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# LEADERSHIP AND WHAT MAKES A LEADER IN MANAGING MODERN DAY LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT: The role of the leader to ensure excellent organizational performance cannot be overemphasized. The library is not an exception. It is not in doubt that without an effective leadership style of the leader, an organization cannot achieve its goals for which it is established. The article mirrored what leadership is and what makes a good leader so as to lead the organization successfully. It is imperative to study leadership and the extent to which it can enhance performance. The study also looks at appropriate leadership styles that will encourage free flow of information among staff in the organization. The article concluded that what affects other organizations negatively or positively is also applicable to the library. Therefore, librarians need to have a good knowledge of a leader to be able to lead the library successfully.

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## INTRODUCTION

Leadership creates a harmonious organization system. Effective leadership does not depend so much upon power. It creates the ability to develop mutual understanding and inspire performance in the organization. Without leadership, the management's ability to obtain cooperation from the workers is impossible. Therefore, leaders possess authority in an organization and for subordinates to willfully co-operate in the discharge of duties. Leadership promotes relationship in organizations. The library is not an exception. If there is no need for this relationship, there is no need for leaders. In an organization, the successful leader is one who succeeds in getting others to follow. An effective leader makes it possible to influence people in the organization towards achieving its goals (Koontz & Posner, 2012). Ideally, people are encouraged not only to develop readiness to work but also the readiness to work with enthusiasm and confidence.

In spite of the fact that there are works on literature on leadership, the art of organizing is still a myriad. The focus of this paper is to build a leader who takes a central role and influences the behavior of others in an organization, such as the library, by looking at how other organizations have made success through effective leadership. This is because a library is a complex organization with a hierarchy of structures, competing with other departments for survival to meet set goals.

# What is Leadership?

Leadership is perceived as the co-ordination of individuals towards the attainment of organizational goals. Leadership means calling for the gifts of people and helping them to work for a common task (Garnet, 1988). Ranchman and Levitt (1985) defined leadership as "the process of showing employees how to do the job, both through actual demonstration of specific tasks and the administration's own behavior and attitude." Leadership is an effort at inducing the activities of groups through the communication method and toward the achievement of some goals. It is an influence process that allows managers to get their people to readily do what must be done and do well what must be done. Leadership is relational influence exercised in a circumstance and directed, through the process of communication, toward the achievement of stated goals. Leadership is not a person or a position. It is a relationship between people based on trust, commitment and shared vision of the good (Ranchman & Levitt, 1985). Rarick (1987) defined leadership as the capability to influence others to perform on the basis of superior knowledge or ability, rational argument and fairness. Rarick (1987) asserted further that leadership refers to having the authority and status to impose one's views on the department and know that the department accepts you as a leader. Hoerr (2006) added that leadership is about associations.

Leadership is getting individuals to do things they have never thought of doing, do not believe are possible or, at that, do not want to do. Leadership is the act of committing staff to contribute their best to the purpose of organization (Kraines, 2001; Taffinder, 2006). Individual leadership performance is hinged not only on his features and personal aptitudes, but also on the features of the circumstances and environment in which he finds himself. The degree to which they are active members rest on how well they are persuaded that their membership will allow them to attain their prearranged objectives. A person will support an organization if he trusts that through it, his personal goals and objectives will be achieved; if not, their personal interest in the organization will decline (Kramer Messainah & Kramer, 2004).

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Writers of management emphasized different classes of needs. These include physical, social and selfish needs. Job fulfilment is however often related to human needs and conditions. Leadership has been connected to management as it pertains to leading and supervision to the degree of the nature and extent of activities and changes occurring within the organization. Management as a process is rooted in the interaction of people at work directed towards maximization of efficiency and scarce resources (Hoover et al., 2001; Dubrim, 2007). Importantly, leadership should be given satisfactory attention if the organization plans to realize its objectives. The exercise of leadership as it were, concerning taking charge and restructuring the activities of organization members to guarantee desired outcomes, are attained. A leader performs management functions which, according to Parkers (2007), are planning, organizing, direction, controlling and coordination of all activities of the organizational objectives.

Planning is a procedure of looking ahead to determine the course of action(s). Both short- and long-standing plans are properly considered for an organization's success using individuals, responsibilities and resources so that they follow and align with the established goals and objectives. In most organizations, directing involves face-to-face supervision of employment. Controlling, as another duty of a leader, is a function that provides the manager with the means of checking to ensure that the plans that are developed are properly implemented. Controlling involves having the capacity to guide and correct activities, which does not promote achieving the organizations' goals (Ituisman & Wissen, 2004; Paley, 2004).

The study of leadership took on a significant new twist with time—from traits to patterns of behavioral style—to know how the leader actually behaved. It was discovered that the democratic leadership style was preferred by followers. It was also induced that no one best style of leadership exists. A number of management researchers have encouraged situational or contingency thinking. According to Kreitner (1998), successful leadership occurs when the leader's style matches the situation. The situational theories stress the need for flexibility.

McGregor, who propounded Throries X and Y, gave two contrasting assumptions on employees' behavior. The proponent was of the view that Theory Y is the correct postulation to make and that organization should be planned on that basis. He stressed that Theory X gives employers the opportunity to satisfy only basic and security needs, while Theory Y enables them to satisfy Maslow's hierarchy needs, such as ego and self-actualization. However, no manager is all of Theory X or Y in the present day (Wikipedia, 2007). McGregor (1976) wrote another theory of leadership known as transformational leadership theory. This theory tasks individuals to attain a remarkably high level of ethics, enthusiasm and performance. The theory emphasizes that only transformation leaders are capable.

There exist highly talented people with leadership ability, from informal groups to social institutions and traditional settings to contemporary settings, all with notable sets of individuals who have established higher leadership acts. Leadership is a dynamic personal process (Gerhard, 2002). Leadership could be said to be dynamic since it differs with circumstances. It is similarly said to be personal because of the inter-personal impacts allowable. However, this does not necessarily mean direct contact between the leader and the subordinates.

The study of leadership has gone through three key stages. The first stage focused on trait theory, the second was on behavioral theory while the third was on situational theory. In

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the past, researchers and theorists in leadership focused on the features of leaders. This belief was perhaps due to the belief that leadership capability stems from active leadership. In turn, this originated from personality features, which are either inborn or learnt. Studies in leadership were dominated by investigations into studies between the end of World War I and after World War II. Over time, when trait theory was condemned, interest was focused on examining the connection between behaviour of leaders and employees' performance, as well as satisfaction. Quite a number of researchers contributed to understanding the leader's behaviour in determining performance. Among the main objectives of the research was to test the hypothesis concerning the structural determination of a leader's bahaviour.

Quite a number of leadership theories were developed over time, most of which were in the late 1950's and 1960's. These theories emphasized the need for traits and behaviours of leaders to vary with situations if they are to be effective at work, such as, the personality of the leader, performance requirements, and the organizational and physical environment of the leaders. Situational theories include Fielder's contingency theory.

## What Makes a Leader a Leader?

A leader is anyone who directors and controls a group of people to achieve a set purpose. There are two types of leaders: official leaders and unofficial leaders. An unofficial leader is when the individual holding his position is officially given charge to the subordinate, Unofficial leader is when the leader is most times not important in an organization. (Hicks & Gullet, 1975). Golden (2011) stated that good leaders must lead by example. Golden listed ten ways to lead by example. They are taking responsibility, being truthful, courage, acknowledging failures, persistence, creating solutions, listening, asking questions and seeking understanding, delegating liberally, taking care of yourself and rolling up your sleeves, to inspire greatness like Alexander the Great who led his men to battles. In looking at leadership, as emphasized by writers, a leader shows sincerity and integrity in the discharge of his duty and in carrying out personal policies which are designed to encourage workers. Herzberg laid credence to this assertion in his motivation theory related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs concept.

The leader sets the direction for one or more other individuals and gets the individuals to move along together with them and with each other in that direction, with capability and full commitment (Tannenbaum, Wechsler & Massarik; Megginson, Mosley & Pietri, 1983). In essence, the leader involves accomplishing goals with and through people, or the leader obtains voluntary cooperation from groups of persons (Megginson, Mosley & Pietri, 1983). The role of leadership in an organization cannot be underestimated. The need for order and discipline in the organization calls for effective leadership, in order to achieve the organizational objectives, so as to enable every member to have their role to play.

The person in charge is usually the leader in an organization. However, there is large disagreement as regards the exact meeting of leadership. According to Ozigi (1978), someone at the top exists to provide central leadership, coordinate activities and make decisions. Kreitner (1998) stated that the assumption is that leaders are born, not made. Leaders such as Alexander the Great, Napoleon, and many others were said to have been blessed with an inborn ability to lead. Leadership traits are not completely inborn but can also be acquired through learning and experience (Craysforth, 1996). Craysforth (1996) concluded that leaders are made, not born. This is in agreement with other early writers of the opinion that leaders are given birth to and not made; perhaps they come from a specific family. They see only one specific form of

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leadership style. However, later studies focusing on the behavioral point of view of both leaders and subordinates in actual work situations show that different forms of leadership styles exist. Workers' participation refers to the inclusion of workers in the decision making process of the organization. This implies that the staff could have satisfactory information on which to base their decision (Dubrin, 2007).

In Herzberg's theory, it is based on the idea that working conditions and job security lead to work itself which could lead to work dissatisfaction (Herzeberg, 1988). An effective leader should look into these factors that can motivate or demotivate others in the organization.

Kirk Patrick (2002) also laid credence to this assertion. Patrick stated that a need exists when the desire to attain or acquire something motivates an individual's growth or stagnation. It is necessary for the leader to recognize that needs as the basis for motivation should try to satisfy them in their bid to motivate or inspire others to action, to work for the overall growth of the organization. A leader is the one who is the guiding head of an organization. The leader is in a high position to oversee performance, maintain standards, control and correct the activities for the purpose of attaining the specific and overall objectives of the organization (Garnet, 1988). Leadership, therefore, is the ability to inspire, direct and manage others.

Anyone who acts as a model to others, or any person whose orders are likely to be carried out, is a leader. Leaders encourage growth by means of helping themselves in carrying out their functions. A leader is responsible for the success or failure of their organization. An effective leader possesses a strong spirit of cooperation and teamwork responsibility. An effective leader keeps promises and follows them. A leader ensures that their actions are consistent with the wishes of the people they lead, and has clear ideas to be successful (Onoyase, 1991).

One way of providing good leadership is to identify the type of person who becomes a leader by thorough investigation and measuring such things as intelligence and emotional adjustment, among others (Craysforth, 1996). The objective is to choose a leader who in a given situation will help to achieve the organizational objective. This implies that an assessment of the leader is based on their efficiency. A good or efficient leader can be judged by their ability to increase work output and keep their followers happy at the same time (Craysforth, 1996).

Leadership styles have changed over time—from a prominent shift from the autocratic leadership of the twentieth century to a more participative style. It becomes imperative for an effective leader to key to these trends to ensure a meaningful outcome for their organizations. The move has shifted from authoritarian leaders who believe in top-down management, strict rules and exact orders, to a more personalized thinking and individual possession over responsibilities. It was here that inclusive leadership styles settled in, and this style is now one of the most popular leadership styles in modern-day society. The participative style of leadership is where the group is vital to the decision making process, and not the leader alone, where the work is more flexible.

It is important that an effective leader needs to have sufficient vision to see beyond our immediate circumstance. Effective leaders are assertive in their thinking, with good attitudes in dealing with others, which include tough-mindedness and self-assurance. To be a good leader, one needs to have high control, maintain integrity and reputation, and be very careful when making decisions. Leadership demands that the leader is required to be mature and put himself in other people's shoes. The leader should possess charisma to be able to arouse strong

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emotions in subordinates and promote a good relationship with the staff (Lutharis & Stewart, 1977; Drucker, 1974).

Leaders vary in their styles of leadership, according to the type of organizations they operate. The style of leadership depends on the goals of the organizations. Some of the styles of leadership include autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. It is emphasized that leadership styles have gone from a classical autocratic approach to a very creative, participative approach. Different styles are needed for different situations and each leader needs to know when to adopt a particular style (Luthans, 1977, Drucker 1974).

# **Autocratic Leadership Style**

Autocratic leadership is a situation where absolute power lies in the hands of the leader. There is little or no input from the subordinates. He makes decisions without consulting members of the team, and with little synergy (Idiegbeyanose, 2018). Segun-Adeniran (2015) further noted that it is a highly non-participatory leadership style because there is no expected input of feedback from employees. The leader is seen as the all in all when it comes to making decisions; even on matters concerning his employees, the leader has the final say.

A leader is said to be autocratic—also known as an authoritarian leader—when they are solely responsible for the day-to-day running of the organization they are in. Similarly, Dairo (2014) stressed that in the autocratic leadership method, authority use and all communications within the group shift towards the leaders. Also, the leader alone exercises decision making; he formulates rules and regulations that concern the organizational goals and objectives. In autocratic leadership style, all authority centres on the leaders, and decision is enforced by the use of rewards and fear of punishment (Onuoha, 2013).

The authoritarian leadership style is considered a classical approach where the subordinates are motivated through a laid down set of rules, rewards and punishments. It is also important to note that the autocratic leadership style supports McGregor's Theory X which believes that employees are lazy and will only work under strict supervision (Nayab, 2011). It is however important to note that the decision making process in an autocratic leadership style is fast, as the inputs are solely from the leader.

## **Democratic Leadership Style**

In democratic leadership style, the leader does not make decisions solely; it is a highly participatory decision making process, where the subordinates are involved in the process of decision making (Khan et al., 2015). The focus of power is more with the group as a whole and there is better communication among the members. The management functions are shared with the members of the group and the leader as part of the group; also, team members contribute in decision making, determining rules and regulations, and the execution of systems and procedures (Onuoha, 2013; Dairo, 2014). As a result of the highly participative nature of the democratic leader, the level of creativity and innovation of the employee is usually on the increase. However, because of the participatory nature of the democratic leadership style, it is imperative that the employees are highly skillful because they are assumed to work with little or no supervision. This participatory leadership style builds a high sense of responsibility in the employees simply because they are involved in decision making processes and are rewarded or punished for actions taken, thereby inculcating in them a stake-holdership mentality.

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# The Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

This form of leadership, from the name, implies a 'carefree' kind of leadership style. This is because the employees in the organization are given a high level of freedom when carrying out responsibilities or assignments. A laissez-faire leader observes whether the members of the group are performing well; the leader allows the members to have liberty of action (Onuoha, 2013; Dairo, 2014). Unlike the authoritarian leadership style, the laissez-faire leadership style allows the employees to make decisions and find solutions to problems on their own; this implies that for the employees to make decisions, they must have built a high level of trust before the organization's management team. This style of leadership is used when employees are highly trained, experienced and skilled.

Lewin's study revealed that participatory leadership, otherwise known as democratic leadership, is commonly the most effective leadership style. In a democratic style of leadership, according to Lewin (1939), leaders offer direction to group members, but they also participate in the group and allow input from other group members. The young ones in this group are less industrious compared to the members of the authoritarian group, but their contributions are of a much higher magnitude. The democratic leadership style is also known as the participatory style as it inspires members of staff to be part of the decision making processes. Participatory leaders inspire group members to contribute, but hold the final say over the decision-making process. Subordinates are involved in the process and are more creative. They are informed about all that affects their work and share decision making and problem-solving tasks (Lewin, 1939).

The leader gathers data from members of staff before making a decision. Democratic leadership can yield superior and quality work for long periods of time. There is team spirit and high morale. Members of staff are encouraged to grow on the job and be promoted in democratic style. It is most fruitful when used with highly capable or skilled staff.

The prospect to grow ingeniously is giving freedom of view equal rights drawbacks of democratic leadership style. Again, despite the advantages of the democratic style of leadership, it is time consuming and difficult for the leader (Wikipedia). Democratic leaders offer guidance to group members; nevertheless, they contribute to the group and permit input from other group members. The young staff are however less productive than in the authoritarian group, but their contributions are of a superior quality. Participatory leaders inspire group members to contribute, but hold the final say over the decision making process. Subordinate members feel encouraged and motivated in the process.

A leader is a person who takes the central role in interaction and who influences the behaviour of other members of a group. He is that individual who has authority over others and is responsible for guiding their actions (Fatokun, Salaam, Ajebomogun & Adedipe, 2010). The leader's style of leadership in an organization is concerned with initiation, organization and direction of activities of the members of a group in specific circumstances towards attaining the objectives of the group (Adegbesan, 2013). The leader's role is to get work done with the group, and win the confidence and cooperation of the entire group. It is a process whereby an individual impacts a group of persons to achieve common goals (Northouse, 2007). Through the leader's leadership, teams are built and the right decisions that affect the growth of the library are made. So the decisions of a leader permeate every side of an organization, hence the reputation (Chukwuma & Idris, 2009). Leadership is very important in today's organizations.

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The library is not an exception from other organizations because it competes with other organizations for survival and needs dynamic and effective leadership based on strong capability to not only combine resources in the most effective ways, but to build a tough workforce that will work with passion for the attainment of set goals (Chukwuma & Idris, 2009; Uwaigwe, 2015). The leadership style of the leader gives an organization its vision and aptitude to interpret the vision into reality (Eneh, 2008). Incentive, encouragement and inspiration of subordinates to allow them contribute freely to the organizational goals is the leader's capability (Nwachukwu, 2004). However, there is no universally acknowledged style of leadership; rather, a suitable style depends on situations and circumstances. The effect of any style of leadership on employees, particularly on subordinate librarians, will come to bear if the library leadership will attain set goals. This is because followers are influenced when leadership and followership are suitably connected (Uwaigwe, 2015; Veechio, 2007).

# The Library Organization and Leadership Styles

Leadership plays an important role in delivering responsibility, rather than focusing on authority and command, when dealing with subordinates. A leader, consequently, must be an individual who has the capability to guide their staff and direct their behaviour (McEachen & Keogh, 2007). To be able to guide and direct efficiently, the head librarian must establish good leadership, to be able to transfer the value, vision and mission of the organization. One role of the leader is to use his leadership style to influence and organize all actions of their subordinates to readily contribute to organizational goals.

A leader directs their efforts towards the goals of the library that give satisfaction, especially intrinsic satisfaction through self-achievement. This makes librarians commit their ability to stay and perform their job effectively, and be involved and identify, despite challenges, such as working conditions and welfare benefits that may affect his job satisfaction. Therefore, a librarian could be committed to his profession in which they work (Akuyemi & Ifijeh, 2013). Quadri (2009) was of the opinion that for employees to be dedicated to their jobs and organizations, there must be satisfactory incentives, particularly in the form of rewards. If the individual learns that he cannot attain the rewards for which he initially anticipated, he leaves the organization and joins another. If this is not possible, he agrees to take those rewards which he can get and may at the same time feel less devoted to the organization (Quadre, 2009).

Leaders change organizations; great leaders change people. People are the heart of any organization; it therefore depends on the efforts of the leader to change the people and nurture challenges for the organization to flourish (Hoerr, 2006).

Quadri (2009), cited in Akinyemi and Ifijeh (2013), highlight the qualities of a good leader: A leader begins setting the vision but does not stop there. A leader pays attention, comprehends, inspires, strengthens, and makes the hard decisions. A leader commends when things go well and takes accountability and picks up the pieces when things disintegrate. Leaders do not lead by dispensing mandates. Leaders communicate well and listen to others by integrating the thoughts of others, aptitudes and drives them into forging a vision.

Leadership style can be defined as the method implemented by a leader in the running of an organization as well as human capitals. There are various styles of leadership that can be adopted in organizations (Sharma & Jain, 2013; Onuoha, 2013). Researchers classified

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leadership styles as autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire (Onuoha, 2013; Sharma & Jain, 2013; Dairo, 2014; Khan et al., 2015).

Ogbah (2013) described leadership as the method in which the leader implements and inspires his subordinates towards attaining organizational set goals and objectives. Also, leadership involves vision, marketing the vision to team members, and preparing the team members with data, facts, skills and procedures to attain the vision (Idiegbeyanose, 2018). Leadership comprises the leaders, followers, communication and the situation (Sharma & Jain, 2013).

A leader is said to do the right thing, produce change, use inspiration, enunciate a vision and assist his subordinates, while a manager, in terms of procedure, is said to do things right, manage change, use authority, implement plans and assist his superior/supervisor (Lunenburg, 2011).

To enhance productivity, a leader needs to apply the appropriate style in the situation they are dealing with, including the subordinates. This is how the library should be organized for effective leadership.

Moran (2010) noted that libraries adopt a more changeable structure by defining roles broadly, ensuring good lines of communication and the free flow of information, and de-centralizing management structures. Regardless of whether procedures are structural or otherwise, change is unavoidable and handling change will continue to be an essential capability for library administrators for some time. Moran (2010) and O'Connor and Au (2009) also stated that failure to see the new reality unfolding has led to apathy and indecisiveness in many libraries.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is pertinent to note that the type of leadership style being adopted in an organization is highly dependent on a lot of factors, such as the skills of employees in the organization and the time required to carry out successful activities, among others. It is therefore necessary that the leader makes use of the right leadership style to ensure job satisfaction and achieve the goals of the library organization. The activities that affect other organizations negatively or positively affect the library organization as well. The leader needs to appreciate the various tactics of leadership so that they can use the right approach for their own situation by learning the core leadership theories that provide the backbone of understanding leadership, in order to be successful.

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