



THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP STYLES AS ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR ENHANCED EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA CAMEROON

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Abstract

This paper examined the role of leadership and leadership styles as an essential ingredient for enhanced employees' performance (a case study of SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA CAMEROON). An Agro Industrial Company for the Processing and Marketing of Electric Poles. Historical and current theories are presented and discussed. Theory understanding and implementation are essential for increased motivation in the organization. Data from leadership style studies is presented showing that situational determinants, traits, and wide style range are essential to promote motivation and effective leadership. There is no single "narrow" leadership style for all occasions rather; the whole leadership is needed for optimum productivity. In view of the findings, all the styles of leadership have effect on the employees' productivity. No single leadership style is the best or effective in all situations. The situational approach in which the leader applies the style that suits the prevailing situation is the most effective. Therefore, for a manager to be effective, he or she should be able to understand the various styles of leadership, the situation under which each of them can be applied and should be able to adopt and apply each of the styles taking into cognizance of the situations. The organization also should understand the styles and the respective situations under which each of them can be applied and should employ the manager that can apply styles that suite the prevailing organizational situations in order to achieve organizational objectives. It is recommended that leaders should be flexible and be able to apply situational styles as the application of the wrong style leads to job dissatisfaction, resentment, lack of commitment to the job and ultimate decrease in productivity of the employees.

Keywords: Leadership, Leadership Style, Performance and Transformation

INTRODUCTION

This paper reveals the role of leadership and leadership styles as an essential ingredient for enhanced employees' performance in SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA CAMEROON An Agro Industrial Company for the Processing and Marketing of Electric Poles. Quite often, management is so concerned with what it can get out of employees in terms of best job performance, efficiency, effectiveness and prompt service delivery, profitability or results. Little attention is paid to the motivation and socio-economic status of employees who are human beings and not machines. This slow attitude of management in failing to

appreciate leadership influence on employees' performance so that appropriate management techniques can be developed has resulted in a great waste of human resources.

The dissatisfaction of employees in the leadership and leadership style in an organization is more often than not; reflected in high labour turnover, frequent complaints, strikes and deterioration in job performance Khan et al. (2010). In order to avoid employees' dissatisfaction, management should appraise its leadership style and appropriate employer-employees' relations in order to create a healthy working environment which will subsequently improve employees' performance and that of the organization at large.

Employees' motivation is a combination of desire and energy directed at achieving a goal. Influencing employees' motivation means getting them to do what they know must be done. People can be motivated by beliefs, values, interests, fear, worthy causes, and other such forces. Some of these forces are internal, such as needs, interests, and beliefs. Others are external, such as danger, the environment, or pressure from a loved one. There is no simple formula for motivation; one must keep an open viewpoint on human nature. There is a complex array of forces steering the direction of each person and these forces cannot always be seen or studied. Also, if the same forces are steering two different people, each one will act differently. Knowing that different people react to different needs will guide leaders' decisions and actions in certain situations.

According to padmakumar and Gantasala (2010) a leader is a person who sets direction and influences people to follow that direction. A leader must have the power to influence motivation. Motivation is a common word often discussed by people in any given organization and the researcher will discuss it in terms of management and employees relationship. Basically, management involves planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, budgeting, controlling etc. (Drunker, 1975 and 1978). The primary objective of all these responsibilities is the achievement of the best result. Similarly, management cannot achieve its primary objectives in the atmosphere of chaos, unfriendliness and lack of motivation (Humble, 1969, Akpala, 1991). Motivation entails in very simple terms, encouragement shown in cash and / or in kind. Motivation thus encompasses the end of leadership because leaders must respond to the motivation of individuals if they are to design an environment in which people will perform willingly.

Management of SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA cannot operate in isolation of employees, for they have a stake in the stability and growth of the organization. The need for motivation arises; therefore motivation is predispositions to act in certain manner such factors are needs, expectations, personalities and operant condition. For the leadership of the organization SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA, the challenge is to determine on how these factors interact to affect individual behavior and the work situations can be structured to attain maximum employees' job performance. Based on this observation, this research work shall be on employer-employees relationships and its influences on workers performance.

The interest in the influence of leadership on employees' performance represents an alternative to the traditional focus on the leader as the center of attention and power. Although the qualities of leaders are obviously important, especially in team work, in particular leaders need the skills to engage followers in productive and satisfying mutual pursuits.

However, this is a departure from the usual way of seeing leader qualities as possessions, rather than interpersonal links to others involved in shared activities, because not all leaders wish to be participative, understanding and overcoming such reluctance to involve followers becomes important. Not least as a source of resistance is the problem of shared responsibility and who will be accountable.

An effective leadership style influences the productivity of employees in an organization and reverse is the case when there is ineffective employer-employees relationship in an organization. It is on this view, this research work aimed to assess the extent to which leadership influences workers' performance in an organization. It attempts to ascertain whether leadership style influences workers' performance in an organization with particular references to SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This paper presents the various views, opinions and concepts of the scholars concerning the subject matter. The following concepts and components will be critically looked at; conceptual framework, defeating leadership, leadership styles, theoretical framework which includes; trait theory, behavioral theory, contingency theory, situational theory, path-goal theory, leader-member theory, leadership attribution theory, leadership skills theory, servant leadership theory, transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, leadership models, motivation, managing various types of people in the organization such as the Hero, the Meritocratic, Bulldozer, the Pessimist, Rebels, the Home run Hitters and A, B, C players etc.

There are many diverse definitions of leadership, and it varies in terms of emphasis on leader's abilities, personality traits, influence relationship, cognitive versus emotional orientation, individual versus group orientation and appeal to self-versus collective interests.

Leadership is a reciprocal process. Any aspect of the leader, group member or setting can influence and be influenced by every other variable in the system. An interactional view assumes that leadership is a fluid, dynamic process involving continual adjustments among the elements (Barrow, 1977, Cartwright & Zander, 1968, Hollander, 1985).

Leadership is a transactional process. The leader/member relationship is a form of social exchange; leaders and group members trade their time and energy in exchange for valued monetary and social rewards (Burns, 1978, Hollander & Julian, 1969, Pigors, 1935).

Leadership is often a transformational process. The transformational leader increases group members' motivation, confidence and satisfaction by uniting members and changing their beliefs, values and needs (Bass, Avolio & Goldheim, 1987).

Leadership is a cooperative process of legitimate influence rather than sheer power (Grimes, 1978). In a small group, for example, the individual who influences others the most is often designated the leader (Hollander, 1985). The right to lead is, in most instances, voluntarily conferred on the leader by some or all members of the group (Kochan, Schmidt & De-Cottis, 1975).

Leadership is an adaptive, goal –seeking process, for it organizes and motivates group members' attempts to attain personal and group goals (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Robbins (2000:314) defined leadership as “the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals”. Bennis (1999) see leadership as the ability to know yourself, have a vision that is well communicated, build trust among colleagues and take effective action to realize one's own leadership potential.

Leadership may be defined as that aspect of management which focuses attention on influencing the organization members to put forth efforts directed at achieving organizational goals. In other words, leadership is the process, by which a person exerts influence over other people and in spites, motivates and directs the activities to help in achieving group or organizational goals (Yukl, 1995:5, Hay, 1998).

When leaders are effective, the influence they exert over others helps a group or organization to achieve its performance goals. And reverse when leaders are ineffective, their influence do not contribute to and often detract from goal attainment (Jones, George & Hill 2004:470).

From the various definitions above, leadership is the process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group and organization objectives.

Leadership style according to Lewin, Lippitt, White (1939) is referred to as a leader's behaviour. It is the result of the philosophy, personality and experience of the leaders.

Leadership style is that specific way in which a manager chooses to influence other people. It is by far the single most important factor in determining the effectiveness of a group in an organization. It is also a major attribute that sets apart successful organization from unsuccessfully one (Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman 2001:324).

METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to introduce the scientific technique involved in carrying out exploratory study to examine the leadership system at SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA CAMEROON... Accordingly, a sample size, questionnaire, data analysis and interpretation techniques were employed to arrive at the conclusion of this study.

The results of this findings support the hypothesis which stated that employee performance is independent of the leadership style in SITEP-CAM COMPANY LTD BAMENDA CAMEROON. The confirmation of this hypothesis is consistent with research literature. This findings is in line with the findings-of Bass, Burger, Doktor & Barrett (1979) who noted that workers expressed a desire to get work done while using less authority. Also Smith and Peterson (1994) found that managers were satisfied with events for which they were delegated substantial discretion.

Similarly, this study supports the hypothesis which stated that there is a weak relationship between employer and employee relation with employee performance, for as the level of relationship between employer and employee increases, employee performance also increases. This will always make significant contributions to the achievement of organizational goals where a leader communicates frequently with his employees or workers, and such creates a situation where conflict can be avoided within the organization and thereby makes the organization more efficient.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A major indication of this study is that leadership style has influence on workers' performance. It becomes more conspicuous that leadership effectiveness is sine qua-non to workers performance. It is also evident that there is high level of commitment to both official and social needs by the leaders in SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA CAMEROON. There was cordial relationship in the move communication from leaders to the subordinates and this made them to have high sense of belonging and efficiency at work. However, leadership styles on their own may not provide an adequate guide to action, they are nevertheless useful as overarching concepts which integrate and make sense of more specific leadership behaviors, as well as pointing out the need for flexibility and to take in to account variables affecting leaders.

Every organization that wants to boost the productivity of its workers must adopt the appropriate leadership/ managerial style. Leadership style in an organization is important and as such should be given the attention it deserves in line with the saying that an organization without a leader is like a ship without a captain.

Leadership effectiveness brings out increase in workers' performance, effective and efficient utilization of manpower resources and consequently improved organizational performance, and as such, should continue to remain the central objectives and goals of the organization.

It has been noted that participative leadership motivates the workers and thus improves performance. As a result of this, it is necessary that leaders should adopt the best form of leadership style suitable for different situations at a given time in the organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby put forward:

- i) The results of this study reaffirm the need for organizations to provide mechanisms to help managers become effective leaders. Organizations should design and implement management training and development programs that focus on effective and facilitative leadership styles, such as a transformational style of leadership.
- ii) The preference of participative leadership style by workers in SITEP-CAM suggests that their performance could be enhanced when they are allowed to participate in decision making process in the organization. So, management is hereby advised to maintain participative leadership style.
- iii) It is not humanly too possible to consistently provide positive leadership to a very large number of staff while at the same time ensuring the effective and efficient operation of a large unit on daily basis. Thus there is a need to develop guide lines and strategies regarding the number of staff a Manager/ Administrator can effectively supervise and lead.
- iv) Leaders in SITEP-CAM Management Board with Reference to SITEP-CAM COMPANY LIMITED BAMENDA CAMEROON should adopt various motivational techniques that can improve and encourage employee welfare and increase work performance.

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