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XRAYING HUMAN RELATIONS MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRINCIPALS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The secondary school system is a complex environment comprising a heterogenous population of learners and teachers all pursuing the accomplishment of national educational objectives. If not properly coordinated, the myriad of activities, both the intended and unintended, that goes on within and around a school will culminate into low-grade accomplishment or no accomplishment at all of the educational objectives. The success of secondary education to a large extent hinges on the administrative or managerial prowess of the school principal. Research evidence is replete with evidence of the existence of secondary school principals that are not properly grounded in management theories, principles and policies. As such they display counter-productive leadership activities that negate harmonious co-existence between the leader and the led. It is however pertinent that a conducive environment be created in the secondary schools which will facilitate the accomplishment of desired educational objectives through the application of workable and viable leadership approaches. This article assessed the provisions of Mary Parker Follets' Human Relations Management and its implications for principals of secondary schools in Nigeria.

Keywords: X-ray, Human Relations Management, Implications, Principals, Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933) eschewed the scientific cum technical approach to management, emphasizing instead the importance of the manager-worker relations and the need to view management (and leadership) more holistically. According to Versa (2019), Follett was an early management consultant and organizational theorist who identified management as an art and not a science. This sits at her heart of thinking about management

and her strong belief that they key task of management is to facilitate cooperation the involvement of the staff and decision making. Follett felt that no one could become a whole person except as a member of a group and human beings grow through their relationships with others in an organization. In fact, she called management the art of getting things done through people. She rejected Taylor's assertion that labour and management shared a common purpose as members of the same organization but believed that the artificial distinction between managers (order givers) and subordinates (order takers) obscured the natural partnership expected in organizations.

Follett advocated for effective humans relations, emphasized equal and reciprocal relationship as a parameter in the success of organizations. Manse (2022) stresses that Follett's work contrasted with the 'scientific management' of Fredrick W. Taylor which stressed time and motion studies. Follett on the other hand stressed the interactions of the management and workers where leaders see the whole rather than the particular. Follett is regarded as the mother of 'conflict resolution' where she coined the words 'power-over' and 'power-with' to differentiate coercive power from participative decision-making showing how 'power-with' can be greater than 'power-over'.

Follett's View of Management

In the view of Follett, human beings are the most important resource of an organization. Humanistic management otherwise called the human relation management advocated organizations should emphasize stimulating employees' motivation, activity and creativity to carry out administrative activities and changes. According to Harris (2019), the core issue in management according to humanism is to understand, to respect and to titillate people's enthusiasm in order to reach the aims that the staff and the organization should develop together. Management must be through basic issues such as what the organization is, on what the organization depends and what the organization is for. The implication is that organizations should be 'of the people', 'by the people' and 'for the people' commonly called the '3P management'.

Of the People

An organization is an aggregation of organized people. If there is no human, there is no organization. If an organization wants to make profit, first it has to effectively organize and manage the staff and through them distribute and use materials. If there is no effective and talented staff base, the organization won't make any profit even with good equipment and sufficient capital. 'Of the people' means an organization must establish a highly dependable culture, fully trust people's abilities, put people to the center place, pay attention to explore and develop people's potentials at any time.

By the People

The way to achieve organizational goals by is dependent on effective utilization of human resources, recognizing people with abilities, protecting them and stimulating their activity and creativity by attaching great importance to affection management. Humanism stresses the participation of all the staff by making them both the object and the principal part of the management through encouraging employees to offer suggestions to the organization in all ways as well as strengthening the employees' will and efficiency in performing decisions. 'By the people' means authorizing the employees to enjoy their own rights, information and

knowledge so as to fulfill their assignments efficiently under the control of their own and achieve self-fulfillment. Creating a cooperate culture environment, forging a common behaviour model for the staff and cultivating a positive cooperate spirit by unifying the employees' personal goals and the organization's goals makes organizational management 'by the people' oriented.

For the People

The symbol of humanism is the achievement of the aims of both the organization and the staff. A traditionally defined organization is an economic enterprise in which the employees are served by the management by paying great attention to the promotion of employees' work and living qualities. 'For the people' means granting employees ample opportunities to make personal progress continuously by assisting them grasps some relevant skills as well as stressing their self development and improvement. The organization helps the staff to carry out professional life design to gain the harmonious unification of the development of both the organization itself and its employees. This turns the 'human based' management to a real expansion-stimulation model as both the organization and its employees being to expand day by day. The end result is massive surge in potentials of the 'interior human' and the 'exterior human'.

Follett argued that the primary responsibility of leadership is to discover the sense-making thread that structures understanding of the 'total situation', establish the 'common purpose' that emerges from this and by leading, 'anticipating' the next situation. Management should try to find out the unifying cord in the mass of facts, experience, desires, aims and attempt to see the relation between all the different factors and strive towards their unification for the development of the organization and its employees.

The Management Philosophy of Mary Parker Follett

Follett's philosophy of management is that any enduring society or any continuously productive organization must be grounded upon recognition of the motivating desires of the individuals and those of the group. Adem (2021) notes that, consistently, Follett sought to force home a realization of the fact that the democratic way of life, implemented by intelligent organizations and administration of government is to work towards an honest integration of all the points of view, to the end that every individuality may be mobilized and made to count both as a person and as an effective part of the organization as a whole. The aim of Follett's work was to create a better organizational climate and culture which should begin with psychological analysis of the nature of the consent of the governed and the conditions under which it could be made spontaneous. Based on this view, Follett brought forth the following tenets of the human relation management:

The law of the Situation and the Giving of Orders: In Follett's view, the law of the situation is based on the concept of complex, reciprocally related interactions that are constantly changing and evolving in organizations, providing repeated opportunities to achieve a healthy process or new synthesis which is integration. Gon (2021) notes that one interpretation of integration is that it is a harmonious marriage of differences that produce a new entity and the real leader is the person who can understand the law of the situation and get the most out of it. The giving of orders is based on the law of the situation rather than on positional authority. Orders are given because they are demanded by the logic of the situation

incorporating input from those with expertise in the areas. According to Pena (2019), Follett's key idea in the giving of orders is that teach individual takes a conscious, responsible and experimented attitude towards the experience noting the result and analyzing the successes and failures by uniting all in a study of the situation. The goal of management here is discover the law of the situation and once that happens, the situation—not the employer or employee—dictates the necessary orders. As the situation is always evolving, the orders should change with the situation thereby creating circular behaviour that is adaptive to the situation for efficient accomplishment of personal and organizational goals.

Principles of organization: Follett advocated an integrative unity of the organization or the state, where member work together to get the facts and consider the situation and in which there is collective responsibility for decisions. The holistic approach taken by Follett can be seen in her application of the concept of integrative unity to both business and government. The process of integration, which is called coordination here, is applied by Follett to management within a given organization focusing on the full, willing, and honest contributions of all parties involved. According to Akpakwu (2012), Follett developed the following principles of organizational management which include (i) Coordination by contact with people; (ii) coordination in the early stages suggesting that speedy coordination or actives and programmes is important' and (iii) coordination as a continuous process suggesting that education managers should always be coordination g people, their works and other resources.

The principle of power: Follett beings by defining power as the ability to make things happen and to initiate change, while viewing the urge to feel powerful as the satisfaction of being alive. In this context there would be varying degrees of power and intensity. Control then is defined as power exercised as a means toward a specific end, while authority is vested control either through strength or weakness. Using Follett' definition of power, it is neither good nor bad, but a condition of being human. However, Monin and Bathurst (2021) notes that Follett indicates that power is usually seen as "power-over" another person or group, which is coercive. In her model of integration using the law of the situation in making the social organization a functional unity, power is jointly developed, coactive, and is termed "power-with" reflecting the participative process. For Follett, power cannot be delegated, as genuine power is capacity, based upon the ability of individuals to grow capacity for themselves and focusing again on the development of the individual.

The principle of constructive conflict and conflict resolution: Follett is mostly known for her in-depth analysis of conflict situation. For her, a conflict is neither bad nor good. A conflict is merely a reflection of the differences between individuals' opinions and interests. The difference is not just between the employer and the employee; differences actually come up everywhere including among executives and in board meetings and this are unavoidable. Ude (2019) noted that, Follett began her discussion of constructive conflict by asking her readers to consider conflict as merely a difference of opinions and of interests without making a value judgment. The three main ways of dealing with conflict are domination, compromise, and integration. In both domination and compromise someone wins and someone loses, while with integration both parties' desires are met and nothing is given up. According to Uba (2019), in dominion, victory is unilateral, that, manager should be able to greater a unilateral solution to a problem. Compromise arises when each side in the conflict zone agrees to make

concession and arrive at a certain solution to narrow down areas of disagreement. Integration occurs when neither side claims victory. Integration requires new ways of viewing the situation, and the creation of something new. To achieve integration, the differences and conflicting values are first brought into the open, thereby uncovering the conflict Discussion of the values allows both sides to reorders or re-values their desires and seeks ways to help each achieve these values. The use of the circular response, where behavior precipitates behavior, helps the participants respond to the situation and the existing relationship. The process of conflict resolution requires open and honest communications, intelligence, perception, and inventiveness along with the necessity to move to action. However, conflict appears repeatedly in different forms.

Principle of citizen participation: The principle advocates participation by members of organization in decision making. It comprises participatory analysis which gives members of an organization a voice in the early steps in policy formulation. According to Versas (2019) this will enhance democratic administration of organizations for efficient accomplishment of the stated goals and objectives. For Follett, participation is each individual's inclusion in a unit comprised of interrelated activities in line with the capacity of each individual. However, a machine cannot be built just by bringing together all of its pieces together. This is because these pieces need to be related with one another. For an effective participation in organizations, employee contributions should be coordinated, to create a functioning whole. According to Wikenna (2022), this can be achieved by coordination, barrier-free communication, and communication based on clarity, openness and understanding. Follett states that participation corresponds not to self-sacrifice, but self-contribution. So, how will the employee participation be recruited? With an organizational structure that will recruit participation, a method should be employed that will achieve different levels of participation from individuals with different educational backgrounds, natures and skills by recognizing the principles of participation in day-to-day management operations and acting accordingly. Follett's ideas about participation are supported by today's management thinking by ensuring that employees work by creating teams in the business place and valuing diversity and using it in the interests of the organization.

Principle of democratic citizenship: Closely related to the principle of citizen participation is democratic citizenship which emphasized the involvement of citizens in management. Rines (2019) notes that human relation focus on the use of all avenues for deliberations and utilizes every available opportunity to build knowledge and confidence in the members. Responsive managers should demonstrate the ability to listen skillfully thereby reducing tension between management and staff by instituting respect for differences, promoting an attitude of openness and flexibility which are keys to successful management.

Mutual problem solving principle: Follett emphasized mutual problem solving by the use of cross-functional committees that encourages all forms and approaches of employee involvement, participative management and team cooperation. According to Yusuf (2022), mutual problem solving thrives best under dynamic environments where changes are constant revolving around the needs and aspirations of employee yet not negating the aims and objectives of the organization.

Principle of dynamism of organization: Follett disagrees to a static analytic in her organizational studies. This is because she sees organizations as a union of dynamic social relationships emerging thorough the reciprocal responses of individuals. For example, Gon (2021) argues that another problem that has to be solved will come up with the introduction of new elements in the environment as soon as a problem is solved. In this context, the nature of interaction between individuals is cyclic rather than linear: For example, each individual action results in another's response, which affects the formation of the action. In this context, executives should not consider themselves to be free from the circumstances in which they are and they should consider that he circumstances could change in case of a problem-solving situation. In this case, the interaction in the environment is the determining factor. Otherwise, that is, where the unique nature and dynamism of the circumstances of the environment are not considered, the results will be negative bother for the individuals in environment and for the organization as a whole.

Principle of empowerment: Follett made a simple definition of power: the ability to make things happen, to be a causal agent, to initiate change. Control, in this regard, can also be seen as power. Authority is the person with the power to control. However, Chika (2019) opines that having the power and being strong are not necessarily the same. This is because, in some cases, our desire to control a situation may also be our weakness. She divides the phenomenon of power into two: First is power-over, which means the individual's or group's pressure on the other individual or group; and the second is power with, which means non-coercive power used and developed together: she saw power as a potential that he individual can develop himself, rather than a pre-existing, given, or seized potential. She does not believe that power can be distributed in this sense, but she believes that and executive can nurture and develop their employed power by giving them opportunities. Thus, power comes from an effective relationship of the individual with the others, showing itself in supporting the employers in the organization.

Relevance of Follett's Human Relation Approach to Educational Management

The educational system by virtue of its existence is essentially a social venture aimed at satisfying the needs of the society. According Okwori (2019), education serves dual purposes which are for consumption and investment. Whichever purpose that education is intended to serve, the people involved in the supply of the demand for education must be treated according to Akpakwu (2012) with a human face. They have to be considered first as human beings then as workers. The creation and maintenance of a naturally humane, democratic, all inclusive and participative atmosphere in the educational setting is a pointer to the effective accomplishment of the educational and national objectives. Marry Parker Follett's human relation approach to management has found relevance to the educational industry in the following ways:

The utilization of the principle of organization for running educational activities: Follett emphasized that, the success of an organization depends on the effective and orderly arrangement of its activities through people. The implication of this on educational management is that, the school manager will utilize all talents, potentials and capacities inherent in the staff to plan for school activities. Including every member in the decision making policy at one stage or the other brings cohesion between the management and staff thereby fostering rapid accomplishment of educational and national objectives (Smith (2022).

Applying the Principle of Conflict Resolution in Educational Management: Owing to the dynamism of human nature, conflict is bound to arise where two or more people work together. In the educational institutions, conflicts often arise between the management and the staff on various issues and within the management. If this conflict is not adequately resolved, the organization may grind to a halt. Using the tenets of compromise and integration, school managers and staff can easily resolve conflicts in order to move the school forward (Odeh, 2021)

Use of Participative Management and Democratic Citizenship in Educational Management: Follett was of the view that, management is simply getting things done through people. The school manager utilizing this principle carries everyone along the decision making and implementation procedure. The advantage of this arrangement is that, everybody feels to be part of the success story of the school and not just the school manager taking credit for whatever form of success in the school. This boosts morale and spurs performance (Gaso, 2019).

Mutual Problem Solving Approach to Issues of Educational Management: No educational manager should assume to be an island of knowledge and wisdom. Adem (2021) opines that there are problems that managers can solve without consulting the subordinated. However, certain problems demands for mutual and consultative approach in their resolution. This is one of the areas of interest regarding the human relation approach to educational management.

Dynamism of the Educations System: Follett stressed that, the environment is not static so are the human components of the environment. Human beings pass through different moments. The school manager will harvest in this principle and be able to effectively manage different staff that could be passing through trying moments in their lives (Gaso, 2019).

Institution of Labour Unions: Using the idea of integrative bargaining, Follett advocated, to turn disputes in a positive direction along with distributive processes they seek a balance in labour negotiations processes. Monin and Bathurst (2021) noted that distributive bargaining is seen as more effective in one-shot transactions, while integrative bargaining is more beneficial when the parties have ongoing relationships. This has resulted to the emergence and existence of teacher's and student's union in managing teachers' and students' agitation.

Compartmentalization of Organizations: Follett maintained that the organization must be constantly aware of both its external and internal environments. As a result, she argued that coherence is created when collective action responds to, and anticipates, both internal and external situational imperatives. The organization as a whole benefits from an understanding of the view from each department and the perspective of each employee involved in the situation. The effective organization seeks to achieve what Follett termed a function unity, in which the contributions of each individual member are coordinated based on their function. However, Manse (2022) *o*bserves that for this functional unity to occur each person must have the authority and responsibility that go with their specific function. This has given way to the emergence of departments in educational institutions.

Unity of Purpose Through Positive Interpersonal Relationship: Follett initiated belief in the importance of human relationships within a society, which stresses the ethical necessity for social and economic relations and responsibility to the greater accomplishment of educational, individual and national goals and objectives. Positive interpersonal relations within the school are a pointer towards the path of accomplishing with less efforts the organizational aims and objectives.

Proper Use of Motivation: Follett recognized the importance of motivation in the management of organization. According to Akpakwu (2012), the educational manager can use motivation to spur performance of organizational duties. This can be done through adequate understanding of the needs, interests, aspirations and desires of the staff. By striking a balance between the organizational objectives with proper staff motivation approaches, success in the accomplishment of educational objectives is guaranteed. In the view of Odeh (2021), the economic incentives are not the only significant motivator of performance; non-economic incentives such as social recognition and esteem are also essential. The school manager can do this by habitually accepting the opinions and feelings of teachers as well as those of the students in taking decisions for the running of school.

Criticisms of the Human Relations Approach to Management

The human relation approach has found wide applicability in the effective management of educational institutions by advocating for management with a human face. Nevertheless, the following criticisms have been leveled against the organizational management approach.

Neglect of the Influence of External Factors on Performance: Critics of this theory argue that, the theory failed to acknowledge the influence of external factors on the teachers' behaviours and overemphasized the role of human relations. For example, Pena (2019) argues that the school manager may create a conducive working environment in a school. However, foreign factors such as aggression from students' parents can dampen the spirit of the teachers.

Nucleation of Organization: Critics argue that the human relation approach assumed that organizations were akin to nuclear families with defined and respected biological linkages and boundaries forged by interpersonal relationships. Assuming the organization as a nuclear family is bound to generate myriads of conflicts that may exert a negative toll on the management of the institutions (Smith, 2022).

Presumed Soft-Handedness in Management: The theory considered management to be soft, only interested in making the staff happy. Once the staff realize that the manager is interested in catering for their welfare, they may at times take the management to task in meeting various needs and resolving numerous real and imagined conflicts. Gon (2021) argues that management is not just the people but everything within and around the people. Making the workers happy alone is not an index of effective management.

Exploitation of the Gullible Worker: Critics argue again that, by placing much emphasis on workers happiness, the management may in turn exploit workers by making them work harder than normal and at comparatively lover rewards. Yusuf (2022) also stresses that when workers are made happier and susceptible to whims and caprices of the management.

No Technical or Practical Directive on Conflict Resolution: There is no single best way of resolving issues in life. Unfortunately, Follett asked managers to use their judgment, recognize interdependence, and use conflict resolution constructively to find integrative solutions to problems, but she did not provide techniques, strategies, and plans at a time when management science was to provide blueprints to managers (Monin &Bathurst, 2021).

Conclusion

As a radical departure from the mechanistic and dehumanistic scientific theory of management, the human relation approach or humanism sought to derecognize human beings as machines by the management. Mary Parker Follett suggested that managers should manage with human face. This form of management posited that humans grew through their relationship with others in the organization; universalization of organizational goals; management should depend on the people; compromise and integration as means of conflict resolution; believed in the power of groups and the empowerment of every member of the group and that the manger should influence and be influenced by others in the organization for effective accomplishment or organizational and individual goals and objectives. This theory has found applicability in the management of educational institutions.

Implications for Principals of Secondary Schools in Nigeria

Although interpersonal relationship, coordination, control and organization are central themes in the human relation approach to management, principals of secondary schools in Nigeria while adopting this approach should bear in mind the following salient suggestions.

i. Humanness should not degenerate to weakness or imbecility on the part of the management which the staff can cash in perpetuates chaos in the organization.
ii. Organizational aims and objectives should not be subsumed in interpersonal relationships to the extent that performance is lowered or the purpose of the organization is derailed or compromised.
iii. The manager should not over empower staff to the extent that boundaries are broken down leading to entropy of the system.
iv. Participatory and inclusive decision-making should not open the door for the workers redefining the goals and objectives of institutions or directing the course of leadership.
v. Managers should know that the only condition that is permanent is change. Consequently, they should be prepared to change the course of management if extremely intervening variables are veering towards anarchy.
vi. The management should management should depend on the people in getting things done through them for accomplishment of personal and organizational aims and objectives.
vii. Power is not static but dynamic and should be treated as such by the management bearing in mind that certain management staff may at one time in their career path may become subordinate staff.
viii. Respect should be reciprocal and not unidirectional but multi-directional, that is, from the bottom to the top, the top to the bottom, vertical, horizontal and even cyclical.
ix. Principals should focus on the use of all avenues for deliberations and utilize every available opportunity to build knowledge and confidence in the teachers which will invariably raise their standards of performance.

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