bassey Essien
Department of Economics
University of Uyo, Uyo
E-mail: essien.ettah@yahoo.com, ettahessien@uniuyo.edu.ng

Florence Ettah Essien
Department of Economics
Akwa Ibom State University
E-mail: florenceessien@aksu.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

The paper brings a high level of interrelatedness of effective leadership and human resources management in organizations. Specifically, it highlights essential qualities and characteristics of effective leadership, the felicity of an effective leader, the value of an effective leader and the implications of effective leadership for human resources management. Hence, the trait theory of leadership and the behavioural theory of leadership underpin this work. In an organization, human resources constitute the primary resource, while leadership is requisite. Human resources management plays a vital role in the growth and expansion of an organization. Nevertheless, for the effective permanence of all managerial functions of human resources management in an organization, effective leadership is essential.

Keywords: Leadership, human resources management, organizations, managerial functions

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership and human resources management are two concepts with a high level of interconnectedness. In an organization, leadership is requisite. Leadership is the ability to lead, guide, direct, and work with people to accomplish tasks to achieve goals. It connotes directing, guiding, and influencing people to carry out activities to achieve desired objectives. Leadership may involve a person who leads, directs, guides, and

works with people to achieve set goals. That is, somebody whom others follow to realize a purpose. It may also involve a group of persons who guide, direct and lead a group or an organization together.

However, Munroe (2005:164) argued that not all who assume the leadership position can practically lead. Munroe (Ibid) referred to this as "leading without leadership". This implies that some leaders lack the charisma and thus would resort to influencing their followers to take action through fear, command, and intimidation. Such leaders usually control and manipulate their followers. Leadership, as argued by Munroe (2005:52) and I consent to it, "is the capacity to influence others through inspiration, motivated by a passion, generated by a vision, produced by a conviction, ignited by a purpose". To this leadership, people as followers would willingly submit their authority. This is *effective leadership* – one responsibility for taking followers into the exciting unknown and creating a new reality for them, one that does not only direct, guide, and lead but also works with the people.

Human resources management is the performance of all managerial functions involved in planning for recruiting and selecting, developing and utilizing, rewarding and maximizing the potential of the human resources of an organization to achieve goals (Antai Nd, 14). Leaders carry out managerial functions in organizations; leadership is central to the performance of organizations. Leadership can make organizations grow and achieve their goals: It can make organizations contract and fall short of their desired objectives. This paper brings the interrelatedness of leadership and human resources management to the implications of effective leadership for human resource management.

2. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are various ways of looking at the concept of leadership. In this paper, we have considered two theories that have attempted to explain how leaders emerge. These theories are:
1. The trait theory of leadership, and
2. The behavioural theory of leadership.

The Trait Theory of Leadership
The underlying assumption of this theory is that leadership is rooted in the characters that individuals possess; people have different traits that are the nucleus of the differences in the performance of various leaders. Thomas Carlyle, in 1841, in his *Heroes and Hero worship,* considered men who rose to power. He identified and

examined their skills, physical characteristics, and talents. He traced the variables he identified and examined - skills, physical characteristics, and talents - to inheritance. Francis Galton *et al.* (1869) also examined the leadership qualities of strong people. In his *Hereditary Genius*, he attributed leadership qualities to heredity. Based on the submissions of Carlyle (1841) and Galton et al. (1869), early thinkers concluded that leadership was inherited; leaders were born, not made. In many organizations and polities today, some people believe that the submissions of Carlyle (1841) and Galton *et al.* (1869) are valid in that leaders are born, not made.

The Behavioural Theory of Leadership

The Trait Theory of Leadership adopted two approaches to compare the traits of people who emerged as leaders with the qualities of those who were not leaders. And compare the characteristics of effective leaders with those of ineffective leaders (Stoner *et al.*, 1995; Akpakpan, 2012). The comparisons showed that:

1. Those who emerged as leaders possessed no distinctive traits from those who were not leaders, and
2. Leaders have no unique distinguishing traits from ineffective leaders.

These findings wilted confidence in the trait theory and caused the attention of researchers to shift from the trait theory to the investigation of the behaviour of effective and ineffective leaders. In investigating the behaviours of effective and ineffective leaders, researchers sought to understand the personal characteristics that explained leaders' effectiveness and ineffectiveness.

Some of the characteristics identified by researchers as primary factors for effective leadership were:

1. Leadership motivation – the desire to want to lead,
2. Self-confidence – a feeling or consciousness of one's power; the quality or state of being convinced,
3. Drive – the desire to put in great efforts in doing something (carrying out tasks) to achieve goals; constant endeavouring for improvement,
4. Ambition – a desire to achieve a particular end,
5. Tenacity – persistent in seeking something valued or desired,
6. Initiative – energy or aptitude displayed in the initiation of actions,
7. Enterprise – readiness to engage in daring or trying action - a systemic purposeful activity,
8. Integrity – firm adherence to a code of especially moral or active values,
9. Empathy – being sensitive and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts and experiences of others.

The researchers observed that ineffective leaders have a dearth of the above personality characteristics. They also observed that the above qualities were not all hereditary and that they could be learned, mastered, and executed by people who did not have all or some of them. Thus, leaders could be developed (Stoner *et al.,* 1995; Akpakpan, 2012). The Behavioural Theory of Leadership is the prevailing theory in contemporary politics and economies. It is the platform on which organizations and countries carry out leadership training programs. It is the behavioural theory of leadership that gave vent to this gathering.

1. Essential Qualities and Characteristics of Effective Leadership

There are basic, essential qualities and characteristics embedded in effective leadership. According to Munroe (2005), they include:

- Vision - the capacity to see beyond one's natural eyes; it is a picture of purpose.
- Wisdom - the capacity to apply knowledge effectively,
- Decision making - the ability to acknowledge the consequences of one's actions, and make sound decisions without fear; a willingness to fail rather than avoid responsibility,
- A positive attitude - the ability to see people and situations positively,
- Courage - the ability not to be controlled or paralyzed by fear; the effective management of uncertainty,
- High energy - strength and stamina to work hard and not be worn down,
- Personal warmth - a manner and attitude that draws people,
- Humility - being in touch with oneself, accepting oneself,
- Righteous anger - a capacity to resist and stand against injustice and abuse,
- Integrity- consistency in one's words and actions; trustworthiness; a true character,
- Responsibility – It is an ability to always come through; a lack of excuses; job relegated means job done,
- A good self-image (self-esteem) - feeling good about self, others, and life,
- Friendship - the capacity to welcome and embrace others without friction,
- Mental horsepower - the ability to keep learning as the job expands,
- Authority - a highly positive influence over others,
- Inspirational power - the ability to communicate one's passion to others,

- Sense of humor - the ability to laugh at oneself and life and to not take life too seriously,
- Resilience - the ability to bounce back when problems arise,
- Track record- experience and success in previous situations,
- Great desire (passion) – a hunger for growth and personal development,
- Self-discipline- a willingness to 'pay the price' and handle success,
- Creativity – the ability to see solutions and fix problems,
- Flexibility - not afraid of change; fluid; flows with growth,
- Sees 'big picture'- able to look beyond personal interests and see a global view,
- Initiative- the ability to discern what needs to be done and commence action,
- Executive ability- the ability to get things done; the drive to finish an assignment.

2. Felicity and an Effective Leader

For a leader to be effective, he/she needs to be spirited, that is, full of energy, animation, and courage. Spiritedness becomes stronger if accompanied by felicity. A leader as much as possible should avoid 'anger'. He/she should be empathetic. He/she should be commiserative. A happy and pathetic leader will be filled with:

- The spirit of resilience - the ability to see failure as temporary and a necessary step to success,
- Spirit of courage - the ability to transform one's fear into a motivator for action and change,
- Spirit of patience - a belief in the potential of change and the ability to wait for it,
- Spirit of compassion - a sensibility to the worth of others,
- Spirit of self-value - a belief in one's importance to one's environment, organization, state and to the world,
- Spirit of self-confidence - a trust in one's inherent abilities,
- Spirit of perseverance - the ability never to give up or surrender to the context of a situation,
- Spirit of strategic thinking - ability to plan rather than panic,
- Spirit of time management - the conscious application of time to goals,
- The spirit of high tolerance for diversity - a belief in the beauty and strength of variety,

- The spirit of self-competition - never comparing oneself to others but only with what one has been or done before (Munroe 2005).

The United Nations Working Group on Leadership (UNWGL, 2017) listed eight essential elements of effective leadership.

First, it is norm-based, that is, it is grounded on the constitution of the organization or country; and 'bound to promote human rights, peace and security, humanitarian principles, economic and social progress and development'.

Second, it is principled, 'defending its norms and standards and their application without discrimination, fear or favour even – especially – in the face of pressure and push-back from powerful actors. It seeks out and promotes evidence over prejudice and popular assumptions for the basis of its work'.

Third, it is personnel and stakeholders inclusive irrespective of age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, grade, contractual status, and other personal characteristics. It means rejecting discrimination in all forms, embracing diversity as a strength, and practising cultural and gender sensitivity".

Fourth, it is accountable, mutually within the system and to beneficiaries and the public beyond. This means that even as leaders ensure accountability from others, they equally accept their accountability …they recognize that their ultimate account is to the people serve…"

Fifth, it is multidimensional, integrated, and engaged across pillars – peace and security, human rights, and development; and functions – humanitarian, security, political, development, and environmental functions.

Sixth, it is transformational …it requires a focus on redefining approaches to partnership-building strategy and systems thinking It is heavily reinforced by attitudinal and behavioural adjustments, by development of leadership capabilities, and by strong vision and leadership for change.

Seventh, it is collaborative **…**it requires new behaviours that strengthen collaboration within and beyond traditional organizational boundaries… Leaders should be able to scope constituencies, opportunities and tipping points for progress that harness the latest technological advances of the scientific and technical community, collaborative system thinking and enterprising partnerships with both traditional and non-traditional partners.

Eight, it is self-applied, that is, modeled in our (human) behaviour. Leaders are expected not just to preach principles but to live them.

3. Concepts of Value of a Good and Effective Leader

A good and effective leader will place value on the following concepts (Munroe 2005; pp 283-284; Heward-Mills, 2011: pp.104 – 108):

- Accountability
- Achievement
- Continuous improvement
- Continuous learning
- Cooperation
- Courage
- Courtesy
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Dignity
- Empowerment
- Fairness
- Faithfulness
- Generational planning
- Goal orientation
- Hard work
- Honour
- Honesty
- Love
- Loyalty
- No compromise
- Persistence
- Professionalism
- Promise keeping
- Punctuality
- Quality
- Reliability
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Service to others
- Steadiness
- Teamwork
- Trust

4. **Human Resources Management: Highlights**

Human resource management is organizing, coordinating and managing an organization's employees to carry out an organization's mission, vision and goals. This connotes the arts and science of leadership – the systematic and objective ways of carrying out tasks to achieve goals. Human resources management has six basic functions, which are:

- Recruiting, selecting and hiring personnel,
- Job design and analysis,
- Training and developing workers,
- Compensating – maintaining reward and penalty system,
- Maintaining the workforce,
- Developing and maintaining strategies for dealing with employee's association, (Antai, Nd….: 18 -19; *https;//www.coursera.org.articles,* March 2024).

5. **Effective Leadership: Implications for Human Resource Management**

From the six basic functions of human resources management, we shall see the requisiteness of effective leadership in the functionality of human resources management. Let us briefly consider each of the functions of human resources management.

(a) Recruiting, Selecting and Hiring Personnel

Recruitment is a primary function of human resources management. Human resources management helps to source and identify the ideal candidates for interview and screening. The aim is to select and employ the best-qualified candidates who will carry out assigned tasks to achieve the goals of the organization. Identifying, interviewing, screening, selecting and employing the best-qualified candidates for an organization are the functions of effective personnel leadership.

(b) Job Design and Job Analysis

Job design and job analysis is another function of human resource management. Job design involves job description and responsibilities for each employee. Job analysis involves describing the job requirements, that is, what the employees are required to do in their tasks to achieve the goals of the organization. Job design and job analysis are tasks that can be carried out by personnel executives who are ambitious, enterprising, tenacious and zealous – qualities of effective leadership.

(c) Training and Developing Workers (Maximizing Employees Potentials)

This is one basic goal that personnel executives carry out from time to time. Human resource Management thinks of the type of training that will bring out the potential of the workers. The human resource management l organizes training for workers to develop them for immediate and future tasks to achieve the goals of an organization. This also is a function that can be carried out successfully by effective personnel leadership.

(d) Maintaining the Workforce

After recruiting and employing, the organization must ensure that the workers are not lured by other organizations that offer better conditions of service. To maintain the workforce, a conducive working environment and service conditions must have been established and maintained. These tasks can be carried out only by an effective Leadership of an organization.

(e) Compensating – Maintaining Reward and Penalty System

This function of human resources management involves the developing and maintaining of an organization's reward system which involves encouraging and compensating and sharing part of the organization's profits with workers. This helps to keep workers from being lured by competing organizations. Essien E. and Essien F (2015; 113) observed that reward maintenance has made organizations attractive with the resultant effect of an increase in net enrolment relative to rural areas in Nigeria. Also, undisciplined workers who do not comply with the rules, norms and regulations of the organization should be duly disciplined. A compromising leadership cannot perform this function. Only an effective leadership can do this.

(f) Developing and Maintaining Strategies to Deal with Workers' Associations

In many organizations, workers are loyal to their organizations as well as to their professional associations and trade unions. Professional associations and trade unions have great influence - positive and negative - on their members. For instance, during strikes, workers are directed by their respective unions and associations to abstain from duties. This is a negative influence that reduces workers' productivity. So, effective leadership must find a way of maintaining good relationships with the workers' associations to avoid a drop in productivity (https://go-better.com/blog/hrm-functions/).

CONCLUSION

The paper highlights essential qualities and characteristics of effective leadership, the felicity of an effective leader, the value of an effective leader and the implications of effective leadership and human resources management on organisations' perfomamnce. Human resources constitute the primary resources of every organization. Human resources management is essential for the growth and expansion of an organization. For effective performance of all managerial functions of human resources management, effective leadership is requisite.

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