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THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

This paper explored the role of leadership in organizational change. A leader works as change agent who manages organizational process effectively. Today's change is demanding and required survival. Nowadays, organizations better understands the importance of change and prepare them to adapt not only to current but also, for the future. This chapter adopted qualitative approach, deploying secondary data; like journals, textbooks and other forms of literature to examine the opinion of scholars in the area of leadership, change and organization, leadership roles which include the leaders ability to relate with both staff and clients, and getting awareness of what constitutes change for the organization. It perceives leaders as the ideal direction providers as well as dissected the various dimensions of competences; include skills and adaptability potentials of the leaders to change. Leadership was isolated as a concept of its own which needs to be taken very seriously. Suggestions were made to sum that leaders may require training and retraining to keep their skills, attitude and their relational strength to keep fit into today's trends.

Keywords: Leadership, Organizational Change, Role.

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INTRODUCTION

Changes have brought organizations to a stiff competitive environment that has led to more complex and interdependent work in organizations and that also requires same organizations to be more agile and resilient. Being both agile and resilient at the same time is not easy. As such, organizations may find themselves mistakenly trying to satisfy everybody as they strive to meet these seemingly competing sets of external and internal demands. It becomes increasingly difficult to create focus in an organization and to harness that goal throughout the organization as tension between the internal needs and the external needs increases. Paradoxically, this situation

calls for more people in organizations to be engaged in strategic leadership, not fewer. To be sure, certain individuals have greater opportunity and responsibility that affect their organization than others. The best way for organizations to thrive in the face of this new reality is to become continual learning engines. In practical terms organizational strategy means the vision, the directions, and the tactics adopted to move toward success should be held in an ongoing state of formulation, implementation, reassessment, and revision.

Sharma and Jain (2013) saw leadership as the management, financial management, academic staff management and space management of any institution of learning. University effectiveness is the concept of how effective a university organization is, in achieving organizational intends goal. Organizational effectiveness group are directly concern with several key areas; like talent management, leadership development, organization design and structure, design of measurements and scorecards, implementation of change and transformation, deploying smart processes and smart technology to manage the firms' human capital and the formulation of the broader human resources agenda. If an organization has practices and programs in the areas above, the OE group does many or all of the above roles.

Leadership competencies are leadership skills and behaviors that contribute to superior performance. By using a competency-based approach to leadership, organizations can better identify and develop their next generation of leaders. Essential leadership competencies and global competencies have been defined by researchers. However, future business trends and strategy should drive the development of new leadership competencies. While some leadership competencies are essential to all firms, an organization should also define what leadership attributes are distinctive to the particular organization to create competitive advantage.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Leadership

Leadership is an English origin term, and “Lead” as a verb is described to guide, to direct; and “Leader” is described as chief, guide, head, commander, captain, pioneer (Redhouse, 2005). Leadership has been the subject of many studies in popular and academic literature as a concept and a whole body of applications. It is stated that leadership may be defined infinitely under eleven main categories, namely “focal point of the group process, art of assuring obedience, influencing, behaviour, form of persuasion, relation of power, means of achieving goals, result of interaction, differentiation of roles, activator of a structure and combination of different elements” (Bass, 1990). Leadership is the ability to instill support and confidence in people who need to achieve organizational goals (Dubrin, 2012). Leadership is guiding the persons in the organization in a proactive work for ensuring motivational process, inspiration, and following up of organizational goals (Hill & McShane, 2008). The main task of the leaders consists of the realization of the organizational goals. Thus, leader-ship means directing a group of people toward the accomplishment of a task or the reaching of an endpoint through various ethically based means (Rowe & Guerrero, 2011). Leadership is being capable of influencing others in order to achieve the specified goals, leading the organization to become more consistent and harmonious (Sharma & Jain, 2013). Management is also a process used to reach organizational goals successfully just as leadership (Bohoris & Vorria, n.d). However, while there are similarities between the leaders and the managers in terms of the goals to be achieved, it may be said that there are differences in terms of the means they use. Developments and changes

experienced have revealed new leadership approaches such as transformational, charismatic and interactional leadership, etc. One of the most comprehensive leadership theories for organizational transformation is transformational and transactional leadership theories.

Leadership and its role are the most concerning issue for the business and organizations now days. The leaders are individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals and who gain commitment from this group of members to established direction and who then motivate members to achieve the direction's outcomes (Conger, 1992). The term leadership can be viewed through multiple angles and concepts. Traditionally leadership is a set of feature owned by the leader or it is a social phenomenon that comes from relationship with groups. These concepts can give different opinions about the definition of leadership. It is a continuous debate that whether the leadership comes from the personal qualities of a leader or a Leader makes followership through what s/he does or believes (Grint, 2004). Grint also highlight position problems with the leadership, which explores, is the leader a person in charge? With the true authority to decide or implement, or it is only a person in front who takes his or her directions for someone. Recent reviews take leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2004). Another view about leadership is that leadership is like the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen (Bennis & Nanus, 1985).

In short, leadership/leader is either a person who is in charge and has authorities to take decision and also has powers to implement his/her decisions or a process having a set of other authoritative process about organizational, personal or social process of influence for which the groups, teams or organizations can do more to increase their ability. The selection of the leader not only depends on the personal characteristics of personal but also on the social and cultural factors along with h/her exposure towards life (Bolden , 2010).

Organizational Leadership

Organizational leadership is not a magic that one person have and other don't have. It is also not all about the ordered by boss and then observed by him that how much these ordered are obeyed. The leadership of an organization is instead, an ability of management to get and protect the company benefits by realizing employees need and company targets and bringing them together to work in a better environment to achieve the common goals (Sansom, 1998). Organizational leadership has a central role in evolution and cultivating an organization. It can help the member of an organization and working teams to face the challenges and to work for organizational goal in a worthy way.

Ololube (2017) described an organization leadership as a person who can promote change in an organization by its vision and strategy (Dunphy & Stace cited in Senior & Fleming, 2006). In this era of rapidly changing business trends and increased customer demands, the role of leadership is more crucial these days. The strategic leadership is eagerly needed for organizations, which is well capable to predict the essential alterations and changes, in advance and create required commitment and highly suitable atmosphere for worker and teams to understand and adopt these changes successfully. This action by leaders is decisive not only for the effectiveness of the organization but also for its very survival (Bass, 1990; Burke & Cooper, 2004).

As the business goals can't be achieved without adopting any strategic business process, likewise the organizational success and sustainability also can't be accomplished without a

strategic role of leaders. From allocation of resources to alignment, from perception of thing to decide future focusing, form commitment and motivating the teams to get the goals of an organization, to confirm the sustainable growth, it's a leadership whose footprints are everywhere (McGuire, 2003).

Change

The word change is taken as a result normally. A simple definition of change in the Sansom and Reid Oxford children's Dictionary (1994:195) defined the change as to become a different. Van derMerwe (1991) asserted that the word change is obtained from the Latin word to better. In general the word change means is to alter, to make something different or better or transformation of any existing thing by adding some values or giving up for something else. The change is usually planned and there are some responses against changes. The respondent thinks first that what has to change and what have to give up. Most authors think that respondents more concentrate on what have to give up rather than what has to gain because the giving up is more curtail. Different types of recourses are used/and or can be used to bring changes according to the nature and environment. Changes are always adopted for the good reasons and the subject of interest is always the outcome of the effort.

Change may be any action or set of actions having some directions to do something new or to amend something. Changes always require commitment and directions. Change is not always positive but there are several ways which strengthen the commitment to happen the certain types of changes (Daniel-Kalio & Ololube, 2019). Change is a concept that affects every aspect of life. Change may happen on every-thing and everywhere, as the philosopher Herakleitos (n.d) says, the only thing that does not change is change itself. Economic, socio-cultural, political, technological and legal structures are constantly changing besides the individuals. In today's competitive business environment, businesses shall follow and even anticipate these changes occurring around them and determine their plans and strategies accordingly in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. While experiencing change in such a rapid pace may sometimes lead to conflicts in organizations, it may cause a great deal of stress for the individuals. Therefore, organizations shall understand what factors affect change, how they shall respond to change, how they shall initiate and manage the change in order to respond to change effectively (Daniel-Kalio & Ololube, 2019).

Change is defined as the process by which individuals, groups and organizations respond to the dynamic internal and external factors that change the current facts, and process of dealing with the process of moving from the current condition to the desired condition (Singh cited in Goswami, 2015).

Organizational Change

Organizational change on the other hand, is related to optimizing performance standards of an organization, and this may usually arise depending on the proactive capabilities of the managers of the organization or on the peripheral changes or in response to the presence of a crisis. Regardless of the situation, organizations shall always need a very skilful, good management team to be able to trigger a change and to ensure that this change will be successful (Ebongkeng, 2018). Organizational change management is expressed as the application of new procedures or technologies aimed at reorganizing a business environment with changing requirements or taking

advantage of business opportunities that emerge (Markovic cited in Goswami, 2015). Change may be caused by many factors, and these factors may be mainly collected in two groups, namely internal and external.

Change may be performed proactively and as planned for creating the future, or reactively and adaptively, i.e. in an unplanned manner (Attah et al., 2017). Planned change may take place in two ways: gradual or radical change. In order to adapt to changing conditions, all businesses may make gradual changes from time to time. These changes may cover a wide variety of decisions and actions. For example, roles of organization members may be redefined, new roles may be specified, activities may be re-grouped, organizational structure may be changed, existing systems or procedures may be changed, abandoned, or new ones may be presented (Dawson cited in Bubshait et al. 1998). The purpose of radical change is to transform the organization radically into a different style. This type of change involves creating change in values, attitudes and beliefs, which are the elements of culture. All attempts to realize a radical change may fail unless a cultural change takes place (Roberts & Hunt cited in Bubshait et al. 1998). Furthermore, Kerber and Buono (2005) stated that each of these changes and approaches are guided by two main factors: complexity of the task and the socio-technical uncertainty. The complexity of the task indicates the complexity of the system, the number of essentially different components and the degree of differentiation in the organizational system where the change shall be applied.

If it is possible to implement change in a relatively simple, routine environment, and if the change involves well-known and accepted actions, managed change may ensure optimal use of limited organizational resources. In this context, ethical and persuasive communication by the change expert/strategist is essential for achieving integrity and credibility. Because the members of the organization shall be less likely to accept the change if they do not trust the person implementing the change and his/her messages. In planned change, the bottom line is complexity of the task. When the complexity of a task is increased, it shall be better to adopt a planned change approach. And for the guided change, what matters is the socio-technical uncertainty. If the future condition or the solution for the change is not known, managers may not be able to plan the change process carefully and may be able to guide change in a meaningful way even in simple conditions faced. It would be more appropriate to adopt approach rather than to managed change in such a case. The process of change in organizations consists of three stages. The first stage is being ready for change and indicates that the members of the organization are ready for change and that they support change. The second stage is adoption. At this stage, change has occurred and the employees have adopted the new methods. However, this adoption process is a trial process and employees deny the change at the end of this stage. The third stage is institutionalization, and change is reinforced until employees internalize the change and consider it as a norm, and required efforts are made to ensure that the adoption stage is resumed (Armenakis & Harris, 2002).

Organizations may receive four different types of responses to change, change messages, or just to possibilities of change (Daniel-Kalio & Ololube, 2019). These are as follows:

- **Withdrawal:** This behaviour is related with the thought that the change has not occurred and that the things shall always continue as usual.
- **Resistance:** This behaviour covers sabotaging of the change by opposing to change directly, delaying the implementation of the change, and refusing to cooperate, etc.

- Acceptance: This means submitting to the change reluctantly considering that change is inevitable.
- Embracing/adoption: This means truly volunteering for change in order to implement the new order of things by looking at new opportunities positively.

Organizations shall always respond to change in the face of change being experienced and adapt themselves to their environment. Businesses, which cannot adapt to this change, shall have their existence under threat after a while (Waddell & Sohal, 1998). The management of the organization shall not focus on the requirements of the organization only, and shall not neglect the requirements of its employees in order to reduce the resistance to change and to ensure adoption of the change by the members of the organization because change programs are crucial for the survival and success of the organizations. Neglecting the requirements of the employees may be a serious mistake at this point. If employees are neglected in the planning and implementation of organizational change, this process shall probably very stressful for all employees and the negative impacts of this condition shall be reflected on the organizations as some kind of a cost (McHugh, 1997). As a result of many researches conducted, it has been shown that an important variable for the success of the change is the human factor, and it has been found that the change programs are not successfully implemented without the support of the persons, no matter how well the change program was developed.

In this context, it is not required that persons are ready for organizational change only, but they shall also participate in the change (Herscovitch & Meyer cited in Mangundjaya et al., 2015). In other words, the success of the organizational change is related with the participation of the employees in the change. What is essential is to determine the variables that may increase the participation rate of employees to the change (Mangundjaya et al., 2015). However, although we know that there are many studies related to organizational change in the literature, the studies investigating the effects of change on the individual level and its effects on the behaviour of employees are less in number unfortunately (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Yet, perceptions and attitudes of employees against change have a great effect in the implementation of change successfully (Eby et al., 2000).

The organizational change in brief, is an intentional effort made by organization leader/leadership/manager to take the organization towards betterment. There could be many reasons or motivations behind the change process, including external or internal pressures for change, technological, social or economical factors. Moreover the vision of an organizational leader/leadership and its innovative ideas can also be reason behind the organizational change process.

The Role of Leadership in Organizational Change

Increasingly, organizations are calling on people at all levels to be strategic to meet up with the changing internal and external organization. Even if you have not heard that you need to be more strategic, we bet you can think of others with whom you work who need to develop their strategic capabilities. However, the path to that end is neither clear nor well defined. In some ways, it may feel a bit like learning to surf. You find yourself in the middle of chaos, business issues and initiatives swirling all around you like waves. You are not quite sure which one calls for your best energies (which waves to catch), and even if you pick one you might not be able to find your balance and ride it to a satisfactory conclusion (Etzioni et al., 2006).

When selecting and developing leaders, leaders should consider the competencies that the individual possesses and compare those to the ones that need further development for success in a leadership role. By looking at his/her current competencies and comparing those to the skills necessary to fill a leadership position, organizations can make better informed decisions in hiring, developing and promoting leaders. In addition to looking at future business trends to shape the development of leadership competencies, organizations must also look to the specific strategy and preferred business results of the particular organization. By creating competency models that reflect the future strategy of the business and the important results to stakeholders (i.e., customers, shareholders, investors), organizations can successfully create a leadership brand. To Daniel-Kalio and Ololube (2019), leadership brand as a reputation for developing exceptional managers with a distinct set of talents that are uniquely geared to fulfill customers' and investors' expectations. Researchers have found that when investors have confidence in the leadership talent of an organization, share price will increase. By creating a unique leadership brand via leadership competencies that produce results to stakeholders, organizations gain a competitive advantage (Ololube, 2017).

Leadership skills according to Ololube (2017) are divided into four broad categories: cognitive, interpersonal, business and strategic. The "strataplex" model refers to how the four categories of skills vary based on respective management levels in an organization. The researchers tested the model on more than 1,000 new, midlevel and senior managers. The results showed that higher levels of management in the organization required greater leadership skills. The most important skill across all the levels of leadership was cognitive skill. This skill is thought to be the basis of all leadership skills because it encompasses the ability to acquire new knowledge and learn new ways of solving problems. Interestingly, business skills and strategic skills were the two most important skills to acquire when moving into high levels of leadership. This research is important because it empirically demonstrates that leadership skills do differ at different management levels on the career ladder.

Most importantly, business acumen and strategic skills must be acquired to be effective at the higher levels of management/leadership. HR professionals should take into account the change in competencies required as managers move into higher level leadership positions. Managers' Justice Perceptions of High Potential Identification Practices high potentials are often regarded as the possible future leaders of an organization. Consequently, the process of identifying high potentials is very important to both succession planning and leadership development practices in an organization. The most important competencies used to identify high potentials were orientation toward results, communication skills, adaptability, strategic skills and ability to make decisions (Mitchel, 2012).

Leadership competencies can be used to effectively select, develop and promote leaders in an organization. Certain factors such as business strategy and future trends should be taken into account when creating leadership competencies. All business strategies are different and HR practitioners should use the business strategy, including the global business strategy, to drive the use of competencies in selecting and developing leaders. By effectively building a unique set of skills for the organization's leaders, the firm will sustain competitive advantage.

Also central to this development of competence is the organization's ability according to Stevenson (2009) is to assess its performance both internally and in relation to its competitors. As with individuals, endorsed organizational competency standards would provide a foundation for (1) the development of an organization's project strategy aligned to corporate strategic goals, objectives and plans; (2) the professional development, selection and employment of project

staff; and (3) the design, development and implementation of project management-related methods, standards and systems all of which, in turn, would influence the evolving and maturing process, or the attainment of competence, for the organization.

How to Drive Change in Organizations

Align Individual Priorities with Organizational Goals: No matter where you work, chances are your organization has overarching change goals it is working to meet. Goswami (2004) quips that leaders should not just wait to be told what to do but look at those goals and figure out what you can do as an individual employee to support them. For instance, if your company just announced that it is acquiring another to strengthen its product line, one of your individual priorities might be to learn more about that company, its customers, and what it does. You could even ask your manager to present your ideas on how these findings will impact your team. When you make the link between what you do on a day-to-day basis and how that can support the overall change initiative, you're showing dedication and demonstrating that you want to help. This understanding works well during any type of company-wide process or technological change, because you can begin to recommend better ways of doing what you already do (Ololube, 2017).

Learn To Live With Ambiguity: If you're not running the show (and sometimes, even if you are), there will usually be uncertainty during change. For instance, perhaps leadership hasn't answered all your questions because not all of the details have been worked out yet. Executives may also have legal reasons for not releasing information. The point is, sometimes it's in your best interest to roll with the ambiguity. Of course you should raise your concerns and ideas if you have them, but then keep focused on the task at hand. However, if you feel that ambiguity is disturbing the workplace or if you see executives ignoring real concerns, let your manager know the downstream impact in a polite yet firm manner.

Understand Your Leadership Style First: Even if your business card doesn't have a powerful title, you are still a leader. And every leader has a particular style and specific strengths. It's well worth your time to figure out what your style is, how it is seen by others, and how you can apply it to maximize your strengths. Most leadership assessments come down to four types of leaders: loud and proud; cheerful and optimistic; the strong, silent type; and data driven. You may also be a combination of them. In any case, knowing your own leadership style can help you effectively manage up the organization, coach employees and peers, and lead future change projects. Your knowledge will also help you to recognize different leadership styles and thus frame your own communication to meet the needs of others.

Change What You Can Change Yourself: There is an old saying that too many cooks spoil the soup. Similarly, too many leaders during change can make everything confusing and fragmented. If you are not in a position to formally influence the change, instead of trying to create a leadership role, take the opportunity to change your own attitude, behaviors and beliefs. You can do this by setting realistic goals for yourself and then eliciting feedback on them from peers, managers, and perhaps even customers. Remember that organizational change and personal change have strong similarities: You must clearly identify what you want to change, what the change looks like, and the specific steps and milestones for meeting them.

Influence what you can Change: Even if you aren't the one running the show, you can still influence the direction of the change. And your position of being "one of them" could even give your opinions a boost with your fellow employees! A good way to build trust and respect with your colleagues is to give meaningful and timely feedback with the sole intent of increasing effectiveness and job satisfaction. Cultivating this atmosphere of openness among your peers will help you influence change, because knowing others' motivations and interests will help you to explain how the change project will meet their needs. And don't forget, another great way to influence change is to model the behavior you want to see in others.

Become an Early Adopter and ally for Change: Adapting early to change and being an ally for it is one of the simplest and most visible ways of leading change when you are not running the show. This entails wanting change to happen and working toward that goal as soon as you have a logical explanation for a particular alteration or modification. The nice thing about being an ally and early adopter is that you aren't seen as someone who is just giving face time to the change; you are actually doing it and helping to spread enthusiasm among your team members.

Create A Community of Peers: Many change projects have frontline staff or employee councils that serve as the eyes and ears of change. This group relays information, ideas, and concerns back to senior leaders so that the change plan can be adjusted as needed. If your organization has a change council, ask to be part of it. If it doesn't, offer to help organize one. For change leaders, there is no replacement for direct feedback as to how communications, plans, and new projects are being perceived in the field.

Help Other Employees Cope With Change: Even if you're excited about change, not everyone will be. Some team members might find the going to be extremely tough; they might also feel confused, angry, or taken advantage of. You can help make the transition easier for them. First, be on the lookout for signals that someone needs help coping, like absenteeism, depressed or despondent behavior, or attacks on team members. You might want to intervene one-on-one, or help steer a bickering session into a change session. You can also help others cope through active listening. Try to act as a sounding board, and make it your goal to help the other person reduce emotionality and increase rational discussion (Mitchel, 2012).

Encourage Communication Among Your Peers: Remember, the sum of the parts is always greater than individual contribution levels added together. On a regular basis, ask yourself how you can help build a better organization by diffusing confusion, expediting the flow of information, or reaching out to others. Communication between peers and up through management helps make your job easier in a number of ways. It uncovers what is valuable to the business and what is not, it minimizes the amount of time required to achieve goals, and it maximizes productivity.

Believe in the Change and Speak Up: This isn't so much about self-help as it is making positive ideas a reality! As soon as change starts happening, start talking about how great it will be. And if change isn't happening yet, talk about past accomplishments in order to capture the emotions, excitement, and energy your team needs to forge ahead.

CONCLUSION

Leadership provides the needed framework and guideline for beating change in any organization. It is the role of the leaders to drive change in any organization and in doing so, the goals and objectives of the organization should be the watchword. Change have been identified to come in different forms, including administrative methods, products, services, transportation and other areas that dynamically influence the internal and external organizational environment. When the need for change arises, it shall be ensured that the necessary infra-structure conditions are met and that the change is perceived positively in both personal and organizational contexts in order to realize the change. In such a condition, it would also be possible to remove any resistance that may cause the change to fail. At this point, leaders shall ensure the harmony and consistency of the change process with the strategies, policies, visions, goals, objectives, values, and beliefs of the business in order to manage the change well.

They shall take necessary precautions to prevent resistance against change, to keep communication channels open, and to support the development of the skills and knowledge required for change. Differences in organizational structure shall also be considered in the change. Because the structure of each organization is different and the change made in one organization may not be suitable for another organization. All differences shall be considered when you are managing a change. Changes applied regularly and properly by considering organizational culture and structure will be successful.

Suggestions

Based on the reviewed literature, the following suggestions have been made:

- Organizations should be made globally competitive by imbibing regular training and retraining of staff to cope the modern trends.
- Leaders in organization should see themselves as chief marketing officers of their institutions in which the people within and outside would always refer to. There is therefore need to carry on with utmost sense of effectiveness and responsibility since they are the icons of the universities.
- Organizational leaders should from time to time enhance their competences which may include their skills, attitudes, knowledge and experience through seminars, workshops and conferences.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the nature of this study, the researcher therefore, suggests as follows;

- That this study can be improved upon or replicated for the improvement/advancement of educational frontier in every educational levels or institutions in Rivers State and beyond.

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