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Why Effective Leadership is Paramount in Organisations

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Abstract

This is a desk study premised on the author's experience as a leader in an education institutional. It was set out with the objective of understanding the role of leaders and what constitutes effective leaders through a Meta-content analysis reviewing various literatures by several researchers on the concept of leadership. The paper finally discussed concepts of leadership in practice, leadership and training and also provided detailed information on how organisations source effective leaders

Introduction

Presented here are the different conceptual perspectives on the subject under investigation. The study succinctly discusses organisations and leaders. Organisations require leaders to guide followers in performing their tasks. Sporting a leader in an organisation is a difficult task. Meta-analysis is used in search for effective leadership (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa and Chan, 2009). It is assumed that the meta-analysis is capable of estimating the impact of leadership intervention on follower's performance using published data although its extent on prediction is not succinctly known (Avolio et al., 2009). Organizations use talent management to achieve their goals of competitive advantage, retention, and increased productivity (Laura, Cynthia, and Sofia, 2013). Bass (1999) posits that leadership is a key driver in altering employees' behaviour. The authors concur with Bass's assertion that leaders are the glue that holds follower and offer them direction to achieve organisational goals. Thus, at no time will the followers perform when the leader refrain from their work of directing, organising, planning and controlling. In a more vivid way, Peterson and Hunt (1997:205) contend that effective leadership is used to draw attention of individuals who take initiatives that are followed by others. Such individual are identified and vested with the responsibility of team leading others.

According to Northouse (2004), effective leadership is a process through which an individual influences a group of other individual to achieve a common objective. Thus, effective leadership is required for goal achievement and this explicates why organisations without effective leadership will not achieve organisational set goals which is common in a number of organisations today. Effective Leadership is a mutual process that persuades followers to achieve organisational goals through changes (Lussier and Achua, 2007). It should be noted the concept of effective leadership has attracted much attention and Barling, Christie, and Hoption (2010) contend that effective leadership, nature and effect is one of the most researched areas in organisational literature. On the other hand, George (2000) argues that by all counts, leadership ranks the most researched and debated topics in organisational science because of its usefulness.

Leadership in practice

Sadeghi, Yadollahi, Baygi and Ghayoomi (2013:1) note that effective leadership involves creating worlds that make people believe this world belongs to them. Effective leaders are individuals in the organization who set the tone and culture (Laura, Cynthia and Sofia, 2013:16). Organisational efficacy is achieved through effective leadership ability to guide and direct followers. Avey, Avolio and Luthans (2011) contend that leader's poses positivity which implies psychological capital and such capital need to be

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cultivated and utilized efficiently. Indeed, Avey et al. (2011) aptly put it that leaders who enact positivity enhance followers' performance and commitment out of which organisational goals are realised. More so, Diltz (1991) posits that effective leadership determines organisational survival and success in future. Therefore, Kelloway (2013) argues that effective leadership is pertinent in predicting employee attitude, performance and motivation and that without such leadership it would prove futile. Bluen (2013:394) aptly point out that effective leaders need to be of high emotional and cultural intelligence, resilient, ethical, good listener and with good supportive family of followers as Kelloway (2013:108) contends that workers emotions are associated with resilience and optimism masterminded by effective leadership. Conversely, Avolio (1999) argues that followers' performance is influenced by effective leadership therefore for the organisation to realise its goals effective leadership is paramount. Kouzes and Posner (1988) conjure that effective leadership breed's trust in the followers which act as glue that holds followers to the leader and compel participation in gaining common vision. Conversely, it is leader's responsibility to ensure followers' are attracted, engaged, motivated and retained in organisation through effective leadership.

How organisations source effective leaders

Organisations get leaders through recruitment and selection. In fact, Singh and Finn (2003) concurs that organisational effectiveness, survival and competiveness depend on its ability to attract and retain effective leaders. Khan (2008) defines recruitment as a process of informing the public that new people are going to be employed and encourage those who qualify to apply. Karsak (2010) hypothesizes that personnel selection determines the input quality of personnel and play a significant role in human resource management. French and Rumbles (2010) posit that recruitment and selection are pivotal in the process of leading, developing and managing people. Dineen and Soltis (2011) argue that the success of an organisation greatly depends on the quality of people it employs. Carless (2009) contends that organisations use psychological testing to aid the selection process. Wolf and Jenkins (2006) argue that psychological testing reduces the legal challenge because of being objective, fair and relevant. Schmidt and Hunter (1998) presented the validity of 19 selection procedures. Kate, Schaffer and Elli (2013) argue that today's organisations experience difficulty in maximising validity and hiring diverse workforce because of inadequate leadership.

The role of leaders in organisations

Figure 1: Leaders construct moral matrix based on three foundations

Source author (2013)

Authority foundation helps legitimize authority of a leader. Liberty foundation helps to make sure followers don't feel oppressed. Loyalty foundation helps form cohesion coalitions (Haidt, 2012). Conversely, leaders create human hives where subordinates live as family. Like it is in the bee hive, where leadership exists having the queen bee hypothesized as the chief executive officer and line managers as bee workers, the same analogy exists in organisations. In the bee hive team work is exercised, all the bee workers carry the bee queen in the event of shifting to another location. The team spirit which

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Fayol coined as **ESPIRIT DE CORPS** is what leaders need to effectively attract, engage, motivate and retain talent. Effective leadership promotes dynamic interactions among all employees and provide visionary trajectory to achieve organisational goals (Northhouse, 2010; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter, 1990).

Effective leadership, reward and remuneration

In global competition within the flat and connected new world, effective leadership should be aware of the importance of attracting best talent. Talents are competed for world over. To attract and retain best talent, effective leadership should design good reward systems. Nienaber and Bussin (2009) contend that leadership should structure total reward systems according to individual preference. They argue that reward structured according to individual preference attracts, retains and motivates employees. Bussin (2013) concur that reward systems are key elements in organisational strategic approach to human resource management in attracting and retaining best talent. Coy and Ewing (2007) argue that there is a formidable challenge in managing talent globally. Overtly, leaders should know that organisational reward system is a strategy of ensuring performance, attracting and retaining high calibre employee (Bluen, 2013:339). Bluen (2013:128) contends that reward types are capable of reducing employee turnover and increase employee morale provides leaders communicate it well to followers.

Leadership and training

Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) argue that leadership is a major issue for many organizations because leaders work through others to achieve organisational goals. Caligiuri (2000) concur that leaders can train followers through contact to perform in organisations. He argues that once leaders are mixed with other cultures they tend to learn their cultural norms to fit in those cultures. Delbecq, House, Sully de Luque, and Quigley (2012) argue that there are Big Five personality traits that enhance learning. Thus, Neirotti and Paolucci (2013) posit that training plays a significant role in allowing the acquisition and the assimilation of new knowledge. Eagly, Schmidt and Van Engen (2003:570) concurs that effective leaders inspire their followers and nurture their ability to contribute to the organisational performance. As a leader, Eagly et al (2003) are actually echoing exactly what leaders do. It is true that once one is branded a leader he is given authority and power but also responsibility to direct followers. The onus of inspiring others (moral legitimacy) rests with him. Effective leaders set goals and plans to achieve the goals, mentor and empower followers (Eagly, Schmidt and Van Engen, 2003).

In the meta-analysis study of leadership style, Eagly et al., (2003) revealed that women and men exhibit different strength in terms of performance. Female leaders possess leadership behaviours that are effective compared to their male counter parts (Eagly, Schmidt and Van Engen, 2003:587). Consequently, leaders need to transform and develop their followers into leaders over time (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, and Chan, 2009). Such practices ensure continuity of good leaders in organisation. Conversely, Caligiuri and Tarique (2009) argue that leaders should be extroverts with greater number of high contact across cultures. Caligiuri and Tarique (2009) emphasises that cross cultural leadership development improves individual ability to produce the culturally appropriate skills and behaviours. Hanna, Crittenden, and Crittenden (2013) contend that followers learn more of their behaviour by observation and mimic of their leaders. Thus, social learning theory enables effective global leader's development (Caligiuri and Tarique, 2009:338). However, leaders should not simply assume that what is true of one type developmental experience will hold for all (Suutari, 2002). More so, Suutari (2002) contends that global leadership research is still in it infant stage. Indeed, Caligiuri and Tarique (2009:337) argue that literature available on global leadership is more normative than empirical, discussing issues and problems rather than tackling theoretical or empirical challenges.

Motivation and effective leadership

Effective leadership motivates followers. Motivation is defined as an individual's degree of willingness to exert and maintain effort towards organizational goals (Franco, Bennett and Kanfer, 2002). Claes and

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Heymans (2008) suggest that motivation in an organisation is as a result of internal and external factors. They argue that internal factors impel work while external factors induce work. The internal factors describe how hard and how good and how long followers maintain their effort. External factors comprise the environment, organisational structure and culture, and human resource policy (Claes and Heymans, 2008).

Figure 2: A model showing cross-national and cross-organisational designs to motivation
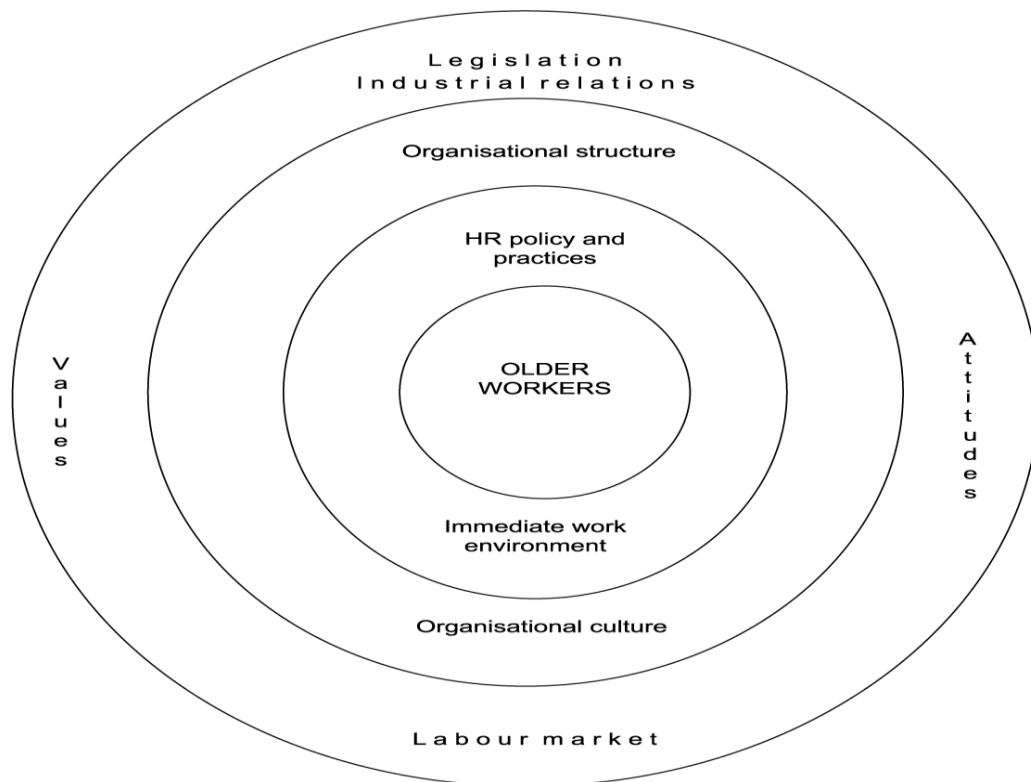
Adapted from, Claes and Heymans (2008).

Leaders need to build a relationship with each employee (Kamery, 2004:139). In the earlier publication Kamery (2004) argues that leaders' relationship building with followers allows a leader to know what motivates each employee as Deci and Ryan (1991) contend that motivation of followers is influenced by cognitive evaluation theory in which events that affects feelings of autonomy (e.g. being in control), competence (e.g. efficacy, ability), and relatedness with work colleagues (e.g. acceptance, intimacy) will influence motivation. Ezama, Prelec and Dunfield (2013) hypotheses that close supervision of workers might undermine intrinsic motivation thus effective leaders' need to give followers some degree of autonomy to allow them exercise their intellectual ability. However, this does not denote leaders abdicate their control responsibility. Kamphorst and Swank (2013) used a Pygmalion and Galatea effect on motivation in explaining how effective leaders should motivate their followers for goal achievement. The leaders' high expectations about followers compel the leader to pay special attention resulting to higher performance referred to as Pygmalion effect while high expectation communicated to followers result in increased performance termed as Galatea effect (Kamphorst and Swank, 2013). Indeed, Kamphorst and Swank (2013:92) argue that "A good leaders boosts an employee's sense of self-efficacy in order to induce greater effort and better performance". Finally, Laura et al (2013) argue that leaders and followers help each other to raise their level of motivation and morality thereby realising organisational goals.

Conclusion

To sum up, organisations should have effective leadership with good talent management strategy (Bluen, 2013:40). Talent strategy should help human resource professionals to attract, engage, retain and motivate talents. Blue (2013:51) suggests institutionalisation of learning and development of staff is key to attracting and retaining talent but it is made possible through effective leadership. With the flat nature of the world today, effective leaders will need better strategies in managing talent because of global competition. Efforts to recruit, select, retain and motivate may require double effort as effective leadership is being recognised as an antecedent for changing workers' behaviours (Joo, and Lim, 2013). Consequently, effective leadership is vested with the responsibility of ensuring that the organisation is stocked with the right people at the right time doing the right tasks. Effective leadership should avoid over hiring and under hiring as both cases pose economic effect to the organisation.

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