THE VALUE OF HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE WORK PLACE

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Abstract
Managing relationship in an organization is paramount as it involves the systematic and careful application of knowledge about how individuals and groups of people interact in the workplace. Behaviour science analysis, performance appraisal and begaviour based safety, etc constitute the necessary technology for achieving this target. The goal of managing behavior in the organization is to establish a technology of a large-scale-performance improvement and organizational dynamism to cope with changes. It also includes ensuing employee's high level productiveness and happiness on their jobs to guarantee organizational effectiveness and efficiency for the realization of set objectives. This paper will therefore focus attention on organizational theories, elements, organizational development quality of work life, social system, culture and individualization which constitute the basis for understanding human behavior and relationship at the work place.

Introduction
Review of related literature showed that the value of relationship in the work place gave birth to what is called human resource management (HRM). Relationship in the work place is very important, because it does not only determine the level of workers' productivity but also determine the very existence and survival of organizations. The importance of relationship in the work place has attracted development efforts from management and the scholars of HRM. Organization is central to man and man is central to organization because it is man that makes things happen in the organization. Man's organizational objectives have to be controlled and channeled towards productivity otherwise personal ambition will thwart organizational objectives. (McGregor, 1960).

It is the management approaches of handling man in the work place that led to studies including organizational behaviour by Robbins, (2001), etc. which also led to the advancement of HRM. Contrary to the past, handling of workers in the work place has moved from traditional, to paternalistic and to modern management. Today, managing workers in the work place is no longer based on oral undertaking but depends on adequate knowledge and application of modern management techniques which include mathematical models, rating scale, behavioural models, etc.
**Historical Background Of The Study**

During the period before 1800, jobs were undertaken by workers within houses or restricted places of assignments, hence no regard for efficiency. Paul Mali quoted by Ibrahim, (2008) defined Personnel Management (PM) as “the process of getting things done through people” and he linked up the origin of PM to the construction of the Tower of Babel (pyramids) in Egypt in the years 5,000 – 1,600 BC. He also traced the Span of Control as a management function (POSDCORB) to the works of Jethro the Father-in-law of Moses in the year 1491 BC. According to him, handling man at the work place was based on oral undertaking which was based on slavery and repression. This trend of labour management was also traced to traditional community leadership in Nigeria which managed the affairs of their communities leading to the transformation and modernization of their communities into city-states and nations with full sovereignty today. In Nigeria, it was the traditional administration on ground which supports the success of the indirect rule system of administration in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. (Dibie, 2012).

However, from the period between 1800 and 1930, workers were viewed as mere mortals. But it was also within this same period they were regarded as an important resource of organizations and so they were expected to improve on their efficiency in the discharge of their assignments.

The period between 1930 and 1940 was characterized by depression and World War II which ushered in the emergence of trade unions with the mandate to negotiate working conditions for their members. Job selection or recruitment exercises were also given to the personnel department to handle. There was also an outburst of technology which requires recruitments of technically trained graduates of engineering from the universities and colleges. It was during this period that the relationship between salary and productivity became well pronounced and competitive as a result of inflation. Performance appraisal, job evaluation, merit rating, job analysis and incentive schemes were also part of its responsibilities.

The period between 1950 and 1960 in the trend of labour management relations witnessed a new development brought about by technology and business organizations. These developments called for changes in managerial styles to replace the existing old ones which were inadequate in managing new organizations. So, in order to cope with the demands of the time, the management culture de-emphasized the man-machine relationship and emphasized the man-to-group and group-to-objective relationship. (Aminu, 2001).

The period between 1970 and 1980 marked the beginning of social responsibilities in the labour management relations. Management became interested in the rights of individuals and groups of workers in the work place. It was as a result of this development that the rights of interest groups, old group, pensioners, the handicaps, minorities, educationally backward were covered by management.
Management also began to have interest in conflict resolutions between individuals and groups in the work place and this move attracted the work of Mary Parker Follet (1949) and others as quoted by Ujo, (2010) in his text: Understanding the Major Administrative Thought. The period 1980s and beyond set in the technological innovation and development era i.e. computers were introduced and usage acceptable in most organizations for assigning personnel to various task, duties and jobs that's why fear gripped some people during the period that computers will one day take over the jobs of PM, Aminu, A.A. (2001).

In the 1990s to date, labour management relations are well developed to its important position in the management of the Nigerian economy. It is during this period that the Federal Republic of Nigeria created the position for the Director of Personnel Management in Local Governments of the country and was made amongst other duties and responsibilities, the Signatories and Accounting Officers of the Local Governments.

The Value Of Relationship In The Work Place
Today, as Dean (2003), put it that “relationship is based on value”, and the value of relationship in the work place led into organized and dynamic labour management relations system, which operate, based on rules and regulations sustained by cordial relationship between employees and employers. There are sufficient literature materials in the field which laid down the foundation for further research and development of the field. Today, management does not only recognize the value of workers in the work place but that, workers could even go on an indefinite strike actions without fear of being sacked or even victimized by their employers after the industrial actions. This is to say that relationship between workers and management is fully matured. By this it is no longer traditional (i.e. one-way traffic) but a guarded, suited and sustained by documented labour rules and regulations in order to ensure smooth labour management relationship in the work place. It also gives workers the feelings of importance in the work place because they are now partners in progress with management rather than being mere mortals.

Today, contrary to the past, the development we have in the field of HRM is to the extent that workers have their full rights to congregate under the platform of professionalism such as APSSON and labour unions (such as ASUU, SSANU), etc. The works of scholars in human resource management like Frederick Taylor (1911), Douglas McGregor (1960) Abraham Maslow (1972), Edward Flippo (1984), Robbins, S.P. (2001), Mary Parker Follet (1949), etc. showed that managing workers in the work place have really put great emphasis on the value of cordial relationship in the work place in support of industrial peace and harmony for profit maximization or achievement of set objectives by organization.
It is also through relationship in the work place that new models in HRM are formed, developed, nurtured and reviewed regularly. These review processes had continued to pose further research undertakings in the field of HRM science thereby guaranteeing its dynamism and advancement.

The new administrative techniques (NMT) for management to improve the public service performance includes the total quality control (TQC), performance management, decentralization management, benchmarking, public–private sector partnership (PPP), Service Compact with All Nigerians (SERVICOM), etc. are based on research undertaking in the area of workers' behaviour in the work place, are made operational in the public sector.

The Federal Government of Nigeria through the public service rules (PSR) also provided job related allowances like: duty tour allowance, acting allowance, overtime allowance, teaching allowance, warm clothing allowance, non-accident bonus, shift duty allowance, call duty allowance, hazard allowance, responsibility allowance and kilometer allowance, medical treatment allowance, training and development, etc. (FRN, 2000).

Having provided such boosters of workers' morale, workers' performance level is no longer based on forceful management nor does it depend on the paternalistic or scientific approaches to labour again but we can categorically say that it is based on the Adams Equity Theory (1963), which spelt out a balance based on 'give' and 'take' or 'inputs' and 'outputs' basis. This relationship is supported by the labour laws and enforceable by the National Industrial Court. (Aminu, 2001).

As earlier indicated the value of relationship in the work place is indispensable for the organizational existence and survival as well as for the workers' achievement of their own individual and collective goal-aspirations, relationship amongst workers also enable management to distribute work along clearly defined lines, monitor and control work and, solve problems relating to individual worker or a group of workers or worker and management amicably.

A group structure also work effectively where workers inculcate the culture of one unit goal, group cohesiveness/team work spirit, high expectations, willingness and adoption of a good communication pattern: vertical, horizontal and external means in the organization. The end result of this culture is to eliminate some counterproductive behaviours of workers in the work place which will affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. And problems that could be solved easily through good relationships in the work place includes tension between staff and other fellow workers or group, tension between workers and management, tension amongst management staff, unhealthy internal rivalry between all workers and management staff, strikes, etc.
A good working relationship in the organization will enable the workers to practice the principles of interpersonal relationship which include acting like a member of a team, recognize the different background of their colleagues, learn to be accommodative, avoid gossips in the workplace, display a positive attitude to your job, be friendly and cooperative, stick to the chain of command, be polite, apologize when you are wrong, be respectful, honest, responsible, etc.

Summary
The labour management practice in the past was based on oral undertaking, hence it was primitive, slavery-driven and repressive to workers at the work place. It then followed by the culture of fixing the right man-machine era which led to the industrial revolution and later on to the global economic depression when salary and productivity became competitive. From there and then the trend had moved to the management culture where it de-emphasized the man-machine labour relationship to the management culture where it emphasized the man-to-group and groups-to-objective relationship in the work place.
Finally, the value of relationship to an individual worker is that it enables the worker remain on the current job in order to secure individual goal in the work place. For groups, it enables the members secure their collective objectives for which such a group was formed and for the management, it enables it obtain and maintain industrial peace and harmony.

Conclusion
Today, workers are no longer seen and handled as an object of profit maximization but they are seen and managed by their employers with some great importance and value. The importance is to the extent that the workers must not only be physically involved in the work they do but they must as well be emotionally involved in the work they do in their work places (Templar,2005). The question is; how can employers get their workers emotionally involved in the discharge of their duties? Actually, the answers to this question will constitute what is called the modern administrative management today both in the private and public sectors. The new labour management techniques therefore demand that both parties must undertake to discharge ones responsibilities or duties commensurate with what the other persons might have put for the other.

References


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