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Management approach for effective management in the 21st century

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ABSTRACT

The 21st century is gripped with the challenge of effective management for the survival of any business organization. Managers and management scholars are left with the responsibility of exploring and adopting the best management approach in other to keep their organization in business. This paper is focused on management approach for effective management in the 21st century. The paper specifically weighed the four major management theories which include the scientific theories, Human Relations theory, the modern theory and the eclectic theory and, finally made Recommendation/ conclusion for the 21st century managers.

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Introduction

The necessity and quest for optimum productivity has always been driving force behind the desire by both managers and management scholars for the development of the most appropriate approach for effective management.

Management theories have evolved over time. According to Amah (2011:56) the interest of management theories are to improve the lot of employees and their environment through effective management, use of human and material resources in the production, distribution and organization of industrial, cultural, social, military and even religious activities. Again they are meant to find solutions to the myriad of problems of managing production and people in the work place.

More so, the present global economic challenges has made it imperative for organizations to seek, adopt and apply the most relevant management ideology for effective management. So as to continue to achieve high productivity in production or service delivery for the achievement of organizational goals.

The evolution of management theories

Management theories has passed through various stages of metamorphosis over time. However, there is need for management scholars and practitioners alike to evaluate management theories because modern management fields and concepts are not completely alienated and unrelated, they evolved from earlier theories. So to say, that all modern management theories has their root on the classical management theory.

The management theories for this paper was reduced to the following (1) scientific management (2) Human relations (3)Modern theory and (4)Eclectic Management theory.

Scientific Management

Fredrick Taylor (1856-1917) a native of a German town is the father of scientific management. He developed scientific management theory based on the challenges of that time. One of the challenge of that time was that output in production line was unnecessarily low. Having being a common labourer himself, Taylor decided to discover the reason behind this low output. In the course of his enquiry, he discovered that the main reason for this low output was because of what he termed "Systematic Soldiering" this is a situation where by workers deliberately

limited the amount of work they will do in a day by deceiving the employers that their output or level of activity was the highest that can be attained by any human being.

The workers fear was that if they worked faster, they would complete the job and laid off, in an effort to resolve this dilemma. Taylor secured a permission to conduct a scientific study of "time" required to do various kinds of works. Systematically, he attempted to replace guesswork and rule of-thumb with exact knowledge about every step in production process. Since "time" study was the major focus of his work, the stop-watch quickly became the popular symbol of Taylor's study. Literally with a stop watch, scale and tape he measured the distance that men and materials travelled. Eventually, he concluded that a large share of both efforts and material was needlessly wasted because of improper management. Through the changes he recommended, the time needed to perform various jobs was drastically reduced.

To implement his method, Taylor developed an incentive piece rate pay system, which would enable first class workers who meet a specified target earn corresponding extra wages. This method significantly increased output level.

Taylor's work was strongly influenced by his social/historical period. His lifetime (1856-1917) was during the industrial revolution. The overall industrial environment of this period is well documented by the Dicken's classic "Hard Times" or Sinclair's "the Jungle". Autocratic management was the norm. citation.

One can see Taylor turning to "science" as a solution to the inefficiencies and injustices of the period. His idea of breaking a complete task into a sequence of simple subtasks closely mirrors the interchangeable parts ideas pioneered by Eli whitney earlier in the Century. Furthermore, the concepts of training the worker and developing "a heartily cooperation" represented a significant improvement over the feudal human relations of the time (Sibbet 1997).

Criticism of Scientific Management (Disadvantages)

- 1.Taylor was treating human beings as a machine
- 2.Labour union felt that it will restrict them during bargaining in the sense that if the employers know how many units each

worker should be able to produce, it will be hard for the union to justify large wage increases.

3.The need desire, feeling, emotion and aspiration of the worker were not considered.

Defence By Taylor(Advantages)

1.Increase in productivity was achieved.

2.Increase in salaries of both managers and workers.

3.He pioneered the use of pause or coffee break.

4.His method encourage the less strain more output approach by workers .

Limitations In The Application Of Scientific Management

1.It requires complete cooperation of the workers whose jobs are being measured. Such cooperation is difficult since workers know that they would be required to meet new standards, and therefore slow down when new measurement begin.

2.Workers are not allowed to participate in decision making even though their full cooperation is needed.

3.It violate the principle of unity of command as each worker will be under several bosses who will examine different aspects of the job.

Human relations:

As organization continued to apply and reap the dividends of scientific managements over the years, they experienced a significant increases in productivity. But after some years, of experiencing this increased productivity, there was an observable decline in productivity even though the philosophy and dictates of scientific management was still effectively applied. What caused this decline in productivity could not be explained by Taylor's scientific management. This deficiency and shortfall made organizational managers in dire need of solution to the new problems confronting organizations sought for, and approached the university academic at Harvard University for a possible solution. The Graduate school of Business Administration was consulted with Elton Mayo a professor of industrial Research being responsible for the initiation and direction of research projects.

This project was tagged "Hawthorn experiment" it was carried out between 1927-1932 by Elton Mayo., R.J. Roethlisberge, W.J. Dickson and others (Drucker 1974) the findings as Mayo wrote " An organization is a social system of rituals and mixture of logical, non logical and illogical behavior".

According to him, effective management involves leading persons not manipulating robots (machine like worker). Therefore higher productivity was not necessarily achieved by positive finance incentive or improved working conditions the knowledge of human nature should be the basis to approaching management problems. They believed that a successful human relation approach would create organizational harmony, higher employee satisfaction and greater operational efficiency.

Basic Canons of Mayor's Human Relation. The worker is a being with feelings and emotions, this evidently is contrary, to Taylor's view of the worker as a mere adjunct to a machine.

□ Worker should not always be seen as Individuals but as members of a group. This is because behavior of the workers are influenced by the group to which they belong .

□ Working conditions impact considerably on worker's performance. It is pertinent to observe that the human relations theory redirected thinking on human behavior from the classical conceptions of it as inert and latently dysfunctional to a comprehensive and dynamic issue in management.

□ The worker is not always economically minded. He is also interested in harmonies and satisfying social relations in the work place. This automatically reflected Taylor's belief and assertion that money was the only means of motivating workers.

□ There are two groups in every organization, the formal and informal. Unfortunately, following from one of the experiments of the Hawthorn crew, the Bank room, they concluded the goals of the informal group were incompatible with that of the formal group.

Evidently, Mayo's Hawthorn investigation produced ground breaking result and therefore established a paradigm shift from the scientific management approach and opened a new thinking in handling organization problems.

Modern Theory

According to Okpata (2006:332) this is an integrative theory that attempts to present and operate organization as a unified purposeful system composed of interrelated parts.

The underlying ideology here is that organizations are systems composed of mutually interdependent variables. The development of modern management organization theory has been influenced by a number of social, political, economic and technological changes in the larger society. Modern theory focuses heavy reliance on empirical research data. It views organization as an adaptive system, which must adjust to change in its environment, if it is to survive. Modern theory perceives organizations as structured process in which individuals interact for objectives. It provides the needed overall view with emphasis on synthesis and design.

According to Obikeze et al (2005), modern approach accepts the premises that the only meaningful way to study organization is through bringing together all information into a conceptual analytical framework, which can be examined by those interested in learning. Personnel management appreciates the approach that social structure consists of basic parts.

The deficiencies of the modern theory was exposed over time by the realization of the complexity of organizational environment.

Many of the basic assumptions underlying human nature were challenged. The moved towards increased empirical research produced inconsistent support for many of our generalized concepts.

That is to say that while these general theories were supported in some studies, other research efforts produced different results. The result of these trends has been the move towards more complicated and sufficient models of human nature and the resultants implications of how to manage these individuals. A set of perceptive assumptions about people began to emerge. **These includes: .**

□ Human needs fall into many categories and differs according to individual's stage of development, aspiration and total life situation.

□ Needs and motives interact to form complete motivation patterns, it becomes pertinent to note that for different people the same object or outcome, e.g. money can vary in importance and fulfill quite different needs.

□ Employees can become involved with an organization on the basis of many different types of motives.

□ People are always capable of developing new motives through organizational experiences.

□ The same individual may display different needs in different organizations or in different groups within the same organization.

The ability of the organization to identify and satisfy the individual worker needs has a strong correlation to the individual's commitment to the organization.

Eclectic Management Theory

Eclectic management theory emerged as a panacea of the various flaws experienced in the practice of the various theories in industrial settings.

It is an integration of all management approach to achieve the desired result.

According to Obikezie et al (2005), a method that is very affective in one situation may not work at all in another. Therefore, the task of managers is to try to identify, which technique will work in a particular situation, under a particular circumstance and at a particular time, best contribute to the attainment of management goal.

The major strength of eclectic management theory is its dynamism; flexibility and all inclusiveness attribute which makes it the choice of 21st century managers and scholars.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

All management theories starting from the classical theory to eclectic theory are all part of a system that cannot work in

isolation of another. That is to say that the machine theory irrespective of its deficiencies is the corner stone upon which the house of modern management was built.

The 21st century managers should be dynamic, flexible and adaptable to various theories of management, in order to able to synchronize the various options available to produce his desired result of effective management.

Eclectic management has broadened the horizon of both managers and scholars since they are now at liberty to combine all necessary approach to produce the best result.

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