

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP: A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Leadership and good governance are crucial to realizing any giant stride taken in pursuit of development anywhere in the world, Nigeria is not an exception. However, leadership is a reflection of characters, which include but not limited to knowledge, vision, courage, openness, accountability, determination, transparency, uprightness, motivation and patriotism put in place by office holders to lead their people and followers so as to achieve reasonable and positive societal development. It is also important to note that a great deal must be between the leader and its follower which will be explained in details. This study took a critical look at leadership and how it can influence development in our country and also argues that ineffective leadership is at the centre of Nigeria's under development and opines that effective leadership can be used to achieve political stability and engender growth and development of the nation. This study adopted the theoretical analytical approach as its methodology and finds out that there is imbalance in leadership roles that needs to be corrected for effective development both in government and other spheres of life. The paper recommends amongst others that Nigeria should adopt leadership models that can lead to optimal human resource productivity to achieve the much desired development in the country and also introduce the spirit of mentoring to the future generation.

KEY WORDS: Leaders, Leadership, Development, Developing Economies.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The trouble with Nigeria as Achebe (1983) rightly observed is simply the failure of leadership. You may have the word manager in your job title, but find out that leadership is talked about as something beyond managing and even more desirable. In the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) there is a slogan: “manage well, lead more”, although they overlap and are linked. But a leader can be described as anybody that can influence others to perform beyond their formal responsibility.

Omolayo (2005) describes leadership as an essential oil that keeps the wheel of government working without any difficulty. According to him, leadership makes the difference between success and failure in a country. It also involves giving direction to citizens who are the critical assets of the nation.

2.0 CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP

A leader can also be seen as one or more people who selects, equips, trains and influences one or more followers who have diverse gifts, abilities and skills and focuses the followers to the organization’s mission and objectives causing the followers to willingly and enthusiastically extend spiritual, emotional and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives. Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training and experience; these do not come naturally, but are acquired through working and studying to improve their leadership skills. Leadership is also seen as a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leaders carry out these processes by applying their leadership attributes, such as belief, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills. Although your position as a manager, supervisor, leader etc. gives you the authority, this power does not make you a leader; it simply makes

you the boss. Leadership differs in that because it makes the follower want to achieve high goals, rather than simply bossing people around.

In contemporary Nigeria, effective leadership is a prime value and “public good” but yet the most elusive in an increasingly changing and globalized world of today, leadership is the most visible aspect of management with its potential of transforming the workforce into a willing and winning team with the appropriate synergy to actualize collectively determined corporate objective. Furthermore, effective leadership is vital for organizational performance. Leadership involves:

- Establishing a clear vision
- Sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly
- Providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision and
- Coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stake holders

All of these are being administered by a good leader and it is important to re-iterate here that a leader steps up in times of crisis and is able to think and act creatively in difficult situations. The recent fall of governments in several African countries, the exposure of corruption and unethical activities among political leaders and the covert conspiracies of government betraying their own people is evidence that this lack of quality leadership is affecting every sphere of our lives (Munroe 1984). It is in this regard that we, as stewards of this present age, must face the challenges of identifying, developing, training and raising a generation of leaders who would secure the future for our children and our generation yet unborn.

According to Graig (2005) leadership is defined as a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary

participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals, He classified these conceptions into four primary definitional themes, they are;

- **Leadership is about what you are:** This definitional theme focuses in leader traits and attributes and is one of the oldest ways of conceptualizing leadership. This emphasis is in identifying the characteristics that define natural or born leaders,
- **Leadership is about how you act:** This perfective leadership is defined as the exercise of influence or power to identify leaders; we need to determine who is influencing whom.
- **Leadership is about what you do:** This definitional thread focuses on the role that leaders play.
- **Leadership is about how you work with others:** This definitional theme emphasise collaboration.

FACTORS IN LEADERSHIP

There are four major factors in leadership

- **Follower:** Different people require different styles of leadership for example a new hire requires more supervision than an experienced employee. A person who lacks motivation requires a different approach than are with a high degree of motivation. You must know your people; the fundamental starting point is having a good understanding of human nature, such as needs, motivation. You must come to know your employees' know and do attribute.
- **Leader:** You must have an honest understanding of which you are what you know, and what you can do. Also, note that it is the followers, not the leaders who determine if a leader is successful. If they do not trust or lack confidence in their leader then they will be uninspired. To be successful you have to convince your follower, not yourself or your superiors, that you are worthy of being followed.

- **Communication:** You lead through two-way communication. Much of it is nonverbal. For instance, when you “set the example”, that communicates to your people that you would not ask them to perform anything that you would not be willing to do. What and how you communicate either builds or harms the relationship between you and your employees.
- **Situation:** All are different what you do in one situation will not always work in another. You must use your judgement to decide the best course of action and the leadership style needed for each situation. For example, you may need to confront an employee for inappropriate behaviour, but if the confrontation is too late too early, too harsh or too weak, then the results may prove ineffective.

3.0 CONCEPT OF DEVELOPING ECONOMIES & DEVELOPMENT.

There are significant social and economic differences between developed and developing economies. Many of the underlying causes of these differences are rooted in the long history of development of such nations which include social, cultural and economic variables, historical and political elements, international relations, and geographical factors. According to the United Nation (UN), a developing economy is an economy with a relatively low standard of living, undeveloped industrial base, and moderate to low Human Development Index (HDI). The index is a comparative measure of poverty, literacy, education, life expectancy and other factors for countries worldwide. Developing nations are the low, lower middle or upper middle incomes. Common characteristics of developing countries are low levels of living characterized by low income, inequality, poor health and inadequate education.

There are some salient features of developing countries that describes developing economies, they include but not limited to:

- Low per-capital income

- Low levels of human capital
- High levels of poverty and under-nutrition
- Higher population growth rates
- Predominance of agriculture and low levels of industrialization.
- Low level of urbanization but rapid rural to urban migration
- Dominance of informal sector
- Under developed labour, financial, and other market

Development as a concept is a victim of definitional pluralism. It is a difficult word to define. This is because the word development'' tend to be relative in nature. Gboyega (2003) captures development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in material wellbeing of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not imperil the future. Development also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced.

4.0 LEADERSHIP MODELS

Leadership models help us to understand what make leaders act the way they do. The idea is not to lock you into a type of behaviour discussed in the model, but to realize that every situation calls for a different approach or behaviour to be taken. Two models will be discussed the four framework approach and the managerial grid.

Four framework approach:

In the four framework approach leaders display leadership behaviours in one of four types of framework: structural, human resource, political or symbolic. The style can either be effective or ineffective, depending upon the chosen behaviour in certain situations.

- **Structural framework:** In an effective leadership situation the leader is a social architect whose leadership style is analysis

and design. While in an effective leadership situation, the leader is a petty tyrant whose leadership style is details. Structural leaders focus in structure, strategy, environment, implementation, experimentation and adaptation

- **Human Resource Framework:** In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a catalyst and servant whose leadership style is support, advocacy and empowerment. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a pushover, whose leadership style is abdication and fraud. Human resource leaders believe in people and communicate that belief; they are visible and accessible; they empower, increase participation, support, share information, and move decision making down into the organization.
- **Political Framework:** In an effective leadership situation the leader is an advocate, whose leadership style is coalition and building while in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a hustler, whose leadership style is manipulation. Political leaders clarify what they want and what they can get; they access the distribution of power and interest, they build linkages to other stakeholders, use persuasion first, and then use negotiation and coercion only if necessary.
- **Symbolic Framework:** In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a prophet, whose leadership style is smoke and mirrors. Symbolic leaders view organization as a stage or theatre to play certain roles and give impressions; these leaders use symbols to capture attention; they try to frame experience by providing plausible interpretations of experiences, they discover and communicate a vision.

Managerial Grid:

The Blake and Mouton managerial grid (1985) uses two axes "concern for people" is plotted using the vertical axis "concern for task" is along the horizontal axis. Most people fall somewhere near the middle of the two axis. But by going to the extremes, that is people whose scores fall on the far end of the scales, we come up with four types of leaders.

- Authoritarian (9 on task, 1 on people)
- Team leader (1 on task, 9 on people)
- Country club (1 on task, 9 on people)
- Impoverished (1 on task, 1 on people)

Authoritarian leader (high task, low relationship)

People who get this rating are very much task oriented and are hard on their worker (autocratic). There is little or no allowance for cooperation or collaboration. Heavily task oriented people display these characteristic. They are very strong on schedules; they expect people to do what they are told without questioning or debate; when something goes wrong they tend to focus on who is to blame rather than concentrate on exacting what is wrong and how to prevent it; they are intolerant of what they see as dissent (it may be someone's creativity) so it is difficult for their subordinates to contribute or develop.

Country club leader (Low Risk, High Relationship)

This person uses predominantly reward power to maintain discipline and to encourage the team to accomplish its goals. Conversely, they are almost incapable of employing the more prentice coercive and legitimate power. This inability results from fear that using such powers could jeopardize relationships with the other team members.

Team leader (high task, high relationship)

This type of person leads positive example and endeavours to foster a team environment in which team members can reach their highest potential, both as team members and as people. They

encourage the team to reach team goals as effectively as possible, while also working tirelessly to strengthen the bonds among the various members. They normally form and lead some of the most productive teams.

Impoverished leader (Low Task, Low Relationship)

A leader who uses a “delegate and disappear” management style. Since they are not committed to either task accomplishment or maintenance, they essentially allow their team to do whatever it wishes and prefer to detach themselves from the team process by allowing the team to suffer from a series of power struggle.

5.0 LEADERSHIP STYLE:

There is the general belief that the effectiveness of job performance in any organization depends largely on how much such organization are structured and managed often, failure or poor performance of public institution is blamed on inefficient administration and management. Skills or dimensions commonly ascribed to “organizational behaviour” are motivation, leadership, communication, conflict management, delegation, decision making and team building. What this implies is that an organization is likely to function effectively if the principles and practices of leadership, motivation, decision making, conflict management, delegation and team building are properly applied in its day-to-day functioning.

The essentials of leadership role:

There are some essentials and inherent facts or pre-requisite a person must possess before he can perform a leadership role in a group. Three of these are:

- i. Ability to influence others
- ii. The leader must be a member of the group and
- iii. A common goal must exist at the point of influence

Different people will have different attitudes to different things and situation. The same is true of leadership. This different attitude or

perception in exercising leadership function is termed styles of leadership. The generally recognised styles of leadership are authoritarian, democratic and Laissez-faire.

Autocratic Leadership

The autocratic leader centralizes power and decision making around him. He structures the work situation and expects subordinates to do what they are told. The leader determines all policies, activities and goals of the group or organization. He takes no part in the work except when conducting meetings, telling others what to do. Members of the group led by an autocrat are usually uncertain about what to do and only act on what they are told to do. The major advantage of autocratic leader is that decision can be taken quickly, because only one person decides for the group. The major disadvantages are:

- i. Dependency
- ii. Lack of initiative
- iii. Slowdown on group activities especially when the leader is not around and
- iv. Fear and conflict develop easily.

Democratic Leadership

The democratic or participative leader is one in which the leader shares with the group members, policies, decision making, planning and execution of activities. Subordinates are encouraged to express their ideas and suggestions in decision making. The leader helps to develop a feeling of responsibility on the part of every member of the group gives constructive criticisms and praises the members when the group achieves a set objective. This type of leadership style is considered better for many reasons including:

- i. High productivity and quality of work
- ii. High morale for both individual and as a group
- iii. Sense of group feeling and

- iv. Group members feel secured and satisfied to belong to other personal qualities of a democratic leader.
- i. He gives clear instructions based on good decisions
- ii. He sets good examples for his colleagues
- iii. Decides on fact and not hear say
- iv. He keeps good records
- v. He is a leader and not a “boss”

However, situation may arise when a leader may need to apply different leadership styles.

Laissez-faire Leadership

The Laissez-faire leader is one who believes that the group members can get on without him. He gives minimum guidance, and remains in the background; he seems to have no confidence in himself. The result of this style brings about ineffective leadership.

6.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many leadership theories but we understand that the groupings of these theories can either be the early or traditional theory and the more contemporary, situational viewpoints. Although it should be reiterated here that there is no one best way to lead. This is because leadership styles vary according to situations and is usual to find managers who combine two or more styles and use them on different occasions. This implies that leaders must avoid the “permanence fallacy of leadership”. It implies that leaders at every point in time will always operate on a flexible attitude as cases emanates.

In discussing leadership style Douglas Macgregor, late professor of industrial management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in his book, “the humanised of enterprise, offers two basic assumption called theory X and theory Y. the theory X is based on the following set of implicit assumptions about human native and human behavior

- ❖ The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if possible.
- ❖ Because of the human characteristic of dislike of work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed or threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort toward the achievement of organizational objectives.
- ❖ The average human being prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility and wants security above all. Theory Y finds its roots in recently accumulated and emerging knowledge about human behaviour. It is based on the following assumptions.
- ❖ The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest.
- ❖ External control and threat of punishment are not the only means for bringing the effort toward organizational objectives, individuals will exercise self-control in the service of objectives to which they are committed
- ❖ Commitment to objectives depends on the rewards associated with their achievement the most important rewards are those that satisfy needs for self-respect and personal improvement
- ❖ The average human being learns, under proper conditions not only to accept but also to seek responsibility
- ❖ The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in the solution of organizational problems is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the population among both men and women.
- ❖ Under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentialities of the average human being are only partially realized.

McGregor's analysis was that the ability for employees to discover goals consistent with those of the organization is the essence of leadership

In view of this Anugwon (2002) concludes that the job of management is therefore easy and straight forward. He posits that what management needs, is to factor organizational goals to be in relation with that of the individual. In this wise saying “the survival of the organization becomes the survival of the worker, the progress of the worker and the death of the organization goes *pari-passu* with the death of the individual workers self-actualization (Anugwon 2002), what theory Y says is that ‘work is as natural as play or rest and whether it will be seen as a source of satisfaction and hence, carried out voluntarily or a source of punishment to be avoided, depend on controllable factors (Onyeonoru,2005).

6.1 LEADERSHIP AND STABILITY OF THE ECONOMY IN NIGERIA

Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth. The resurgence of this desire is not only explicable through their political policies alone; but also it is reflected in the social and economic policies (Omolayo, 2006). Most constituted government in Africa have been undergoing serious and deepening political, economic crisis. These problems generated by political, social and economic instability and the prevalence of ethnic, communal and religious crisis, which have bedevilled Africa, calls our attention to the problems of leadership and governance in the continent. It is important to note that no country has ever achieved meaningful development socially, politically or economically without the input of or effective leadership (Omolayo, 2006)

Becoming the best leader requires a lifelong learning commitment. The reward for your commitment can make tremendous difference for your team, your organization and even the world great leaders ignite passion and energy in others, and they get an inspiring vision for the future they rally people to achieve. To become a leader, we

must challenge ourselves to get even better at leadership skills such as strategic thinking, coaching and mentoring and leading change and teams, while also strengthening our emotional intelligence and our ability to influence through the quality of our relationships and communication.

According to “trait theory” of leadership, the qualities of a good leader include sound of judgement, intelligence, knowledge, good perception of human nature, common sense, a good level of training, dependability, sociability, economic status, self - confidence and ability to appraise situation correctly.

The inference drawn from all of these is that we need to look deep in our leadership structure and give advance of an in depth knowledge of the problems and bring about measures that will provide positive solution which will be discussed herein.

7.0 THE WAY FORWARD

Sociologists have noted that to foster one’s effort is a healthy response to an obstacle for Nigeria and the developing economies to survive as nations in the 21st century; we have to remain vigilant and intensify our efforts in areas of leadership. Firstly as a nation, a leadership ideology in Nigeria politics is imperative. The lack of leadership ideology in Nigeria politics is a problem. As a result, many politicians in Nigeria are known to have forgotten the importance of leadership ideas in politics; however tend to waffle on issues that need expertise. More so, nobody is often held responsible for any policy failure in Nigeria for our politician leaders to behave and be accountable we must device means to hold them responsible for their actions or in-actions to serious issues in the country.

Secondly, change is ubiquitous in any society, practically in that it strives to fulfil human needs. It takes a committed leadership to accomplish a positive change in a society. Although in leadership

as it relates to social change or development is vital to the development of Nigeria at this point in time the importance of a self-critical leadership, good governance and transparency in state activities in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. Leaders in Nigeria and other countries of developing economies must help their people to know how they can be better at their best. Leaders in this nation must activate existing institution and also bring about good follower in pursuit of the society's goals and help redesign such institutions to achieve great result.

Thirdly, a relative good approach like the structured approach to developing leaders which come from various formats is necessary. It may be used independently or combined depending on the organizations goals. Individual skill development programmes are characterized by the assessment of leader's personality, values and behaviours, oftentimes with a 100% feedback assessment to identify the strength and weaknesses of the leader. Coaches are frequently used to delivers feedback at the task level rather than at the personal level, meaning that feedback should be specific to relevant task and directed at that what a leader does rather than who the leader is.

Fourthly, socialization programmerslike the assignment of mentors can orient new or newly promoted leaders towards the vision and values of the organization. Mentors and new leaders can be matched internally and should be selected based on job knowledge and compatibility to establish the mutual trust and respect, vital to mentoring relationships. A mentoring relationship can also help a leader understand the goals and operational style of the organization.

In addition to fulfilling organizational demands for strong leaders, studies suggest that taking the perspective of both the leader and followers are equally necessary for effective leadership development if a leader is unable or unmotivated to develop a

development programme regardless of quality or length, will be ineffective. In these cases coaching and preparing leaders for development may be one solution. Furthermore, it is important to consider follower expectations; reactions towards the leader throughout the development process and what efforts can be put in place to develop strong "followership". Follower expectations and reactions are not only indicators of a leader's success or failure but they can also influence a leader's future development. This suggests that leadership is not just about the leader but is shared and distributed as a result of interaction between the leaders and others.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

In Nigeria, several leadership styles have been experimented such as parliamentary, military dictatorship, democratic system, and rotational system among others. Leadership must not only be selfless but also, the leader must be able to utilize judiciously the resources of the state in providing people-oriented and quality services in the state. By this, leadership must be viewed as service to the people. The government should establish leadership training centres at the 774 local government areas across the country. These training centres should serve as platforms for those wishing to occupy elective positions at all levels. The National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies should be more proactive to equip public functionaries at the state and national levels with requisite training that would ultimately reflect in the formulation and implementation of government policies and programmes in Nigeria. The rule of law must be a cardinal principle of any administration and the leadership in Nigeria. Also, while we retain the leadership role in the sub-region and play a leading role in the continent, the foreign policy direction should be used to propel economic development of our country. Our embassies and high commissions should be re-invented to promote investment and trade.

In conclusion, effective leadership is needed from all the Nigeria's leaders to achieve economic development and enhance development at all spheres of our country. Also, no particular style of leadership is considered as the best, most successful leaders are those who carefully adjust to situations and apply a wide range of interpersonal skills and are able to manage and stimulate followers towards defined objectives in specific situations.

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