

LEADERSHIP RESPONSIVENESS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This work examined the empirical relationship between leadership responsiveness and national development. The study focused on five selected ministries under Rivers state Government, Nigeria. Samples of 20 directors and administrators were drawn from the population of each ministry through a convenience sampling technique. A total of 100 directors and administrators were sample for the study. Two hypotheses were tested using primary and secondary data. The instrument was validated by one Human Resource expert and one Measurement and Evaluation expert. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained at 0.74 using Crombach Alpha. Spearman Ranking Order Correlation (r) was used for the test of hypotheses. Out of one hundred (100) questionnaires administered, one hundred (90) copies were retrieved. It was found that there was a significant relationship between leader-member relationship and national development; there was a significant relationship between effective supervision and national development. It was concluded that leadership responsiveness plays a key role in societies especially in the areas of managing the material and non-material resources through among others leader-member relationship and effective supervisors, towards transforming the political stability, social, and economic for the improvement of the living condition of the populace. It was recommended among other things that: Leaders should embrace the spirit of timely responsiveness to the inspirations, drives and needs of their followers, individually and collectively, thus enhancing development; For leaders to thrive in leadership, they must think for the good of all, especially when it comes to national issues. Therefore, a leader-member relationship mechanism should be employed to create a forum of togetherness and as one family, thus enabling leaders to reach directly and also being responsive to the plights of their followers. This of course will promote national development.

Keywords: Leadership Responsiveness, Leader-Member Relationship, Effective Supervision, and National Development.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the most visible aspect and highest prospect of management (Lucky & Blessing, 2012). Newstrom & Bittel (2007) defined leadership as “the process of influencing and supporting others to follow you and to do willingly the things that need to be done. Leadership responsiveness as a social tool is germane to every local region or state as it is a requisite for the development of such area. The developmental level of a country is being determined by the degree of responsiveness leaders employ while leading their followers. Hence, inertia to responsiveness breeds societal ills which deteriorate the development of a nation. The fundamental gains of development generally are manifested in the bettered and improved of lives of the citizens of a nation through provisions of portable water supply, extreme reduction of poverty, low employment rates, high literacy rate, high quality educational system, sophisticated and well equipped health care service delivery, to mention but a few. To provide these facilities and infrastructure, countries of the world especially the developed ones like United States of America, Germany, Britain, Australia, Netherlands, Norway etc. have through their leaders, effectively and prudently managed the available resources endowed on them by providence to reduce the sufferings and pains of the average man in the society (Before its news, 2014).

Chukwuka and Ananaba, (2016) asserted that Leadership involves managing the external boundaries of the group, as well as dealing constructively with members of internal responsibilities, roles and relationship. To this end, it is a necessity for leaders to be dully responsively to managing the every member under his aegis. Often, leadership is associated with great political figures that inspire others because of their extraordinary vision and commitment to high ideals. These leaders seem to embody the most desirable and sought-after characteristics. They are people who are able to command loyalty, commitment, trust, dedication, respect, obedient, love or even worship from their followers (Linstead, Fulop & Lilley, 2004). For lasting accolades to prevail among leaders, responsiveness must be meticulously employed in their act of leading. Proactively responding to followers’ perceptions, actions and inactions among leaders pave way for stability in the development of a country, as the leadership of every country plays a very significant role in the development of a country through effective responsiveness and adequately exploiting the natural and human resources to enable the country achieve the status of a developed state.

Statement of Problem

It is quite troublesome that despite the superfluous endowment of resources in Nigeria, its citizens are still engulfed with untold hardship, penury, insecurity, and brain-drain. These pitiable circumstances have enthused scholars both local and international to investigate and find out the reason for the failing state of the country Nigeria. Though there are many reasons which were traceable to the socio-economic woes of Nigeria, little or no facts have been statistically painted on leadership responsiveness. Nigerian Observer (2015) stated that literature on the Nigeria economy has cited leadership problems as a major cause of the country’s inability to effectively mobilize her resources. This presupposes that leadership especially at the top echelon of power is not amply responsive to curbing the ills of the country.

Leadership triviality to responding to the pressing ailments of the country has hampered the country's development in political, economic, military, technological, ecological and social and cultural sectors. Consequentially, Nigeria is yet to make substantial growth in the development of the country. Against this purview, this work was posed to investigate the relationship between leadership responsiveness (leader-member relationship and effective supervision) and national development.

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between leadership responsiveness and national development. Specifically, this study examines;

1. The extent of relationship between leader-member relationship and national development.
2. The extent of relationship between effective supervision and national development.

Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between leader-member relationship and national development.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between effective supervision and national development.

The Concept of Leadership Responsiveness (LR)

It is unbecoming in the 21st century as leadership challenges are permeating the peace, harmony and socio-economic fruition of developed, developing and under-developed countries across the globe. This is as a result of little or no leader's responsiveness to the plights and complaints of his followers, thus militating against the growth of the state. Leadership responsiveness simply denotes when a leader takes responsibility in building the society as he works with those (stakeholders) required to enhance collective goals and objectives, as opposed to alone. Hitherto, the factorial dimensions of leadership responsiveness as conceptualized in this study are:

Leader-Member Relationship:

The leader-member relationship is being tied to the theory of Leader-Member Exchange Theory. This theory postulated that effective leadership is achieved via the dyadic leadership relationship. These relationships develop through a series of social exchanges and are defined as the quality of the exchange relationship between a leader and a subordinate (Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999). To this end, leader-member relationship denotes the exchange and reconciliation of diversity of tangible and intangible commodities within a leader-member dyad. For instance, a leader may exchange resources such as, data, information, influence, desired tasks, latitude, support, attention and incentives, for the services of the follower (member or employee), which may include task performance, commitment, allegiance and citizenship. Researchers have acknowledged the important role of trust between the leader and subordinate as an important dimension in Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) quality (Gómez & Rosen, 2001; Scandura & Pellegrini, 2008). Hence, the level at which peace, harmony and development are spread across an association or social settings (leader-follower forum) depend on the degree of relationship portrayed by the leader (government) and member (governed). Factors such as mutual respect, trust, obligation, delegation of responsibility, decision influence

and innovativeness among leaders and member plays a key role to lasting relationship and national development.

Effective Supervision:

This has to do with the leader's supervisory role in ensuring projects, works and its processes are adequately monitored, especially from its time of commencement to time of completion. It is expected of a leader who is responsive to ensure resources (financial and non-financial) allotted to institutions and agencies to curb the plights and plagues of his followers are thoroughly supervised to avoid misappropriation and mismanagement. In recent times, especially in this democratic era, government projects such as roads, hospitals, scholarships, empowerments, electricity, schools etc. are being ruin due to little or no supervision unilaterally, bilaterally or multilaterally orchestrated by those assigned to carry out such projects. To this end, there is need for leaders (government and non-government institutions) to foster effective supervision to all their dealings with followers (governed).

National Development

Development as a concept suffers from a myriad of meanings with neither generally acceptable operational definition nor harmony regarding how it should be driven, thus qualifies it as a multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary, value orientation, and multifarious connect concept. According to Lucky & Blessing, (2012), development, in its most simplistic definition means progress. It presupposes change for the better. To this end, development is dynamic in nature as it entails a process continuum change in circumstances usually from primordial to a sophisticated state. It also denotes the state of betterment as regards the institutions of a country via political, social, economic, religious, technological, ecological, and legal with marriage to the standard and quality of lives of the people.

National development deals with human endowments, natural/physical, psychological and other factors", national development goes beyond having plenty of money, it embraces all aspects of social behaviour such as the establishment of law and order, resourcefulness in business dealings, honesty in business relations, sophistication, broadmindedness, familiarity with science, modern technology and mechanical gadgets and overall positive national outlook (Ogai 2003).

Economic Development

Economic development can be referred to as the quantitative and qualitative changes in an existing economy. Economic development involves development of human capital, increasing the literacy ratio, improve important infrastructure, improvement of health and safety, and other areas that aims at increasing the general welfare of the citizens (Chukwuka & Ananaba, 2016). Economic development is can also be seen as an increase in living conditions, improvement of the self-esteem needs and a free and just society (Todaro, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to note economic underdevelopment is when citizens of a country are living beneath their basic needs, as a result of hostile policies and leadership responsiveness.

Political Stability

Since emerging as an independent nation in 1960, Nigeria has struggled to fashion out a political system that would guarantee an orderly society as well as clearly defined methods for settling conflicts and for sharing whatever collectively belongs to the people. It has been a struggle to establish a system that would handle unemployment, protect the basic rights of

citizens, promote their culture and unity, provide basic infrastructure and services, electricity, water supply, healthcare and many others which are yet elusive, establish shared aspirations and how those aspirations would be pursued. (Usua 2010). Political stability is defined as the measure of the perceptions regarding the probability that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including domestic violence and terrorism (Mădălina, 2015). Therefore an unstable political environment will reduce investment and the speed of economic development and will increase the probability of a government collapse and political unrest (Alesina, Ozler, Roubini, & Swagel, 1996).

Theoretical Framework

The Functional Approach to leadership was adopted for this research. The rationale behind this approach is that attention is focused on the functions of leadership and not on the personality of the leader, or on the man or woman in the job. According to Mullins (2005), the functional approach views leadership in terms of how the leader’s behaviour affects, and is affected by, the group of followers. The approach concentrates on the nature of the group, the followers or subordinates and the content of leadership.

By application leadership responsiveness should exhibit quality dispositions (leader-member relationship, effective supervision, patriotism, national consciousness, probity, etc.) capable of inspiring and influencing citizens to believe in their posture for positive change to key into the various developmental programmes and policies instigated for growth and development in the country, via political, cultural, economic, technology, ecological, etc. for the wellbeing of citizens and dwellers of the Nigerian society.

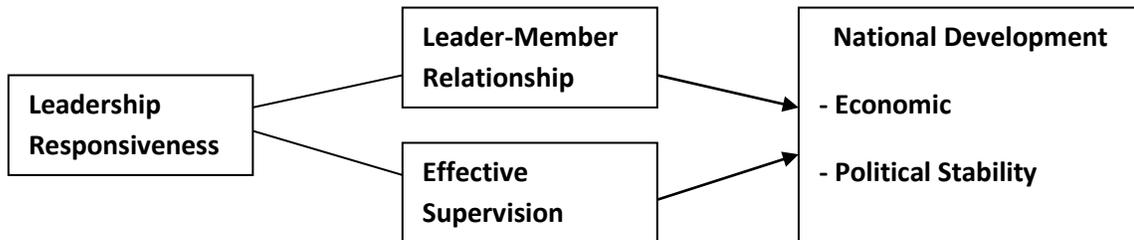


Fig 1: Conceptual Model of Tested Relationship

Procedures

The study adopted the survey research design. The target population for this study comprise of directors and administrators of Rivers State Secretariat, Port Harcourt. The population size is infinite. Convenience sampling technique as 20 directors and administrators from the five ministries (Finance, Health, Budget and Economic Planning, Commerce and Industry, and Education) under the Rivers State government were sampled from each of the six selected local governments. A total of one hundred (100) directors and administrators were sampled from the ministries under study. Data were collected through primary (questionnaire) and secondary (textbooks, journal articles and internet). The instrument was validated by one Human Resource Experts and one in Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability coefficient of the instrument of 0.74 was obtained using Crombach alpha. Spearman Ranking (r) was used for the test of hypotheses. Out of one hundred (100) questionnaires administered, the researchers were able to retrieve ninety (90) copies.

Results/Findings

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between leader-member relationship and national development.

X	Y	RANK 1	RANK 2	D= X-Y	D ²	Level of Sign	Cal. P Value	Crit. P Value
15	20	4	2.5	1.5	2.25			
15	10	4	6.5	-2.5	6.25			
8	12	8	4.5	3.5	12.25			
4	6	11.5	10.5	1	1			
20	10	1	6.5	-5.5	30.25			
10	20	6	2.5	3.5	12.25	0.05	0.55	0.503
8	12	8	4.5	3.5	12.25			
6	4	10	12	-2	4			
15	25	4	1	3	9			
16	9	2	8	-6	36			
8	7	8	9	-1	1			
4	6	11.5	10.5	1	1			
ΣX=129	ΣY=147	ΣR1=78	ΣR2=78	ΣD=-7	ΣD²=127.5			

Field Survey, 2019.

Since the calculated P value 0.56 is greater than the Critical P value 0.503, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between leader-member relationship and national development was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between leader-member relationship and national development.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between effective supervision and national development.

Table 2: Effective supervision and National Development

X	Y	RANK 1	RANK 2	D= X-Y	D ²	Level of Sign	Cal. P Value	Crit. P Value
22	13	1	5	-4	16			
11	14	5	4	1	1			
9	11	8.5	6	2.5	6.25			
7	3	10	12	-2	4			
9	21	8.5	2	6.5	42.25			
20	10	2	7	-5	25	0.05	0.54	0.503
12	8	4	8	-4	16			
4	6	12	9	3	9			
16	24	3	1	-2	4			
10	15	6.5	3	3.5	12.25			
10	5	6.5	10	-3.5	12.25			
6	4	11	11	0	0			
ΣX=136	ΣY=134	ΣR1=78	ΣR2=78	ΣD= -4	ΣD²=148			

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Since the calculated P value 0.54 is greater than the critical P value 0.503, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between effective supervision and national development was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between effective supervision and national development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The analysis of data revealed that leadership responsiveness such as leader-member relationship and effective supervision national development in terms of economic and political stability. These findings imply that the degree of developmental strides (economic, political stability, etc.) portrayed by a nation is a function of the height of responsiveness adopted by leadership in terms of their relationship with their members (followers) and effective supervision on governance. These findings are in consonance with the view of Chukwuka and Ananaba, (2016) which averred that leadership involves managing the external boundaries of the group, as well as dealing constructively with members of internal responsibilities, roles and relationship. To this end, one can only be manage his followers when he is being responsive to the drives, inspirations, needs, and plights of those he leads. Paradoxically, the perceptions regarding the probability that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including domestic violence and terrorism (Mădălina 2015), would only be determined when there is political stability as a result of measures strategically employed by the responsive leader.

Since leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others to follow one and to do willingly the things that need to be done (Newstrom & Bittel 2007), it is undisputed that the propensity of increment in followership would enhance when leaders are all-round up and doing, designing mechanisms and marshaling them to help curb members' plights through the act of responsiveness. Before its news, (2014) corroborated that countries of the world among others such United States of America, Germany and Britain have through their leaders, effectively and prudently managed the available resources endowed on them thus subsiding the degree of sufferings and pains of the average man in their society. It is crystal clear that the responsiveness of their leaders had paved way for national development. An average Nigerian when asked why the country is aback from development, he would say "Bad Government" which is synonymous to leadership irresponsiveness. Thus it is a major concern for Nigerian's leaders to map out ways through which development would be enhanced and one trusted way is leadership responsiveness. Against this, the leaders of both public and private institutions must rise to inculcate virtue of responsiveness to their followers, balancing the equation of individual (satisfaction) and collective enhancement (national development).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is undeniably that leadership responsiveness plays a key role in societies especially in the areas of managing the material and non-material resources through among others leader-member relationship and effective supervisors, towards transforming the political stability, social, and economic for the improvement of the living condition of the populace. Since, leadership responsiveness has been conceptualized as leaders taking responsibilities in building the society with those (stakeholders) they work with for the enhancement of collective goals and objectives, as opposed to alone, Nigeria would only develop as expected when leaders are posed to adopting leadership responsiveness while leading their followers for a common front.

This calls for patriotism where leaders will not only confess with their mouth that they love Nigeria but will be responsive to all that is important by their actions and inactions for the development of the Nigerian state.

In line with the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. Leaders should embrace the spirit of timely responsiveness to the inspirations, drives and needs of their followers, individually and collectively, thus enhancing development.
2. For leaders to thrive in leadership, they must think for the good of all, especially when it comes to national issues. Therefore, a leader-member relationship mechanism should be employed to create a forum of togetherness and as one family, thus enabling leaders to reach directly and also being responsive to the plights of their followers. This of course will promote national development.
3. A thorough and effective supervision policies and programmes should be formulated and implemented to the fullest. Government projects should not be taken for granted. Qualities should be consistently and regularly checked and monitored, to ensure any project contracted by her be completed in line with specifications.

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