

Leadership Style and Organizational Commitment of Workers in Some Selected Academic Libraries in Delta State

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Abstract

The study was intended to survey the leadership style and organizational commitment of workers in some selected Academic Libraries in Delta State. It employed survey research design using questionnaire to collect data from Librarians and their supporting staff (library officers and library assistants). Frequency counts and simple percentages were used to analyze the data collected. The study found out that Autocratic leadership style is the most used and they perceived it to be negative. Promotion criteria is the factor that militate against organizational commitment the most and next to it, is the leadership style in use.

Introduction

A leader is a person who takes the central roles in interactions and who influences the behaviour of other members of a group. He is an individual who has authority over others and he is responsible for guiding their actions. Fatokun, Salaam and Ajegbomogun (2010). Leadership determine values, culture, change, tolerance and employee motivation. They influence those around them to reap maximum benefit. (Germano, 2010). Leadership can be defined as the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals (Robin, 1993 cited by Wu et al, 2006). According to Fatokun, Salaam and Ajegbomogun (2010) leadership is in hierarchy and is usually illustrated as a triangle with the head at the apex of the triangle and authority flowing downward to all other part of the triangle. Thus leadership can be defined as the manner in which the leader executes and motivates its subordinates towards accomplishing the organizational goal. Just like a business or any other organization libraries require leadership. Libraries are complex organizations that has its own set objectives. It has its hierarchical structure, official decision making process, institutional policy and routines, to enable it to achieve set goals.

The role the leader plays is very important in every organization. It is the role of the leader that will determine the growth or the downfall of the library. The leader has positive and negative influence over its organization or library as in our study. According to Davis and Newstorm (1985) there are differences in the ways leaders approach people to motivate

them. If the approach emphasizes rewards –economic or otherwise-the leader uses positive leadership. Better employee education, greater demands for independence, and other factors have made satisfactory employee education, greater demands for independence, and other factors have made satisfactory employee motivation more dependent on positive leadership. If emphasis is placed on penalties, the leader is applying negative leadership. This approach can get acceptable performance in many situations but it has high human costs. Negative leaders act domineering and superior with people. To get work done, they hold over their personnel such penalties as loss of job, reprimand in the presence of others, and a few days off without pay. They display authority in the false belief that it frightens everyone into productivity. They are bosses more than leaders. A continuum of leadership styles exists, ranging from strongly positive to strongly negative. Almost any manager uses both styles somewhere on the continuum every day, but the dominant style sets a tone within the group.

Organizational commitment means the degree of one's identification with, and participation in, a certain organization. It is the level of devotion or dedication that an employee demonstrates towards its organization (Wu, Tsai, Fey and Wu 2006). According to Chen (1995) cited by Wu et al(2006) Organizational commitment is deeply influenced by the leadership style used, organizational commitment has typically been viewed as the relative strength of an individual's identification with the involvement in an organization as well as his or her willingness to extent effort and remain in the organization. Commitment as outcomes has been related to leadership (Walumbwa, Orwa, Wang and Lawler, 2005 cited by Yahchouchi,2009).Beckeri, Randal, and Riegel (1995) defined organizational commitment in three dimensions :

- a strong desire to remain a member of a particular organization
- a willingness to exert high levels of efforts on behalf of the organization
- a define belief in and acceptability of the values and goals of the organization

Literature Review

Leadership has a direct cause and effect relationship upon organizations and their success. Library leaders directly affect everything from patron experience to successfully executing stated missions, including resource allocation, services offered and collection development strategies. In fact, the influence of leaders and their effectiveness in moving people to a shared vision can directly shape the library's people, its materials, how patrons use or interact with them and whether or not that experience is beneficial (Germano,2010).For a library to be effective it needs an effective leader and to Davis, and Newstrom, (1985) an effective manager is one who can invoke support through the channeling of a clear shared vision through the organization. The manager is the dynamic, life-giving element in every organization the quality and performance of the managers determines the success of a business, indeed they determine its survival. There are various leadership styles which exist but the predominant ones are autocratic, democratic and free-reign. According to Davis and Newstrom(1985) the way in which a leader uses power establishes a type of style. Each style –autocratic, democratic, and free-reign –has its benefits and limitations. A leader uses all three styles over a period of time, but one style tends to be the dominant.

Types Of Leadership Style Autocratic

This leadership style is always in the form of dishing out orders. Autocratic leaders will always tell their subordinates what they want done for them. They do not put into consideration the opinion of others whether it is important or not. All they want to know is their subordinates carrying out their instruction. Some leaders tend to think of this style as a means of commanding respect. They use demeaning language, lead others by threats and abuse their power by “bossing” their subordinates around. Davis and Newstrom (1985) posits that autocratic leaders centralize power and decision making in themselves. They are also typically negative, based on threats and punishment; but it can be positive, as demonstrated by the benevolent autocrat who chooses to give rewards to employees. According to Germano(2010)Autocratic leaders can damage an organization irreparably as they force their ‘followers’ to execute strategies and services in a very narrow way based upon a subjective idea of what success looks like. There is no shared vision and little motivation beyond coercion. However, there are situations that demands this style and it should be used on rare occasions especially when the situation demands it.

Democratic

This leadership style is based on the principle of involving others in the running of the organization. It involves others in the decision making process, they determine what to do and how to go about it. Using this style does not mean that the leader is weak rather it promotes innovation and creativity because a leader is not expected to know everything and that is why different knowledge and skills are employed for the achievement of organizational goals. Fatokun, Salaam and Ajegbomogun (2010) opines that although the leader maintains final authority, subordinates input and consultation are highly valued as it involves a system of shared decision making and open communication. Davis and Newstrom(1985) Democratic leaders decentralize authority. They are not unilateral because they arise from consultation with followers and participation by them. The leader and group are acting as a social unit.

Free-Reign

This leadership style allows subordinates to make decisions, it gives authority to them to carry on with the affairs of the organization though, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. The style is still is most used when the leader have full confidence in his subordinates that they are able to plan and achieve how to go about it successfully. According to Fatokun, Salaam and Ajegbomogun (2010) Free-reign leadership style allows subordinates maximum autonomy in their job. Individual decision making, free exchange of information, interpersonal conflict resolution and minimal leadership controls are standard. This style is mostly used when the employee or subordinates know about the job or problem that is on ground. According to Davis and Newstrom(1985)Free-reign leaders avoid power and responsibility. They depend largely upon the group to establish its own goals and work out its own problems in this type of leadership style, the leader plays only a minor role.

Germano (2010) posits that there is a clear difference between leadership styles and there may be instances where one style is more effective; a need for flexibility and perhaps an inventory/awareness of who might best lead an initiative based on their styles. A good leader does not depend on only one style but uses all three, depending on the situation he is faced with at the moment. The existing leadership and management research suggest that the leadership style of managers can lead to higher measures of organizational commitment in their direct reports(Davenport,2010). Northcraft and Neale (1996)posits that organizational

commitment is an attitude reflecting an employee's loyalty in the organization. It is an on-going process through which organization members express their concern for the organization and its success and well being.

Clemmer and Mcneil (1990) cited by Fatokun, Salaam and Ajegbomogun(2010) suggest that leadership is not a role or position, but the ability to initiate action and move others to shared goals .Drucker(1993)indicated that the quality and performance of managers or leaders are the key criteria in deciding organizational success. An enterprise without a manager's leadership is not able to transmute input resources into competitive advantage. Therefore it is clear that the leadership style of a manager /leader has a close relation to the development of an organization. It is important to note that for a service delivery organization like the library, the success and failure is mostly determined by the performance of the staff which is greatly affected by the leadership styles that is adopted. According to Chen(1995)cited by Wu et al(2006)the leadership style of a manager is able to affect subordinates organizational commitment and organizational commitment is related to a person's service attitude, passion and willingness to work. According to Germano(2010)libraries need more than leaders and leadership; they need the right kinds of each. To remain viable institutions, and to add value to the constituent they serve, a library's leadership must manage change, develop employees and provoke customer commitment.

An academic library serves different people with different academic levels and need. It is also a research library and as such it has to organize its library, books and other information resources needed for the academic and research programmes of its clients through the effective co-ordination of its human resources to ensure a good work attitude among them and the achievement of the library's goal through good leadership style. The place of a library in an academic institution cannot over emphasized, it is crucial to the actualization of goals and objectives of the institution where it exist. It is the hub of all academic pursuit of the parent body. The library is a recognized and essential resource center which no student and even staff especially academic staff can afford to dispense with, if he or she wants to achieve academic success. It is the pivot around which other activities in the institution revolve. It supports all the functional of the establishment. For the institution to function as a centre for teaching and research, the library's fundamental service must be put in place as it is established to provide fundamental service which affects the entire institution. In order to achieve the fundamental objective for which the institution is established, it must ensure that both its human and material resources are well organized to ensure effective and efficient growth.

Studies on libraries indicates that traditionally, the function of the library include the acquisition, organization, preservation and dissemination of information. A critical analysis of the operations of the library shows that libraries and librarians are charged with responsibility of enhancing human knowledge through the provision of information. In a library, enhancing human knowledge is synonymous to organizational goals which is closely related to organizational commitment. To a large extent, all these depends on the implementation of good leadership style

Objectives Of The Study

In view of this, the study tries to examine the leadership styles adopted by academic libraries in Delta State and their effects on the organizational commitment of workers. Therefore, the study sets to investigate the following:

- The leadership style that is used the most in their libraries

- Staff perception of the leadership style that is used the most
- Staff level of organizational commitment as regards leadership style
- Factors that militate against organizational commitment of workers

Methodology

Questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. A total number of 90 questionnaires were distributed to the librarians and their supporting staff (library officers and library assistants) in some selected academic libraries in Delta State. The questionnaires were administered with the help of research assistants and a total number of 84 were returned. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section A contains the bio-data of respondents and section B which contained information questions on leadership style and organizational commitment. Frequency counts and simple percentages were used to analyze the data.

Findings and Discussion

Findings of the study are presented in tables 1-6

Table 1 :Sex of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	34	40.5
Female	47	56
Not Indicated	4	3.5
Total	84	100%

47(56%) of the respondents are female, 34(40.5%) of the respondents are male while 4(3.5%) did not indicate their sex.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Librarie

Libraries	Frequency	Percentage
Delta State University Abraka	58	69
Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun	15	17.9
Delta State Polytechnic Ozoro	8	9.5
College of Physical and Health Education Mosogar	3	3.6
Total	84	100

From the table above Delta State University has the highest number of respondents with 58(69%),Federal University of Petroleum Resources is next with 15(17.9%) amongst others.

Table 3 :Leadership style that is used the most in their library

Leadership style	Frequency	Percentage
Autocratic	51	60.7
Democratic/Participative	21	25

Delegative/Free-Reign	12	14.3
Total	84	100

Table 3 shows the result of the leadership style that is used the most. Based on the findings of the study, majority of the respondents 58(69%) agreed or said yes to autocratic leadership style while 21(25%) said yes to democratic style and free-reign with 12(14.28%).

Table 4: Staff perception of leadership style that is used the most in their library

Leadership style	Perception		Perception	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Autocratic	5	5.9	46	54.8
Democratic	21	25	0	0
Free-Reign	9	10.7	3	3.6
Total	35	41.6	49	58.4

From the table above, the perception of Autocratic leadership style is viewed negative with 46(54.8%). This implies that this leadership may negatively affect the organizational commitment of staff. While 21(25%) perceived it to be positive.

Table 5: Levels of Organizational Commitment as Regards Leadership Style

Leadership Style	Levels of Organizational Commitment											
	Very High		High		Very Moderate		Moderate		Very Low		Low	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Autocratic	0	0	10	11.9	16	19.4	12	14.2	30	35.7	16	19.04
Democratic	50	59.5	22	26.2	7	8.3	5	5.9	0	0	0	0
Free-Reign	13	15.4	23	27.3	21	25	19	22.6	2	2.3	6	7.14

The table above measures the level of organizational commitment as regards the type of leadership style that is adopted. As can be seen from the table the respondents indicated that they will be very commitment to democratic leadership style with 50(59.5%) as against the other leadership styles.

Table 6: Factors that militate against Organizational Commitment of workers

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Leadership style in use	51	60.7

Absence of in service training	20	23.8
Inadequate information	34	40.4
Lack of cordial relationship between boss and staff	45	53.5
Lack of incentives	40	47.6
Lack of motivation	50	59.5
Promotion criteria	56	70.2

Table 6 shows that promotion criteria is the factor that militant against organizational commitment the most with 59(70.2%). This implies that when promotion criteria are stringent or promotion is not favourable to staff and staff cannot get their promotion as at when due, organizational commitment will drop. Leadership style in use ranked second amongst factors that militate against organizational commitment with 51(60.7%). This implies that the leadership style adopted in any organization can affect the organization commitment of workers and next to this ranking is lack of motivation with 50(59.5%)

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it is evident that the leadership style that is used the most amongst other style is the autocratic leadership style and the respondents perceived this type of style to be negative. This implies that the respondents are not comfortable with this type of leadership style. This study also revealed that most of the respondents will be more committed to democratic leadership to other leadership style. This implies that the respondents will prefer a democratic style, in other words with the autocratic leadership style in place the respondents are excluded in one way or the other from making their contributions towards the organization thus their commitment level is not very high. According to the respondents the factor that militate against organizational commitment the most is promotion criteria. This implies that the respondents are more concerned with their promotion to the leadership style in use. Next to this is the leadership style in use. This may be because leadership is very important in every organization and it influences the organization in one way or the other. Ranking 3rd is motivation, which implies that motivation goes a long way in enhancing organizational commitment. The other factors can be seen as in table 6 above.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were drawn:

- Library Leaders should adopt more frequently democratic leadership style instead of autocratic leadership style as it will yield very high organizational commitment
- Autocratic leadership style should be used only in situations that requires it
- Based on the findings of the study, it is imperative to establish a system where subordinates can get their promotion as at when due
- It is also recommended that library leaders should employ positive leadership which emphasizes rewards in order to motivate its subordinates to high organizational commitment

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