



THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN BUILDING THE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY OF MEDICAL DIRECTORS OF HOSPITALS IN NIGERIA AS LINE CHIEF EXECUTIVES

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ABSTRACT

The paper explains the leadership of public hospitals in Nigeria which rests in the hands of Medical Doctors who are line personnel without adequate management education and training required to foster efficiency of hospital organisation. A table of selected public hospitals in South-South Nigeria is presented to empirically substantiate the position of the authors. The paper also reveals management attitudes of line chief executive as a source of industrial distrust which breeds industrial disharmony. Avenues for management training were also enumerated to guide Line Chief Executive to acquire core-competence in management. The paper recommended Nigerian Institute of Management, a regulatory body to champion inclusion of management in the professional training of medical doctors and other professionals like engineers. The paper strongly maintained that the adoption of Hospital Governors as in Britain who are professional managers in terms of amending the enabling laws establishing hospital to change them from line chief executive (Doctors) to specialised health administrators as heads, will solve the problem of administrative inefficiency and wastage in Nigerian public health institutions.

Keywords: Role, Management education, Management capacity, Line, Staff, Chief Executive, Medical Directors

INTRODUCTION:

The main or cardinal goals of any organization include survival, growth and development, and the achievement of these goals depends greatly on the efficiency and effectiveness of Management of the organization. In view of this organizational desire, there exist a concerned about who leads, and directs the organization to achieve its goals.

Some organizations are headed by specialists, while others are headed by just anybody. In some cases, professional managers or administrators, who are well trained in the art and science of managing both human and material resources, are hired as the Chief Executives, and in this situation Management techniques, dexterity and administrative acumen are utilized in solving organizational problems, thereby placing the organizations on a proper balance for sustainable growth and development. But where these managerial ingredients are lacking, due to non possession of adequate managerial skills by leaders, organizations will suffer and may possibly collapse.

This paper considers management training as a key element of organizational leadership; and also views effectiveness and efficiency as a pre-requisite for sustenance, growth and development. The focus on Medical Directors is because of their peculiarity as line personnel in Hospital organisations, who lead hospital establishments' day-to-day operation in line with laws establishing them and placing



the headship in the hands, as Medical Directors who are Medical Doctors lacked requisite management education (Bassey, 2012).

LINE AND STAFF IN ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A CONCEPTUAL GUIDE

Koontz, O'Donnell and Weihrich (1980:395) defined line as those functions which have direct responsibility for accomplishing the objectives of the enterprise, while staff refers to those functions that help the line to work must effectively in accomplishing the primary objectives of the enterprise. Tyagi (1981: 161-162) in a more simple language considers line as those agencies which are concerned with the main or primary functions for which the organizations came into existence, for example teachers in educational institutions and Doctors in healthcare agencies, while staff refers to such activities in an organizations which assist the Departmental Head or the Chief Executive in the performance of his duties.

From Tyagi (1981) and Koontz, O'Donnell and Weihrich (1980) definitions, two major things are clear:-

- 1 Organization may be purely on line levels - for example a professional firm of Lawyers or Accountants.
- 2 Organization may be line and staff at the same time.
- 3 It is difficult to find a purely staff organizations.
- 4 In most perspectives, they are both line and staff employees in organizations, e.g. the cashier in an accounting firm, or the lawyer attached to a firm of Estate Surveyors.

Another perspective of viewing line and staff which is also relevance to this paper is the functional authority perspective. In this regard, line constitutes "that relationship in which a superior exercises direct supervision over a subordinate, while the nature of staff relations is Advisory" (Bassey, 2001:2).

THE NEED FOR A PROFESSIONAL MANAGER IN HEALTH ORGANISATIONS

The position of a professional Manager in the organization is critical in terms of his contribution to organizational success. Is the professional Manager a line or staff employee? The answer to this question depends on the nature and purpose of the organization. Taking for instance a firm of Management Consultants, the professional Manager is a line officer, but in a health care institution a professional manager who is a health administrator is a staff. Then, when a professional manager is a staff, whose role is only advisory despite his management dexterity and administrative acumen, how efficient is such organization expected to be in a situation where sound administrative advice may not be accepted by Specialist Chief Executive. It is the likelihood of the occurrence of this kind of situation in line and staff organizations where a line officer is the Chief Executive and the Staff Officer (a professional Manager) is only playing advisory role which prompted the choice of this thought-provoking delicate topic under examination.

LEADERSHIP IN LINE AND STAFF ORGANIZATIONS

Line and Staff Organizations include variety of firms, companies, enterprises of both public and private dimension. However, since we are in an economic environment dominated by public governmental concerns, focus will specifically be on government organizations, especially those in the health sector.

Other than ministries and departments, government corporations, companies and parastatals have enabling laws establishing them. These laws provide for the leadership structures of such organizations. These laws include the various Acts and Decrees establishing Federal Universities, Public Utility Corporations like Power Holding Company of Nigeria and the Federal Universities Teaching Hospitals. In the law establishing Universities, a lecturer of the professorial standing (a line staff) is the leader and Chief Executive with the title "Vice Chancellor". In the University Teaching



Hospitals the enabling decree has provided for the position of Chief Medical Director (C.M.D.) as the Chief Executive Officer and this position of C.M.D. is occupied by a Medical Doctor of the status of Consultant physician or equivalent (also a line staff). The question again is, how adequately trained are these specialists (line) Chief Executives, to manage such large and complex line and staff organizations as the University Teaching Hospitals? Do they possess the required management know-how? The answer often is "NO". Whenever the answer is "No" the resultant effect is the bastardization of the organizations, as noted by Bassey (2003) that line executives are not interested with details in their hasty decision making process and make decision with scanty and porous facts, comprehensive examination of issues and their consequences are not carried out and every decision is affected by professional bias, and arrogance and pride in total neglect of staff employees. In times of industrial crises, the line Chief Executive often take sides with line employee groups at the detriment of staff employee groups, which give way to tension and distrust in work group relationship. In this condition, no organization can strive on success lane. Bassey (2003) extensive study opines that the professional bias is common among doctors (Consultants) as Chief Executives of Health Institutions as compared to Professors (Vice Chancellors) as Chief Executives of Universities. This leads us to the administrative inadequacies of line Chief Executives which are:-

1. Lack of Management Training and Education
2. Inability to apply and adopt humanistic approach to management and preference for non-humane management styles based on line technical training as against scholarship in humanism.
3. Ignorance of the ethics of Management which focus on efficiency and effectiveness of the organizations, as against sectional interest which is parochial rather than wholistic.
4. Professional Bias as against comprehensive rationality in decision making.

All these problems act as the limiting factors affecting the total capacity of the line Chief Executive to move the organization forward.

Table I: Selected Tertiary and Secondary Health Institutions in South-South Nigeria

S/N	Name of Institution	Chief Executive Profession	State of Location	Classification Chief Executive	Ownership
1.	University of Calabar Teaching Hospital	Medical Doctor	Cross River State	Line	Federal
2.	Federal medical Centre Uyo	Medical Doctor	Akwa Ibom State	Line	Federal
3.	Federal medical Centre Asaba	Medical Doctor	Delta State	Line	Federal
4.	Central Hospital Warri	Medical Doctor	Delta State	Line	Federal
5.	Federal medical Centre Agbor	Medical Doctor	Delta State	Line	Federal
6.	University of Benin Teaching Hospital	Medical Doctor	Edo State	Line	Federal
7.	Central Hospital Benin	Medical Doctor	Edo State	Line	State
8.	Federal Psychiatric Hospital Calabar	Medical Doctor	Cross River State	Line	Federal
9.	University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital	Medical Doctor	Rivers	Line	Federal
10.	Braithwaite Memorial Hospital Port Harcourt	Medical Doctor	Rivers	Line	State
11.	General Hospital Yenagoa	Medical Doctor	Bayelsa	Line	State

Source: Federal Office of Statistics (2011)



Table I above shows that the Chief Executive Officers in publicly owned hospitals in Nigeria are Medical Doctors. But in Nigeria, some private hospital though owned by medical doctors as proprietors, employed professional managers to run the daily activities of the hospital. The situation in some Nigerian private hospitals is in line with the practice in Britain of Hospital Governor (a seasoned health administrator) leading hospital establishment. This condition in Britain fosters the efficiency of such hospitals and help explain why government functionaries in Nigeria and other developing countries patronised health institutions in Europe.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF LINE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN HOSPITALS WITH MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Following the managerial inadequacy of line Chief Executives and the pressing need to build their management capacity in order to guarantee organizational survival, growth and development, they must be trained and retrained to expose them to contemporary ideas, skills and techniques for them to utilize in moving the organization forward. The type and method of management training needed depends on both the individual need, adaptive capacity, availability of fund, time limitations, organizational needs, expectation and dimension. The under-mentioned institutions, among others, offer management-training programmes:-

- 1 Centre for Management Development: This is a foremost Management training organization, funded by the Federal Government as a parastatals of the National Planning Commission, established to provide management education to both Public and Private Sector. Its mode of training includes workshops, conferences, short courses and specially designed programmes for organizations.
- 2 Professional Management Associations: The number of professional management organizations is as many as there are branches of management. Notable ones include:-
 - (a) Nigerian Institute of Management
 - (b) Chartered Institute of Administration
 - (c) Institute of Cost Management
 - (d) Institute of Personnel Management
 - (e) Institute of Industrial Management.

All these bodies provide management education and training based on need and request, coupled with their regular workshops, conferences, lectures and mandatory professional training for members. Health institutions should contract any of these professional bodies to increase administrative component of Medical Chief Executive in specific areas of management.

- 3 Tertiary Institutions: The role of tertiary institutions in Management education and training can never be ignored. The various Universities offer courses/programmes leading to the award of first and higher degrees in various fields of management. They play significant role in breeding the much-needed manpower to manage the post-colonial Nigerian economy for the success of the Nigerianizations and Northernization policies of the fifty and sixties (Ubeku, 1975). Medical personnel can pursue programmes in administrative management in addition to their medical degree. Example of such programmes include post-graduate Diploma in Management and Public Administration offered by University of Calabar. Some universities also designed and offer executive management certificates of short durations two weeks to one month to enhance administrative competence of Chief Executives.

Line officers who are Chief Executives require management training as against development. Training will provide them with the basic and required management skill which are desired to build their



capacity and enhance efficiency, as they were previously developed in their chosen area of specialization, as a criteria for them to attain management positions. For instance, a pupil Engineer who grows in a construction firm to become the Chief Executive Officer (Managing Director) is expected to take advantage of management training programme as listed above in order to be a good Chief Executive of the construction firm in future. In this regard, a medical doctor should pursue short courses in management to prepare him or herself for future leadership because management of complex organisation like hospital is beyond clinical diagnosis of patient.

The Nigerian Institute of Management is at the fore front of Management Education in Nigeria. As the institute acquires a regulatory status, the time is ripe for the Institute to be involved in regulation and accreditation of Management courses in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, as well as develop the management content of other specialised disciplines as Medicine and Surgery. The Nigerian Institute of Management should expand its training programmes to every State in Nigeria. By this, the Institute can bring line executive everywhere in Nigeria to value, the essence of management training, as a basic ingredient of capacity building for effective and efficient management.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

This paper specifically attempted to present a solution to the possible problem of inadequate managerial capacity of line Chief Executive in health organisations through training and management education. This topic was conceived based on current observations in line and staff organizations where the Chief Executives is a specialist in the primary area for which the organizations was established to serve but lacked required managerial acumen to lead a complex organisation. Other than direct training of these line executives in the art and science of management after their appointment to management positions, the following recommendations are also made:

Review of the laws establishing these organizations to make way for professional managers with specialized training to lead.

Introduce management into the training courses in various fields, like medicine, Engineering, Architecture and Surveying, etc.

Make "Introduction to Management" a general study programme in Universities, Polytechnic and Monotechnics.

Compulsory Management Training must be organized for all specialists who are appointed to management positions.

In conclusion, Management is not an all-commerce-affair; every leader and chief executive in organisation should be adequately trained in order to build his managerial capacity to meet organizational challenges. There is the task for every organisational leader to re-examine himself, especially the specialists turned managers and determine personal level of management competence. Whenever the level is low, management training and retraining should be considered as the panacea and competence booster.

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