



A REVIEW ON THE INFLUENCE OF MANAGERIAL SKILLS OF MANAGERS ON PERFORMANCE OF CORPORATE ORGANIZATIONS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the influence of managerial skills of managers on performance of corporate organizations in Nigeria. The objective of the paper is to examine whether effective managerial skills of managers will lead to increase in the performance of corporate organizations in Nigeria. The paper builds on existing literatures on managerial skills and performance of corporate organizations as bases for the review. It employs both theoretical and empirical papers with the aid of secondary information. Findings revealed that effective managerial skills in the organization would lead to an increase in the performance of employees. The paper concludes that effective and efficient managerial skills of managers are a prerequisite for increased performance in corporate organizations. It therefore recommends that managers at all levels should be well equipped in their areas of specialization, it further recommends that adequate resources should be set aside for the training and retraining of managers from time to time.

KEYWORDS: *Influence, Managerial Skills, Managers, Corporate Organizations, Performance.*

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Every organization strives to enhance the effectiveness through focused attention on managerial effectiveness aimed at helping managers to get best out of their team as well as themselves. Olorisade (2011) argues that every organization exist to accomplish a purpose in a larger society which is usually stated in the form of objective or goal.

Managers may directly influences the workers attitude, interest and change their behavior towards commitment to organizational work and objectives. According to Mintzberg (2010) a manager is everyone who has an influence on others in an organization. The ideas needed to sustain the culture of excellence in management

practices used to imbibe the ethnical standard and technical know-how required for character, learning and professionalism in Management (Ake, 2003).

Management skills are all encompassing essentially necessary for all managers to enable them accomplish the vision and mission of organizations. As they are obligatory ingredients for efficiency and effectiveness in Management, they invariably involve the management of human resources requirement, particularly in selection and appointment of managers as well as continuous training and development.

The human relation skills or interpersonal relation skills have to do with the manager ability in bounding relationship with others. It has to do with the competence about the ability to work with people as well as the manager ability to create harmonious working relationship within an organization that will enhance the job performance of subordinates towards goal attainment. Human relation skills make it possible for the supervisors to impact on the work behavior of the subordinates towards achieving organizational aims. Effectiveness in personal relationship is an indication that the leader is familiar with human behavior in the organization (Abama 2016). As noted by Fatile in Ireland (2015) the prime interpersonal skill of a manager is the ability to communicate effectively. Effective communication therefore, requires the managers to transmit feelings, thoughts, and beliefs with the organization using appropriate medium.

Communication skill should be stressed that communication is best achieved through simple planning and control especially at meetings where conversations need particular care. To ensure an efficient and effective conversation, there are certain considerations that require leadership in organizations to constantly pay attention in the first place, leaders must make sure that intended message sent is received and understood. Secondly, they must exert some control over the flow of the communication. However, learning to listen patiently as well as to speak lucidly are effective communication skills for managers in democratic settings. Those who dismiss these as a mere platitude are already demonstrating an indisposition to listening, the phrase must be trite, but the message is hugely significant for effectiveness as a manager. The skill of listening must be explicitly developed to enable leader hear the suggestion/ information which should launch them to fame and fortune. A manager in a corporate organization must avoid being ambitious. In other words, the manager must be pragmatic rather than philosophical. Thus, words means not what the dictionary says but rather what the speaker intended.

The technical skills have to do with the managers' familiarity with and mastery of a particular job engaged in. this skill is known as the analytical skill because it involves the managers' analytical propensity to adopt the right procedures in

achieving results (North house, 2007). To have technical skill is an indicator that the manager possesses requisite competence and knowledge relating to the activities of the organization. Technical skills are very important for managers in a corporate organization as they have to be proficient in the methods, processes, procedures and techniques in supervising activities of subordinates towards attainment of goals of an organization. Technical skills are very important for any manager in corporate organization as they have to be proficient in the methods, processes, procedures and techniques of service delivery to the general public for the attainment of the goals of the organization.

The conceptual skill has to do with the ability of managers to work with ideas and concepts. As noted by Adeyemo (2012), the conceptual skills showed the managers familiarity with the complexities in the organization and designing a way of fashioning out effective operation towards achieving results. The skill is therefore concerned with the manager ability to impart knowledge to his subordinates. According to Adeyemo (2012), conceptual skills can be achieved through coaching and on job training to develop the administrative potentials of the subordinates, by assigning responsibilities to them.

The ability of corporate managers to impart knowledge to subordinates is an example of conceptual skills, and this can be achieved through “coaching” or on the job training to develop the administrative potential of subordinates. Another excellent way of demonstrating conceptual skills by corporate managers is through trading jobs and lateral movement of people through different functions. Conceptual skills of managers in a corporate organization are prerequisite to attainment of goals of an organization and it is manifested in the leadership skills exhibited by managers. Ross and Gray (2006) found that corporate managers with requisite skills, knowledge and experience are required for administrative effectiveness. Similarly, a corporate manager who had conceptual skill concentrates on the provision of support for his subordinates so that they will be able to put in their best in the performance of their jobs (Hoppey and Mcleskey, 2013).

Supervisory skill of corporate managers’ directly deals with managing both human and material resources towards attainment of the goals of the organization. According to Koontz and Chabra (2005) the supervisory skill of managers’ generally speaking includes planning, organizing, staffing, leading, coordinating and controlling the affairs of the subordinates towards effective utilization of resources for the attainment of organization goals. Ake (2003) opined that supervisory skill of manager has to do with analyzing what has to be done and then deciding who does what with acceptable standard, setting up the reporting relationship among subordinates as well as method of communication, coordination and essential control

of subordinates. Supervisory skill of managers involves getting objective and target to be accomplished because it involves agreeing on objective and target, allocating and delegating responsibility.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section explains the following concepts: human relation skill, communication skill, technical skill, conceptual skill and supervisory skill. These are described as follows:

- a. **Human Relation Skills:** Kamble (2011) described human relation skills as ability to work with other members. Latif (2002) defined human relation skills as the ability to understand oneself, work with others, to understand and motivate others, this includes developing self awareness, managing personal stress, coaching, and counseling, motivating, managing conflicts and empowering others. Human relation skills are also called interpersonal skills. It is an ability to work with people; it helps the managers to understand, communicate and work with others. It also helps the managers to lead, motivate and develop team spirit. Kamal (2012), described human relation skills as the knowledge about and ability to work with people. Katz (1995) opined that human relation skills are “people skills”. They are the abilities that help to work effectively with subordinates, peers and superiors to accomplish the organizations goals. A human relation skill allows a manager to assist group members in working cooperatively as a group to achieve common goals. Katz (1995) also submitted that human relation skills means been aware of one’s own perspective on issues and, at the same time being aware of the perspective of others. Managers with human relation skills adapt their own ideas to those of others. Furthermore, they create an atmosphere of trust where employees can feel comfortable and secure and where they can feel encouraged to become involved in the planning of things that will affect them. Katz (1995) went further to say that being a manager with human relation skills means being sensitive to the needs and motivations of others and taking into account others needs in one’s decision making. In short, human relation skills are the capacity to get along with others as you go about your work.
- b. **Communication Skills:** Kamble (2011) defined communication skills as the ability to convey the message effectively to subordinates. Communication skills for managers are an important factor for effective management in an organization. The manager needs to communicate knowledge, instructions,

purpose, goal, mission and vision of the organization to the employees. The communication includes verbal and non verbal skills. The manager must be able to communicate the plans and policies to the employees, similarly, he must listen and solve the problems of the employees, and he must encourage a free flow of communication in the organization.

Nebo, Nwankwo and Okonkwo (2015) argued that communication is a means of bringing about change, it is the main stream of any organization growth. Communication is a process of transmitting information from one person to another. According to Stephen (2011), communication is a critical factor in directing and mobilizing the workforce towards the accomplishment of the organizational goals or objectives. Wilson (1997) opined that communication can be seen as a reduction of uncertainty thus communication is an exchange of meaning. Asamu (2014) pointed out that the beginning of the universe was the beginning of communications, there was no beginning which was devoid of communication. Thus communication facilitates transformation of human society, communication is a many sided phenomenon that means different things to different people. It is a process or a means of accessing the minds of thought of another.

Similarly, Obamiro (2008) defines communication as the exchange of information between a sender (source) and a receiver (destination) so that it is receive, understood and leads to action. Folarin (2003) defines communication as any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another. Communication is a process by which any person or group shares and impact information with/ to another person (or group) so that both people (and group) clearly understood one another. Soola (2000).

- c. **Technical Skill:** according to Kamal (2012) technical skill is knowledge about and proficiency in a specific type of work or activity. It includes competency in a specialized area, analytical ability and the ability to use appropriate tools and techniques. Katz (1995) explains technical skill using the following examples: in a computer software company, technical skill may include knowing software language and programming, the company software products and how to make these products function for clients. Similarly, in an accounting firm, technical skill may include understanding and having the ability to apply generally accepted accounting principles to a client audit. In both examples above, technical skills involves a hands on activity with a basic product or process within an organization. Technical skills play an essential role in producing the actual products a company is designed to produce.

- d. **Conceptual Skill:** Conceptual skill is the ability to visualize the organization as a whole. It includes Analytical, Creative and Initiative skills, Kamble (2011) defines conceptual skills as the ability to understand the complexities of the overall organization, his ability to think in abstract, analyze work situation and his creative and innovative ability to access the environment, while Latif (2002) describe the conceptual skills as understanding of how different components of the business are related to each other and the business as a whole. It helps the manager to identify the causes of the problems and not the symptoms. It helps to fix goals for the whole organization and to plan for every situation. Conceptual skills are mostly required by the managers of the organization because they spend more time in planning, organizing and problem solving. Kamal (2012) argued that, conceptual skills are the ability to work with ideas and concepts. A manager with conceptual skills is comfortable talking about ideas that shape the organization and the intricacies involved. He or She is good at putting the company's goals into words and can understand and express the economic principles that affect the company. According to Kamal (2012) conceptual skills is most important at the top management levels. In fact, when upper level managers do not have strong conceptual skills, they can jeopardize the whole organization.
- e. **Supervisory Skill:** This is the exercise of direction and control in management to achieve desired objectives and employee satisfaction. The supervisor is responsible for establishing the work environment. Positive work environment leads to improved performance and increased job satisfaction. Supervisors who afford employees the opportunity to get involved in decision making, and in matters that require attention on the job ensure that the work environment is positive. Research indicates that supervisors who make involvement as part of their supervising role have better performing employees.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper focused on two theories for the purpose of this review, the theories are System Theory and Scientific Management Theory and discussed as follows:

The System Theory.

A system can be defined as an entity, which is a coherent whole such that a boundary is perceived around it in order to distinguish internal and external elements and to identify input and output relating to and emerging from the entity. A system theory is

hence a theoretical perspective that analyzes a phenomenon seen as a whole and not as simply the sum of elementary parts. The focus is on the interactions and on the relationships between parts in order to understand an entity's organization functioning and outcomes. This perspective implies a dialogue between holism and reductionism. Systems can be found in nature, in science, in society, in an economic context, and within information systems.

A distinctive characteristic of systems theories is that it developed simultaneously across various disciplines and that scholars working from a systems theory perspective build on the knowledge and concepts developed within other disciplines. Examples include natural and ecological sciences (organic aspects, homeostasis and equifinality; Hannan and Freeman, 1977), chemical and biological disciplines (autopoietic aspects; Maturana and Varela, 1975).

Aristotle's claim that knowledge is derived from the understanding of the whole and not that of the single parts (Aristotle's Holism), researchers have been struggling with systems and parts in terms of their contents and their relative dynamics. This historic effort evolved during the last century into so-called "systems theory" Systems theory is an interdisciplinary theory about every system in nature, in society and in many scientific domains as well as a framework with which one can investigate phenomena from a holistic approach (Capra, 1997). Systems thinking comes from the shift in attention from the part to the whole (Checkland, 1997), considering the observed reality as an integrated and interacting Unicom of phenomena where the individual properties of the single parts become indistinct. In contrast, the relationships between the parts themselves and the events they produce through their interaction become much more important, with the result that "system elements are rationally connected" (Luhmann, 1990) towards a shared purpose (Cristina, 2010).

Systems theory encompasses a wide field of research with different conceptualizations and areas of focus (e.g. Maturana and Varela, 1975). Specifically, within management and marketing, a number of authors and scholars have adopted – implicitly or explicitly – a vision of organizations as systems with the aim of analyzing the relationship between organizations and their environment.

SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT THEORY

Frederick Winslow Taylor was an American inventor and engineer that applied his engineering and scientific knowledge to management and developed a theory called scientific management theory. His two most important books on his theory are shop management (1903) and the principles of scientific management (1911). F.W. Taylor's is regarded as the father of scientific management theory.

F.W. Taylor's scientific management theory can be seen in nearly all modern manufacturing firms and other types of businesses. His imprint can be found in production, planning production control, process design, quality control, cost accounting and even economics. If you understand the principle of scientific management, you will be able to understand how manufacturers produce their goods and manage their employees. You will also understand the importance of quantitative analysis, or the analysis of data and numbers to improve production effectiveness and efficiency.

PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT THEORY

In broad terms, scientific management theory is the application of industrial engineering principles to create a system where waste is avoided, the process and the method of production is improved and goods are fairly distributed. This improvement serves the interest of employers, employees, and society in general. Taylor's theory can be broken down into five (5) general principles of management.

- a. Replacing opinion and rule of thumb which is based on custom and experience with science i.e. science and not the rule of thumbs leads to efficient operation by outlining the science of each job through carefully organized and systematic analysis of the job and then find one best way of achieving the task.
- b. Careful and systematic selection and employment of employees.
- c. The subsequent development and training of workers.
- d. The division of work responsibility with management doing the planning and the workers doing the execution as it suits them best (specialization) with a resulted increase in efficiency.
- e. Employees must be motivated using economic incentives. Thus Taylor put forward the piece rate scheme as a proper way of compensating workers and boosting productivity in the work place.

Taylor approached the study of management quantitatively through the collection and analysis of data. For example, he and his followers performed motion studies to improve efficiency. He analyzed the motion required to complete a task, device a way to break the task down into component motions, and found the most efficient and effective manner to do the work. The aim of the scientific management theory is to find out one best way of performing a task.

Despite the appropriateness of these principles and the theory generally, today it has not gone uncriticized. It was argued by critiques as follows:

- a. Increased productivity per worker would create unemployment.

- b. Since scientific management was an outgrowth of engineering, it was generally viewed as focusing on the technical aspects of management of work without sufficient attention to the effects on human beings.
- c. It generated a “carrot and stick” approach to the motivation of employee by enabling pay to be geared tightly to output alone and no other criteria (e.g seniority).
- d. Scientific managers are chiefly interested in management of organization and neglected attention to the upper levels or general management.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW:

Communication Skills:

Nebo, Chidiebere S. Nwankwo, precious Ngozi and okonkwo Rita ifeoma (2015) conducted a research on the role of effective communication and organizational performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study adopted a survey research method and relied much on secondary and primary data. The population of the study was drawn from the academic and non- academic staff of the university, the population comprises of 170 non- academic and 130 academic staff. A sample size of 166 was determined using Taro Yamane techniques and stratified random sampling. The findings revealed that effective communication is the remedy to effective and efficient management of performance of employees in an organization. Similarly, Shonubi, A.O, Akintaro, A.A. (2016) conducted a study on the impact of effective communication on organizational performance. The study was based on series of empirical- studies of communication and organizational performance. The study showed that there is a positive relationship between effective communication and organizational performance. The study recommends the following: consideration should be given to the content and tone of the message before communicating, there should be better understanding of the physical and human environment when communicating, all stakeholders should be encourage to be good listeners etc. Asamu, Festus femi (2014), conducted a research on the impact of communication of workers performance in selected organizations in Lagos state, Nigeria. The study reveals that a relationship exists between effective communication and workers performance, productivity and commitment.

Human Relation Skills

Kamal, G. (2012) conducted a research on investigation of the effect of management skills (technical, human, cognitive) on productivity of human resources in Iran. The

study employed a survey research method with the use of simple linear regression method for analyzing the result. 100 questionnaires were distributed to the staff Islamic Azad University of urmia city, but only 66 questionnaires were used for the final analysis. The study found that management skills (technical, human, cognitive) have a significant and positive influence on productivity of human resources in Iran. Similarly, Olorisade, G.O. (2011), conducted a research on an influence of managerial skills of middle level managers on organizational effectiveness, in Nigerian colleges of education. The study employed survey research method with the use of a questionnaire. The population of the study consisted of deans, head of department, and academic staff members of Nine colleges of education. The sample size consisted of 461 academic staff members randomly sampled from the colleges. The study reveals that middle level managers demonstrated requisite managerial skills in the college of education. The study concluded that managerial skills of middle level managers had a very low influence on academic staff research/publications and on community service effectiveness. The study therefore recommends that middle level managers in college of education need to employ their technical and impersonal skills to encourage academic staff improve on the quality of classroom, teaching/ learning by exposing students to research findings in their chosen fields

Supervisory Skills

Ismail Azman, Lucy loh ching sieng, Mohammed Na'eim Ajis and Noor Faizzahh Dollah (2009), conducted a study on the relationship between supervisors role and job performance in the work place training program on job performance in a state library in Sarawak, Malaysia. The study adopted a survey research method, the population of the study was 91 respondents, and data was collected through the use of a questionnaire from employees who have worked in the studied organization. The study found that supervisor support positively and significantly correlated with job performance. The study concluded that supervisor role acts as partially predicting variables in the training program of the organizational sample.

CONCLUSION

Managerial skills of managers towards the performance of corporate organizations in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized; the following conclusions were drawn from the study:

- a. Managers with effective managerial skills carry subordinate or employees along in their day to day activities and this leads to increase productivity.

- b. Managerial skills help managers to judiciously allocate and manage the available resources effectively within the organization.
- c. Managerial skills of managers will help managers to perform the various functions of management effectively towards achieving the objective of the organization.

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