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Management Theories and Contemporary Issues in Managing Libraries in Nigeria

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Introduction

In today's contemporary times, the management of libraries has gone beyond the traditional way of "doing things" due to the changing nature of the business environment. Most libraries are driven by sophisticated information technologies (IT) such that various tasks and activities are undertaken in different ways. These technologies facilitate faster processing and transfer of information from one point to the other within and across libraries. It has also improved management practice and functions such as planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016). Despite the positive influence of IT in today's libraries, managing them in recent times may be quite challenging due to organizational and environmental factors that would be unveiled in this paper. Some of these factors include globalization, changing business environment, competition, changing customer needs and preferences and work place diversity, among others.

Between the 18th and 20th centuries, management theorists have suggested various paradigms that are required in managing organizations. These paradigms are anchored on different approaches to managing organizations such as organizational structure, technical requirements of organizations, employee satisfaction, among others. However, modern management theorists have improved on these propositions by emphasizing more on people and not only the organization (Mele, 2016). In essence, people are indispensable resources in organizations; therefore without the required human resource with the requisite skills, organizations cannot thrive maximally.

Management theories include classical theory, humanistic relations theory, behaviorist theory, systems theory, contingency theory, chaos, and team building theories, among others. These theories have been found to assist organizations in proffering solutions to several management problems. In addition, it had been established that the application of theories brings about changes in actual behavior (Thu Hoai, n.d). Management theories are, therefore, relevant in today's organizations for the following reasons: it helps to view the interrelationships between the development of theory, behavior in organization and management practice; help in understanding the principles underlying the process of management; they are of continuing importance due to their application in today's management; and help to provide a sound basis for action by the management of organizations (Thu Hoai, n.d).

In view of the importance of management theories in today's organizations, this paper focuses on discussing the contemporary issues confronting the management of libraries in Nigeria. Also specific management theories will be discussed in terms of their relevance and importance in the management of libraries. This paper will further delve into other areas which include the concept of management, general functions of management, the concept of management theories, and relevance of specific management theories to libraries in Nigeria, with conclusion and recommendations.

Management: Conceptual Analysis and Functions in Today's Organizations

Management, in general terms, can be defined as the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives of the organization and using available resources efficiently and effectively (Sethi & Slaria, 2012). In another way, management can be defined as sets of activities that include planning, leading, controlling, decision making, and leading to accomplish organizational goals efficiently and effectively (Thorn, 2012). Another definition of management was proposed by Koontz & Weihrich, (1990) as the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals work together in groups efficiently to accomplish organizational aims. The above definitions of management reveal that it is an "act of doing something" in an efficient manner to achieve some sets of outcomes. Therefore, the different tasks performed by management such as planning, organizing, leading, and controlling are tailored towards the accomplishment of organizational goals such as profitability, gaining a competitive edge, and increased productivity among others. In essence, management is getting things done through people efficiently and effectively.

The term management conveys similar meanings and interpretations across organizations. However, there are different perspectives to the meaning of management as reflected in the literature. Olum (2004) highlighted some perspectives on the meaning of management. Firstly, management refers to any kind of organization irrespective of the size and purpose of the organization. Secondly, management applies to managers at all levels- operational, tactical, and strategic levels. Thirdly, management involves the acquisition of managerial competence and effectiveness in areas such as problem-solving, administration, human resources management, and organizational leadership.

Based on the above definitions, it can be deduced that management can either be an art or science. In essence, this means that the management of libraries in Nigeria needs relevant skills

to execute their functions, these skills could be acquired through training, skill acquisition, and mentoring programs. Therefore, management can be referred to as both science and art, which entails following certain rules and procedures, as well as acting intuitively (Stern, 2007).

Management of organizations in Nigeria differ in their approaches to managing organizational resources due to differences in their goals and objectives. However, in the case of libraries in Nigeria, there are general functions performed by the management of these organizations irrespective of the type of organization whether public, private or special libraries. Henry Fayol (1841-1925) identified five functions of management which are: planning, organizing, leading, directing, and controlling. These functions are discussed below in the context of organizations in Nigeria

(i) Planning: Planning is a determination of a course of action to achieve desired goals. Every library in Nigeria is involved in setting out a plan to be executed to achieve the organization's goals and objectives. These plans are expected to be specific and measurable to ascertain the accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives. For instance, the management of libraries is found to develop a strategic plan that is implemented through appropriate financial and human resources.

(ii) Organizing: This is an indispensable role of management. Organizing cuts across different levels in the organization. This function is carried out via processes, and various resources to ensure that tasks are carried out efficiently and effectively. In most libraries, employees execute their daily roles and functions by adhering to their job descriptions and requirements manual.

(iii) Leading- Management of libraries performs the function of leading by putting the right peg in the right hole. Management leads through people that have been assigned specific leadership positions in the organization. Through these assigned roles, management can lead in the right direction. For instance, most libraries are designated in different units, and each unit is headed by an employee with special expertise and skills.

(iv) Staffing- The function of staffing cannot be overlooked by the management of libraries in Nigeria. Every library needs to recruit new employees and train old hands to accomplish the library's goals and objectives. The function of staffing is executed by management through the human resources department of these libraries.

(v) Controlling: The control function is undertaken by the management of libraries to ascertain their performance and conformity to the laid down rules and procedures. This cuts across all levels in the library due to several resources that need to be managed and to ensure continuity based on the set standard.

These general functions of the management of libraries as spelled out above have gone beyond these conventional practices due to the high level of dynamism and competitiveness in the business environment. In other words, the management of libraries in Nigeria, whether public or private, are involved in maximizing organizational resources by carrying out specific managerial functions. However, due to several organizational and environmental challenges, libraries in Nigeria may not be able to compete successfully with other libraries internationally.

Contemporary Issues in Management of Libraries in Nigeria

Modern libraries are faced with numerous challenges due to the complexity and uncertainty in today's business environment. Several contemporary issues are calling for urgent attention by the management of libraries in Nigeria. These contemporary issues differ from one country to the other due to differences in labor laws and other regulations across countries. These contemporary issues are discussed below:

(i) Attracting, Recruiting, and Retaining Right Employees: The ability to attract, recruit and retain the best hands is a major challenge for most libraries in Nigeria. Without the right human resource, no organization can successfully reach its goals. Management of libraries in Nigeria needs to ensure that the services of employees bring about growth and organizational growth. A continuous challenge for management is attracting, recruiting, and retaining the best brains that can contribute to the growth of the organization.

(ii) Use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs): ICTs have impacted positively on all aspects of organizations, as a result of this, most libraries have invested hugely in these technologies. For instance, in the area of training, the management of libraries in Nigeria has invested a lot in training and re-training employees. The use of ICTs in libraries has facilitated improved organizational communication, faster processing of information, and quicker dissemination of information to their clientele and staff through different application platforms. Continuous training of employees in today's libraries is a big challenge to management in terms of providing the required resources. The advancement in technologies has its grave

consequences on organizations due to the need to train and re-train the workforce. Besides, libraries may need to employ the services of skilled personnel to use these technologies. This creates a challenge for today's libraries in terms of getting skilled personnel at the same time, laying off employees that do not have the capabilities of rendering services (Srivastava & Agarwal, 2012).

(iii) Globalization: Due to the influx of ICTs, businesses are becoming more globalized. As a result of this, there is a growing internationalization of organizations. Most libraries are expected to network to other libraries globally to facilitate the sharing and use of information for the benefit of the organization. However, the impact of globalization on libraries in Nigeria is quite enormous due to several changes in their operational activities. The effect of globalization on organizations leaves much to be desired due to challenges in the area of recruitment, training, competition, language barrier, differing labor laws across countries (Srivastava & Agarwal, 2012).

(iv) Workplace Diversity: Workplace diversity is a common phenomenon in the 21st century due to different categories of employees that are recruited in the organization. Dimensions of workplace diversity include, but are not limited to: age, ethnicity, gender, educational background, marital status based on different criteria such as age, ethnicity, gender, and educational background, among others (Thomas, 1992). Workplace diversity creates a challenge to the management of libraries in Nigeria due to the need to manage a diverse workforce. The inability of organizations to manage a diverse workforce creates unfulfilled and unsatisfied employees. Therefore, the onus lies on the management of libraries in Nigeria to create an enabling environment that supports diversity.

(v) Highly Competitive Business Environment: The business environment in which most contemporary libraries operate in Nigeria is highly competitive due to factors such as globalization, disparities in salaries, changes in employees' needs and preferences among others. On this account, the management of libraries in Nigeria are expected to be proactive in their approaches through continuous innovation and having a close watch on the activities of their competitors. Management of organizations is challenged to offer continuous unique products and services even in the face of stiff competition. This is essential to attain profit maximization and continuity of the organization.

(vi) Changing needs and preferences of employees: Employees in libraries are diverse; as a result, they differ in their needs and preferences. Employees' needs are changing due to the

demand of personal and environmental factors that are capable of creating a form of imbalance in the satisfaction of their needs. Therefore, in satisfying employees' changing needs and preferences, the management of libraries should continually motivate employees concerning their needs. This explains why employees in libraries are remunerated differently based on positions occupied. Therefore, any library that fails to satisfy its employees' changing needs may experience constant job mobility which may pose a big challenge to the organization.

The above contemporary issues cannot be overlooked by today's management; rather management of libraries should work assiduously in addressing these organizational and environmental challenges. However, the question is to what extent can management theories address these contemporary issues confronting the management of libraries in Nigeria?

Concept of Management Theories

Theories provide a framework that is used in gaining valuable insights, understanding and successfully managing organizations in any dynamic environment (McLean, 2005). In the context of libraries in Nigeria, management theories may provide a basis for library managers in making sound decisions. The emergence of management theories dates back to the 18th century which started with classical approaches to managing organizations. The classical writers viewed organizations in terms of purpose, formal structure, the technical requirement of the organization, planning of work in a scientific manner (Thu Hoai, n.d). The contributions of these classical writers have been widely criticized by other theorists for not taking into account the personality and social factors that operate within the work environment. However, studies have expressed doubt on the effectiveness of classical principles when applied in practice (Woodward, 1980). Since the inception of the classical approach, several approaches to managing organizations have sprung up with different ideologies. However, despite several criticisms of the classical 'theory, it is found to be relevant in today's organizations because it offers a good starting point for an organization in terms of analyzing the design of organizational structure (Thu Hoai, n.d). In the course of writing this paper, contributions of other management theories will be delved into to bring to limelight their relevance and application in Nigerian libraries.

Underlying Principles of Specific Management Theories

Proponents of specific management theories will be discussed in this paper. These theories include the Classical approach, Scientific Management approach, Human Relations approach, Neo- Humanistic approach, Systems approach, and Contingency approach. Each of these approaches will be delved into in detail as reflected below:

Classical Approach to Managing Libraries

The classical approach to management viewed organizations in terms of purpose, formal structure, planning of work, and technical requirements. Under the classical perspective, different approaches have been emphasized such as scientific management, bureaucratic organization, and administrative principles. One of the key authors of the classical approach is Fredrick Taylor (1856 - 1917), the father of scientific management. According to Taylor, he believed that since there is the best machine for any job, there is the best working method to execute jobs in any organization. Fredrick Taylor identified some underlying principles to guide management. These principles include the following:

- (i) Develop standard methods for performing each job.
- (ii) Scientific selection, training, and development of workers.
- (iii) Division of work and responsibility between management and workers.
- (iv) Support workers by planning work and eliminating interruptions.
- (v) Provide monetary incentives to workers for increased output.

However, these principles have been criticized for not taking into account personality factors that can affect work, rather the organization is considered first instead of employees. It has been emphasized that a distinctive feature of Taylor's approach is the concept of management control (Baverman, 1974). This kind of control limits employees' initiatives at work. However, today's employees cannot be treated as robots, being knowledge workers, they have the abilities and skills to execute tasks assigned. Therefore, one of the arguments against Fredrick Taylor's scientific management is that it limits employees, initiatives, and control.

On the whole, Fredrick Taylor's underlying principles are still relevant in today's libraries in terms of segregation of duties, job design, organizational design, and technical requirements on the job. On the contrary, Anichebe & Agu, (2013) in an empirical study carried out on three Nigerian organizations found that the application of scientific management in these selected

organizations accounted for labor turnover, the layoff of workers, low productivity, and slow pace of growth and development. The reasons that can be deduced are that most employees may not give their best if the work environment is too regimented.

Humanistic Relations Approach to Managing Libraries

The Humanistic approach to managing organizations emphasized the social factors at work and the behavior of employees within the organization. The humanistic perspective addressed some lapses of the classical approach to management. The classical approach adopted a managerial perspective while the human relations perspective advocated for a greater understanding of employees' social and psychological needs. Therefore, the human relations perspective emphasized the satisfaction of employees' basic needs as a key to increased productivity. Human relations writers include Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), Douglas McGregor (1906-1964) among others.

The Humanistic Relations perspective is still very relevant in today's libraries. For instance, according to Abraham Maslow, an employee possesses a hierarchy of needs starting from lower-level needs ranging from physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization. Therefore as employees progress on their jobs, their needs differ, and as such the satisfaction of these needs motivates an employee to increase his/her level of productivity. From the point of the Humanistic relations view, library workers go to work to satisfy some couple of needs and not necessarily for monetary rewards. This deviates from the classical approach which emphasizes monetary rewards as essential to increase productivity.

Behavioral Approach to Managing Libraries

The Behavioural approach is an offshoot of the Hawthorn work experiment carried out at the Western Electric Company (1927-1932) in Chicago. Elton Mayor, a key proponent of the behavioral approach disapproved of Taylor's belief that science predicted workers' productivity in an organization. Hawthorn work experiments examined the effects of lighting on workers' productivity. The result of the experiment revealed that lighting had no impact on workers' productivity, and based on the result of this experiment, Elton Mayo examined the impact of other factors on the level of productivity of a particular women group. These factors include

rest breaks, free meals, more hours in the workplace, more weeks, and fewer hours. Each of these factors increased the level of productivity of these women.

The Hawthorn experiment proved that work satisfaction and performance of workers in organizations are not based on economic incentives such as money. However, satisfaction in the workplace depends on factors such as good working conditions, attitudes, positive responses, and engagement by management. Elton Mayo's experiment also showed that group dynamics and the social make-up of an organization propels the high productivity of employees.

Behavioural approach is relevant to modern libraries due to the complexity of the business environment. Library employees are not only satisfied based on monetary reward only, but get more satisfied as a result of good working conditions and favorable management practices. All these culminate in increased productivity and satisfaction on the job.

Systems Approach in Managing Libraries

The systems approach views the organization as a system with interrelated parts, that is, the whole being the sum of different parts. A system is a collection of parts that contributes to achieving the overall goal. According to Olum (2004), he analyzed a system from four different aspects namely: (i) inputs include resources, raw materials, money, technologies, and people. (ii) Processes include planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. (iii) Outputs are either products or services. (iv) outcomes comprise the enhanced quality of life, improved productivity for workers or customers. Therefore, a library is seen as a whole system with other subsystems working together as part of the whole. This means that the library is an extension of the larger society, therefore, the onus is on management to ensure that what happens in the external environment does not extend to the library being a part of the larger system.

The Systems approach is relevant in 21st-century organizations due to numerous changes in the business environment that are bound to affect organizations. The changes include globalization, information technologies, changing customer needs and preferences, work diversity among others. Based on the system's approach, libraries in Nigeria must operate within the confines of the business and corporate environment to attain a competitive edge, increased profitability, increased productivity, and organizational performance.

Contingency/ Situational Approach to Managing Libraries

The contingency approach suggests that successful resolutions of organizational problems depend on identifying key variations in a particular situation at hand. In tackling problems, library managers can adopt the contingency approach by identifying key aspects of the problem to bring about lasting solutions. In other words, the situation at hand in any library will determine how best to handle problems revolving around the situations.

In the context of Nigerian libraries, the contingency approach is adequate due to several organizational and environmental challenges that are confronting libraries locally and globally. On this account, library managers should painstakingly examine problems confronting organizations, and identify probably key factors in the situation that would bring solutions to the problems. In the Nigerian situation, environmental challenges such as Boko- Haram insurgency, climate changes, environmental health hazards among others may affect the existence of any library. Therefore, in such situations, the management of libraries needs to address problems based on their current situations.

Chaos Approach to Managing Libraries

Chaos theory was propounded by Tom Peters (1942). It is one of the modern management theories which emphasizes the chaotic situations faced by organizations across countries of the world. Since organizations exist within a given environment, chaotic situations are bound to affect organizations. Therefore, libraries cannot be immune from the adverse effect of chaos and conflict in the environment. Chaos theory predicts that chaos cannot be abated unless quick action is taken or by successful intervention by an effective leader. For instance, most university libraries in Nigeria face chaotic situations especially from students' riots and violence that may not be easily combated except by rapid solutions from effective and efficient management. Also, in some parts of the country where there are cases of insurgency, such libraries are prone to terrorist attacks, which may eventually affect the existence of such libraries if adequate care is not taken by management. Chaos theory is therefore relevant to the management of libraries in Nigeria due to chaotic situations that may arise within and outside the environment, they operate. Management of libraries in Nigeria needs to combat problems as quickly as possible to avert a total collapse of the organization.

Management Practice and Application of Management Theories

Management of libraries is required to acquire necessary skills in managing organizational resources, and most importantly applying the right theory in problem-solving and decision-making situations. The role of management theories cannot be undermined because it can serve as a basis for sound judgment and action. It is therefore expedient that management of libraries should develop their managerial skills as one of the ways in applying relevant management theories in the workplace.

Olum (2004) elaborated on four main kinds of skills required by managers in organizations namely: (i) Technical skills connote knowledge of and proficiency in activities involving methods, processes, and procedures. Thus, it involves working with tools and specific techniques; (ii) Human skill is the ability to work with people successfully by emphasizing teaming or creative effort. It is the creation of an environment in which people feel secure and free to express their opinions; (iii) Conceptual skill is the ability to recognize significant elements in a situation and to understand the relationships among the elements; (iv) Design skill is the ability to solve problems in ways that will benefit the enterprise.

Therefore, library Managers must be able to do more than see a problem and possess valuable skills in designing a workable solution to the array of problems faced in the workplace. Each of these skills needs to be applied and used by the management of libraries in different problem scenarios and decision-making situations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The role of Management theories in 21st-century organizations is of immense importance due to their application and use to successfully manage organizations. Without an iota of doubt, modern libraries thrive in the face of several organizational and environmental challenges. However, these challenges need to be surmounted by the management of libraries as a means of meeting their organizational goals and objectives. The rippling effect of the inability to address these issues may be a total or partial collapse of the organization in the future, leading to incapacitation in the delivery of result-oriented, functional and satisfactory information services to the library users.

Based on the foregoing, the role of management theories in successful management practice in Nigerian libraries cannot be overemphasized due to its impact in handling specific problem

situations and decision-making scenarios. In view of this, the use and application of relevant management theories by the management of libraries in Nigeria are hereby recommended based on the following reasons:

- It will help library managers in analysing and tackling specific problem areas in organizations such as the problem of structure, human relations, or socio-technical.
- It will enable library managers to choose from different approaches that best suit the problem area detected. For instance, in dealing with the problem of structure, the idea from classical writers can be reviewed and applied to the problem at hand. In another case, if the problem is relating to human resource management, the idea from the human relations movement may be useful in providing solutions to the problem at hand.
- Management theories are managers' tools for successful practice because theories are accumulated bodies of knowledge that are applicable in different scenarios that occur in the organization. Problems in real-life situations that occur in Nigerian libraries can be addressed carefully through the application and use of relevant management theories

In conclusion, management theories are not impracticable, but rather are still relevant in today's libraries despite the contemporary challenges facing management of libraries. Therefore, managers in Nigerian libraries need to possess the requisite skills in applying theories to practical scenarios in the workplace.

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