

TESTING MCGREGOR'S THEORIES X AND Y IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS' TEACHERS

By
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Abstract

The study examined the application of McGregor's Theories X and Y in the management of teachers in Nigerian public post-primary schools. The general complaint by teachers in various states of Nigeria is that many school administrators are insensitive to the needs of teachers. The population of the study was all the public post-primary schools in the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. A random sample of two political zones participated in the study. From each zone, 25 school administrators and 250 teachers were randomly selected and invited to participate in the study. A total of 50 school administrators and 500 teachers participated in the study. The data was collected with a questionnaire titled McGregor's Motivation Theory Inventory (MMTI) and was augmented by oral interview. The validity of the questionnaire was made by the experts in educational Administration and planning. Split-Half method was used for the test of reliability. The correlation coefficient was corrected by the use of Spearman-Brown Formula. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was .72 and the final Spearman-Brown Formula yielded 0.84. The Statistics used was Z-test and common percentage. The major finding was that only Theory X was highly applied in the management of post-primary schools. It was recommended that seminars, workshops and conferences should be organized for the administrators to create the awareness of the importance of Y Theory of application.

Keyword: Bureaucracy, Colonial, McGregor's theories X and Y

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Introduction

Consciously or unconsciously, managers make assumptions about the human nature in their organizations. McGregor, (1906-1965), made assumption about human nature and human motivation. His assumptions were summarized in his Theories X and Y given in his book titled "*The Human Side of the Enterprise*" in 1960. He claimed that a leader's choice of leadership style will depend on how the leader views his subordinates' behavior in the organization. Theory X which is the classical or traditional view holds that the average human being inherently dislikes work; is innately lazy, irresponsible, self-centered and security oriented. Consequently, he is indifferent to the needs of the organization. Theory Y, which is progressive view, makes the opposite assumptions that people do not inherently dislike work and are not inherently lazy. People according to the author have learnt to dislike work, be lazy and irresponsible because of the nature of their work and supervision. Such people can develop intrinsic interest in their work, commit themselves to organizational goals and are capable of working productively with minimum external controls. This theory when applied would instill the sense of maturity and responsibility on the worker. The worker is expected to see this as a means of career advancement. To a greater extent, the worker will have the feeling of belonging and secured.

In Nigeria public schools, there is high rate of bureaucracy (Ifedili, 1993) and it is usually assumed that professional principles are incompatible with bureaucratic ethos since school is a professional organization. According to Kaufman (1981), popular press, reporters, columnist and editors have poured out series of complaints and exposes on the subject of bureaucracy. Anti-bureaucratic sentiments seem to have taken hold like an epidemic. Many people, according to Ifedili (1993), are apparently convinced that Nigeria's educational bureaucracy is whirling out of control and there is need to put it in order so that the goals of education can be achieved. The bureaucracy in Nigerian public schools is a consequence of colonial bureaucracy that introduced European oriented education. This type of education was basically meant to maintain law and order without regard for culture and temperament of individuals. Organizationally, the present structure has concentrated such executive power and authority on the administrators that it is greatly resented by the professionals and technical specialists in the service. Most of these administrators seem to believe that their subordinates are lazy, uncommitted to the attainment of government objectives, lack initiatives and cannot produce without detailed supervision.

It is a general notion in Nigeria that government work is nobody's work and therefore does not deserve commitment. The apathy to work among some Nigerians can be traced to the colonial era when indigenous civil servants had

very limited growth potentials. As was observed by Nwosu, a seasoned civil servant in 1977, that Nigerian workers during the colonial era worked to meet above all, the requirements of the colonial masters. They never obtained the reward which was commensurate with the work well done. Today, despite the fact that the policies and objectives are now being formulated by Nigerians for Nigerian needs, the colonial attitude persists. Adeyinka (1992) stated that infiltration of western education made the educational system to adopt managerial philosophy of McGregor's Theory X.

Many teachers in post primary schools see teaching as a stepping stone. This is because the remuneration is too poor; job security is lacking; teachers are not often respected; they are always in shadow while the spotlight is always on the administrators. According to Aghenta, (2001), many employed graduates are poorly remunerated, motivated and unceremoniously removed from teaching before they can establish themselves as experienced teachers. Teacher's progress is often retarded in a situation where a senior teacher who is highly competent and experienced but cannot bribe those in authority is stagnated while an inexperienced and incompetent teacher who can bribe is made a school administrator. Levitt (1974) pointed out that the process by which a manager is selected is a critical element in managerial success. This determines talents, competences, attitudes, styles, personality which were appropriate for the task and problems of new situation the worker would enter.

The school administrators see authority as personal, permanent and pervasive. There is a feeling that professionals see administrators as being insensitive to the needs, personal growth and personal job satisfaction of their subordinates. The present educational management condones favoritism and nepotism. In the general recruitment and promotion, it is a general observation that it is based on who one knows and not what one knows. The attitude of some workers is that the best way to deal with the government was by avoidance and non-commitment. Corruption in public schools has become so alarming (Ifedili, 1993) that one wonders if Nigerians can achieve the much articulated educational goals in Nigeria's National Policy on Education. This corruption is reechoed in the whole system since there appears to be no public aversion to it. With this state of things in public schools, one wonders if McGregor's Theory X Theory Y would hold.

Statement of the Problem

It seems to be a difficult task to apply McGregor theories X and Y to the management of teachers in post-primary schools. This is in no doubt because of the cultural climate of the school system. The attitudes and behaviors of the

administrators to some extent may not allow the administrators to adopt characteristics of Theory Y. This is because where the appointment to the post of administrator is not by merit; the administrator has to contend with the subordinate teachers who are more experienced and more competent. There is a feeling that some of these administrators who are afraid of being challenged, resort to oppressing, intimidating and blackmailing those sub-ordinates who are more competent and senior to them. Many teachers are complaining of being marginalized. Some have accused some administrators of corruption, nepotism and favoritism. They have accused them of incompetence and in-expertise. Some are complaining of being made redundant so that they can be removed from the system. Teachers seem not to put in their best because of dissatisfaction with the system. Some are still there in system because of no alternative job opportunities as observed by Ifedili (2006). With this state of affair, is McGregor's Theory Y going to be applicable?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be beneficial to all educational stakeholders. School organization requires special administrative skill because unlike other organizations, it is highly sensitive and complex. There is a growing separation of administration from teachers and students. The government will benefit from having less teacher turn over which has created shortage in teaching personnel. The government will also benefit from having efficient and effective teachers who will raise the standard of education which has become a major concern both nationally and internationally. The teachers will be happy to work under leaders who will motivate them and see their jobs as means of career advancement. The students will benefit by having concerned teachers who will impart the much desired knowledge. The school administrators will know that using the wrong theory in their administration can bring resistance and poor productivity irrespective of the culture of silence among the aggrieved teachers.

Both the teachers and the school administrators will work as a team and not the present attitude of many teachers who see the employer and their school administrators as "they" not "we" that run the school.

Methodology

The study is ex post facto. The design deals with the collection of two sets of data from a group of subjects with an attempt to determine the subsequent relationship between those sets of data. School administrators in Nigeria share similar characteristics. The population of the study was all the public post-primary schools in six geo-political zones in Nigeria. A random sample of two political zones participated in the study. From each zone, 25 school administrators and 250

