An Investigation on Workers Motivation and Leadership Behavior: The Elements of Public Sector Administration

Dr. Maharishi Mudgal Dev*

Chairperson, National and International Council for Scientific Research, Japan

Pro Chancellor, International Open University, Meghalaya

Abstract – Leadership and workers motivation are key issues that improve organizational productivity. The paper examines leadership and motivation theories as vital elements of organizational development and effectiveness, especially in public sector administration. Starting from the classical to the most contemporary approaches to leadership and motivation in comparative perspectives, the paper provides managers with working tools for effective and efficient management of their various organizations. The objective therefore is to relate motivation and leadership theories to organizational management. The paper finds out that there is no one best approach or theory to workers motivation and leadership effectiveness and that all theories are relevant to organizational management depending on the scope, objectives and philosophies of the organization. Arising from this fact, the paper identifies that there are some limitations and weaknesses of leadership and motivation theories, but advocates/recommends among other things that managers should have as many theories as possible at the tips of their fingers to enable them thrive in organizational management.

The paper therefore concludes that comparative approach to motivation and leadership theories will become an eye opener and the best strategy for achieving organizational effectiveness. The origin of the concept of public service motivation (PSM) dates back to 1982. Since then, many definitions, measurement scales and implications have been proposed and discussed. Still, the gap between what we know and what would be useful to know about PSM is open. Therefore, this article reviews the literature of the last thirty years and identifies five main streams within the literature itself.

Leadership in public sector is accepted to be an important component of good governance in general and good public governance in particular. In this context, this article will present recent developments in leadership literature with a view to highlight significance of public leadership while also providing food for thought for public leadership in Turkey. First, an overview of how the public leadership is perceived in international organizations like OECD will be brought into perspective. Second, taking into the vast scholarly literature on leadership, recent research on the theory and practice of leadership will be highlighted.

---◆---

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, leadership in public sector is an important component of good governance in general and good public governance in particular. This fact is also underlying the current good governance work carried out in international organizations like the OECD, while accelerating current research on leadership.

The vast literature on leadership has been growing since the past four decades exponentially, while at the same time being the focus of several empirical studies with a view to sustain the theory of leadership. However, these studies have been oriented for business organizations. Later, these developments accelerated when the New Public Administration literature, informed by neo-classical economics and with private sector practices, brought the significance of public leadership into focus in this context. Thus the public leadership has been a focus of attention and several empirical studies followed. Public leadership theory and empirical work related to the concept is relatively new and this article is meant to contribute to

growing literature on public leadership both in general and also with reference to local government context, while providing food for thought for future research on the topic.

In recognition of a primary concern with performance and the limited role of motivation in determining that performance, however, work motivation is considered here as inclusive of such aspects as the direction, intensity, and persistence of work-related behaviors desired by the organization or its representatives. Although this definition emphasizes the determinants and processes that underlie behavior, such constructs cannot be measured direcdy but must be inferred from a larger theory in which the antecedents of motivation are linked to purported behavioral consequences. Even though mere has been some agreement on a definition there has been little agreement on how to operationalize or measure work motivation, and there are a number of compering theories of work motivation. While no single, dominant theory exists, many recent attempts to develop a unified theory of work motivation have emphasized the importance of goal structures as the immediate regulator of behavior.

As I have noted, however, work motivation has failed to achieve similar interest among public-sector scholars. This l ck of attention to work motivation in the public sector is surprising.

Public-sector organizations are under constant pressure to improve their productivity and reduce their costs. Because public-sector employee's frequency are stereotyped as lazy, self-serving, and misguided, a better understanding of work motivation is essential to any efforts to describe, defend, or improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public organizations.

Furthermore, recent research on motivation has emphasized how the interaction of environmental and personal forces influences individual motivation, but little effort has been made to identify or discuss the potential implications these theories hold for public-sector organizations. Aluiough there is a great deal of debate on whether fundamental differences should exist between the public and private sectors in the characteristics of employees and work environment, there is agreement that differences do exist. Unfortunately, research generally has failed to address whether the differences between the two sectors have a significant impact on the variables relevant to organizational effectiveness in the public sector. The study of work motivation can provide valuable insight into any effect these sector differences might have on a critical antecedent of public-sector productivity.

Although insufficient attention has been given to work motivation within the context of the public sector, relevant research does exist. To facilitate an understanding of the existing work motivation literature, some attempt must be made to place these studies within a theoretical framework. One such framework is suggested in figure 1. In addition to the focal construct of work motivation, the framework contains five sets of antecedent variables that are purported to determine the extent of work motivation in the public sector: sector employment choice, employee motives, job satisfaction, job characteristics, and work context.
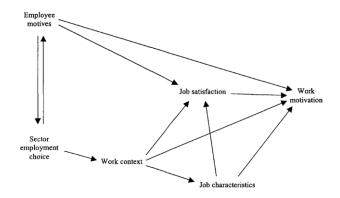

Figure 1 : Public-Sector Model of Work Motivation.

Research on the determinants of work motivation in die public sector can be further classified into two major streams, one that focuses on employee characteristics and the other that focuses on the organizational environment. Two basic types of employee characteristics have been suggested to be determinants of work motivation: employee motives and Joe satisfaction. While employee motives represent what employees want or expect from their jobs, job satisfaction reflects the employees' reactions to what they receive. Similarly, two characteristics of the environment have been suggested to influence work motivation: job characteristics and work context. Job characteristics describe aspects of the job or task an employee performs, while work context pertains to characteristics of the organizational setting (e.g., the organization's reward systems, goals, or degree of formalization) in which the employee must perform the work.

Although the importance of leadership in the public sector has been widely recognized by public management scholars (Wright and Pandey, 2010), the application of modern leadership approaches and especially empirical studies have been scarce. This has caused "a significant gap in the development and progression of general and public leadership theories" (Kellis and Ran, 2013). The assumption that modern leadership approaches, such as transformational leadership, are less effective in the public sector than in the private sector, explains the lack of

research. Public organizations are thought to rely primarily on bureaucratic control mechanisms that reduce the importance of public leaders' relationships with their followers. However, public organizations are not always highly bureaucratic, and there is "a growing consensus in public management scholarship that 'management matters' and that public organizations and their leaders can overcome structural constraints". The present study, which empirically investigates transformational leadership in the public sector, is an attempt to improve our understanding of public sector leadership and to reduce the above-mentioned research gap in this under-investigated field. Effective leadership in public organizations is dependent on the context in which it arises. Understanding how leaders' sets of competencies are influenced by a changeable variable such as power may therefore lead to a more differentiated view on desirable leadership styles in the public sector. Seeing as both power and leadership are interpersonal concepts, we focus on transformational leadership characterized by its attention and attendance to subordinates' needs.

In the current study we investigate how power influences an individual's leadership style. We assume that transformational leadership is diminished by leaders' elevated feelings of power. Research concludes that power will lead to greater social distance and less individuation of others (Trope and Liberman, 2012; Lammers and Stapel, 2011). We therefore propose that elevated perceptions of personal power will result in a leadership style that is less transformational than that of low power perceivers.

THEORY

A theory is a set of arguments which explain a phenomenon. It is an instrumentality which explains a happenstance. Nwali (2013) opines that administration, management or leadership theories are sets of arguments or concepts which explain the part of the administrator. He added that there is no fact without a theory, hence, theory is usually selective of a priority or perspectives and the data they define are usually significant. Moreover, theory helps to explain the past and enables us to understand the present as well as helps to produce the future. A theory conceptualizes and assumes a relationship between variables. Also a theory tries to synchronize data for empirical classification and unification.

According to Ollawa (1978), a theory is a specially designed or stated framework of sequential designs meant to explain or predict assumed relationship between two or more variables. But Oxford Advanced Learners' dictionary defines theory as a set of properly debated ideas intended to explain facts, events or a principle on which a subject of

study is based. Theory is much more than prescription. It seeks primarily to explain and predict future.

Duru (2010) states that the world of theory is an abstract one. He added that something may be true in theories but not in practice. However, the theories and practice of Public Administration make it easier for us to decide what we must do to function most effectively in an organization. Without theory, all we have are intuition, hunches and hopes, which are limited to use in today's increasing complex organizations and world,. As leaders and managers, we should have at our disposal many ways of looking at organization and at the activities, performance and satisfaction of people in organization and each of these ways may be useful and more for others.

LEADERSHIP

Nwali and Okpata (2013) succinctly state that in every state or organization, the major problem that has often posed threat to its existence is the problem of leadership. Leadership is the act of influencing and inspiring subordinates to perform their duties willingly, competently and enthusiastically for the achievement of the group objectives. Leadership is a way of influencing or motivating people to move towards a common goal. Thus, the onerous task of steering the ship of any state or organization cannot be realized if there are no persons with the constitutional empowerment or enablement to carry out the task of governance/administration,. Laurie (1998) defines leadership as the relationship through which one person influences behaviour of other people. This means that the process of leadership cannot be separated from the activities of groups. But, the leadership behaviour relationship is not limited to leader behaviour resulting in subordinating or dynamic behaviour, hence, leadership is a dynamic process.

Leadership in the words of Nwali and Nkwede (2013) is the ability of influencing the activities of others without any form of coercion or threat towards the realization of the goals of a group, enterprise, organization or nation. They added that the followers must be influenced to work enthusiastically towards the realization of stated goals. Thus, the function of leadership as Nwali and Nkwede continued to preach should always induce or persuade all subordinates or followers to contribute willingly to organizational needs.

A good and effective leader should take responsibility for his actions and that of his followers not minding the situation. This action can make the leader to exert much influence on his followers and the followers having confidence in their leaders. A leader who abandons his followers in the face of responsibility cannot command

respect and influence in such an organization or society. In all, Agena and Oketa (2002) believe that good leaders must:-

i.   Have influence

ii.   Provide direction, and

iii.   Help in the attainment of group or societal goals.

MOTIVATION

Motivation is the set of force that cause people to behave in certain ways. It is the set of forces that initiate behaviour and determine its form, direction, intensity and duration. According to Gannon (1979) quoted in Okorie (2013) motivation is the needs, desires and concepts that cause staff to act in a particular end through the manipulation of incentives.

In an organization, motivation seems to flow from top or the senior workers to the bottom or the junior workers. Naturally, each worker expects some forms of motivation from the next senior in the hierarchical order. It has been experimented that when staff are motivated, the morale will be high and this facilitates the attainment of organizational goals. By implication motivation leads to high morale and productive efficiency of workers, increase the interest of the staff on the job, confidence and enthusiasm in jobs they do.

LEADERSHIP THEORIES IN CONTEXT

When examined closely, the scholarly literature on leadership has been a focus of attention for approximately three decades and even more. This is partially because the definition and theory of leadership has been a focus point in different contexts through time. Thus there is not one definition of leadership but many. This is also true for theoretical underpinnings of the concept through time.

The development of mainstream leadership theories have been generally weak up until the end of 1970s when Burns' well-known book came out with the emphasis that so far transactional leadership was taken as the core understanding in leadership research while transformational leadership was largely ignored (Van Mart, 2003). This also meant that leadership should be seen beyond traditional view and that leaders can facilitate dramatic changes by energizing their followers beyond conventional exchange theory or what is known as charismatic leadership.

The development of leadership theory also informed a variety of different schools with this context. Although there is a vast literature on the topic, it would still be possible to identify three schools within the leadership theory. First school are those who advocate the transactional leadership where individual characteristics of the leader can inspire the followers. Second school, is the entrepreneurial school, which claims that leaders, in order to increase productivity and improve quality of processes, should carry out effective practical processes and cultural changes. What is advocated by the second school can also be considered as a hybrid theory between transactional and transformational leadership theories. This is because it emphasizes change like the transformational leadership school and it has an internal focus like the transactional leadership school. Indeed, the third school, the transformational leadership school emphasizes vision and organizational change.

After a period of confusion in leadership theory with the incorporation of transformational leadership, as of middle 1980s, there have been attempts to bring in characteristics of different leadership schools into one theoretical model. Since then, it is possible to identify the mainstream leadership theory as multifaceted. One of these attempts was made by Bass who merged transformational and transactional elements of leadership theory.

LEADERSHIP IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The integration of transactional and transformational leadership types and the follower-centric theories were seen as a great advancement over the field's narrow focus. However, these changes have not been reflected in the public sector literature. The amount of research conducted on the public sector only represents a fraction compared to existing research on the private sector research.

The track record of the Public Administration Review (PAR), established in 1940 and one of the top-rated journals in the field, can be one indicator of the amount of research in this field. Van Wart (2003), who did an informal content analysis of the PAR journal since its inception 61 years ago, found 25 articles, in which leadership was the explicit focus of the article. There was only a handful of empirical research on leadership the last 50 years. However, the PAR is only one source and the history of the public sector leadership literature is more than that. In the 1950's several leadership studies in the administrative sector were published and in the following twenty years the tradition of studying administrative leaders continued. The introduction of the transformational leadership in the 1980's was mirrored in the public sector literature as well, but did not change the development of research as dramatically as in the private sector. The mainstream literature is much more focused on an integrative approach of leadership since the economic shocks of the 1970's and

the resultant new economy. This reformation was not as necessary in the public sector as in the private sector and therefore, the public sector lagged behind by nearly one decade to investigate into integrative models. In the 1990's and in 2000 the literature on this topic varied a lot. Numerous studies focused on civic leaders or local or national policy makers. Furthermore, most studies concentrated on specific elements of leadership.

Not only has the history of mainstream leadership research and the public sector literature differed in the definitions of the phenomenon but also in the perspectives of research compared to private sector leadership research. Rusaw defined public leadership "(…) as an interhuman process of identifying, defining and carrying out goals using democratically sanctioned norms and behavior." . Comparing his definition to the one by House and his colleagues (2004) mentioned above, both define leadership as an interhuman process to accomplish certain goals. However, in the public leadership literature not the effectiveness and the success are the major elements, but the identification of goals and the democratic norms. A leader in the public sector has to represent the organization to external interests and combines the pluralistic interests to one vision. The followers are not only the subordinates, but also other interests groups as taxpayers, governmental agencies and legislators, who all have different ideas and expectations of their leader.

PUBLIC SECTOR ADMINISTRATION

Public sector is a term used to describe those outfits owned and managed by the government, federal, state or local. Thus, the existence of public sector can be attributed to the prevalence of political and social ideologies, which depart from the premises of consumer choice and decentralization of decision making.

Public sector means those areas of societal activity directly owned, funded and managed by the State as opposed to private sectors which are organized and owned by individuals and groups (Nwali and Nkwede, 2011).

Thus, Njemanze (2004) had written that the public sector comprises the federal government ministries, extra ministerial departments and boards, while those of the state government include ministries and departments, local government councils and government owned corporations or parastatals. This means that public sector in this parlance means the organization or arrangement of group of outfits with people charged with the responsibilities of doing government business, example is the local government.

The conceptualization of public sector administration in

this paper begins with splitting public sector from administration and defining them separately before marrying them together. Having made this point, public sector from our previous discussion represents those aspects or areas of societal activity directly owned, funded and managed by the state as opposed to private sectors which are organized and owned by individuals or groups. Corroborating the above point, Onu (2005) says that though, the public sector is measured and managed by mostly citizens and non-citizens employed by government and paid from government coffers, these employees who are paid for their services are not direct owners and have little stake in the success or failure of government business. This is as opposed to the private sector where enterprises are owned directly by individuals mostly through shares and profits declared at regular periods.

He concluded that while it is easy to measure the success of private sectors, it is not easy to measure that of public sector. On the other hand, administration can be seen in its encompassing nature because it is common to group efforts, whether private or public. In the words of Okpata (2004) organization's growth informs administrative concept, hence whenever an organization has grown beyond simple face-to-face relationship, its operational mode and activities would become administrative, especially with regards to goal accomplishment. Organization exists to achieve some predetermined objectives through the co-ordination of group efforts. He added that it is this desire to achieve common objectives through organized group efforts that gave rise to administration, especially in the public sector. Thus, administration is concerned with the co-ordination, harnessing and energizing of organizational resources in a manner that an established objective of an organization is achieved. Nevertheless, the attainment of administrative goals of an organization using possible sources requires the elements of planning, organizing, commanding, controlling and co-ordinating. Organization may be private or public

WORK MOTIVATION DETERMINANTS: PUBLIC-SECTOR IMPLICATIONS

Although the existing empirical evidence has not consistently confirmed the hypothesized existence of public-private distinctions in employee motives or work context, the possible existence of such differences provides much of the theoretical foundation for studying work motivation in the public sector. If differences do exist, it is important to understand their impact on variables relevant to the effective operation of public and private organizations such as work motivation. Even if differences do not exist, however, the study of the impact that characteristics of public-sector employees and

environments have on work motivation may still be instrumental in identifying and understanding the determinants of work motivation. To that end, the research regarding each of the four employee characteristics and organizational environment variables identified in exhibit 1 will be reexamined in terms of its implications for work motivation in the public sector.

Employee motives-Much of the variation in the motivation to perform at work has been expected to be a result of individual differences in needs, values, and reward preferences either directly or indirectly through their effect on job satisfaction. It is these differences that often are perceived as the key to motivating behavior because "understanding the values and reward preferences of public managers is essential in structuring organizational environments and incentive systems to satisfy those preferences". For example, the few studies that have measured work motivation have found no differences between public and private employees at the managerial level. This finding may imply that the importance public employees place on the opportunities thought to be more readily available in the public sector, such as performing altruistic acts or receiving intrinsic rewards, may compensate for the low levels of extrinsic rewards associated with the public sector. Unfortunately, differences in public-sector employee motives have not been linked to any specific behavioral consequences such as work motivation.

Job satisfaction-In an extension of die literature on employee motives, many studies of work motivation in the public sector have asked individuals to assess their levels of satisfaction with the work environments' fulfillment of important needs or its provision of desired rewards. If need fulfillment and reward attainment represent motives that drive behavior, then satisfaction wim these facets of the job identifies the necessary conditions for optimal employee motivation. In other words, job satisfaction is important because "examining what employees want from then jobs and comparing it to what they are getting reveals the need deficiencies that instigates goal directed behavior". Several studies have attempted specifically to identify leverage points that may assist public-sector organizations in their efforts to motivate employees.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of different theories of leadership and motivation has helped us to understand the best approaches to the management of organization in both private and public sectors. It is has also helped us to discover that there is no particular theory that is a panacea to leadership and staff motivation, rather, the leader should be abreast with different types of motivation and

leadership theories in order to thrive and achieve organizational goals of excellence and productivity.

To conclude, it is possible to say that public leadership, whether it is considered at different international, national or local contexts or not, has its roots in the public sector management culture and societal culture in a given country or region. It also depends how and to what degree public leaders are exposed to different management styles, experiences, and management cultures next to their character traits and their educational backgrounds.

REFERENCES

AJonso, Pablo, and Lewis, Gregory (1999). "Public Service Motivation and Job Performance: Evidence from the Federal Sector." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society for Public Administration. Orlando, Fla.

Comparing Job Satisfaction among Public and Private Sector Employees (1996). American Review of Public Administration 26:3: pp. 327-13.

Conger, J. A., Kanungo, R. N., & Menon, S. T. (2000). Charismatic leadership and follower effects. Journal of organizational Behavior, 21(7), pp. 747-767.

Crewson, Philip E. (1997). "Public-Service Motivation: Building Empirical Evidence of Incidence and Effect." Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory 7: pp. 499-518.

DeSantis, Victor S., and Durst, Samanthal, Duru, E. J. C. (2011) Theory and Practice of Public Administration. M.SC Lecture Notes. Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.

Hart, P. (2011). "Evaluating Public Leadership: Towards an Assessment Framework", Public Money and Management, Vol.31, No. 5, pp. 323-330.

Joyce, P. (2010). "The Role of Leadership in the Turnaround of a Local Authority", Public Money and Management, Vol.24, No.4, pp. 235-242.

Kellis, D.S. and Ran, B. (2013). "Modern leadership principles for public administration: time to move forward", Journal of Public Affairs, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 130-141.

Lammers, J. and Stapel, D.A. (2011). "Power increases dehumanization", Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 113-126.

Njemanze, O. L. (2004). Public Sector Financial Management. Enugu. Rhyce Kerex Publishers.

Nwali, T. B. (2013). Nigerian Government and Administration. Abakaliki: De Oasis Communications and publishers.

Nwali, T. B. and Nkwede, J. O. (2011). Public Private Partnership in the Development of Public Sector Administration in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges. International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review vol. 2 (3)

Okorie, C. O. (2013). Employee Motivation and Effective Service Delivery in Nigerian Public Enterprises. Journal of Arts and social Sciences vol.1 (2).

Okpata, F. O. (2004). Public Administration; Theory and Practice, Abakaliki: De Oasis Communications & Publishers.

Onu, G. (2005). Democratizing Citizens Participation in Public Sector Management: The Policy of Privatization Among African States; in Obi, E.A. et al. (ed), State and Economy. Onitsha: Book Point Ltd.

Trope, Y. and Liberman, N. (2012). "Construal level theory of psychological distance", Psychological Review, Vol. 117 No. 2, pp. 440-463.

Trottier, T, Van Wart, M. and Wang, X (2008). "Examining the Nature and Significance of Leadership in Government Organizations", Public Administration Review, Vol.68, No.2, pp. 319-333.

Wart, M. V. (2003). Public-Sector Leadership Theory: An Assessment. Public Administration Review, 63(2), pp. 214-228.

Wright, B.E. and Pandey, S.K. (2010). "Transformational leadership in the public sector: does structure matter?", Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 75-89.

E-Mail – drmaharishimudgaldev@gmail.com

Corresponding Author

Dr. Maharishi Mudgal Dev*

Chairperson, National and International Council for Scientific Research, Japan

Pro Chancellor, International Open University, Meghalaya