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LEADING THE WAY: INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON SERVICES DELIVERY IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN LIBRARY

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Abstract

Effective leadership is crucial in every organization, influencing services delivery, staff motivation and user satisfaction. This study examined the effect of leadership style on service delivery in the University of Ilorin library. The study generated three research questions with one null hypothesis. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study includes the staff members of the University of Ilorin library. The population of the study comprise of 146 library staff. Total enumeration sampling technique was used due to the manageable population of the study. The study used a self-structured questionnaire as a tool for data collection and frequency count, tables and simple percentage, mean and standard deviation, and PPMC was used as data analysis. The finding of the study revealed that autocratic, democratic, transactional, transformation and situational are leadership styles that are common among the leaders in the university of Ilorin library but transformational leadership style was more prevailing among the leaders in the university of Ilorin library. It also revealed that budget constraint, lack of space, information overload, epileptic power supply, poor internet access, changing user needs among others, are the challenges to services delivery. The study recommends that leaders of the university of Ilorin library should adopt transformational leadership style in managing the university of Ilorin library to enhance effective and efficient services delivery and foster innovation and creativity.

Keywords: Leadership style, Services Delivery, University of Ilorin library

Introduction

Leadership is issue of concern that organizations should pay attention to; the leadership style prevalent in any establishment (including library and information Centre) will influence the behavior of employees in that organization. Leadership style plays a major role in enhancing services delivery in libraries. Thus, effective leadership is a key success factor in enhancing organization's success or failure. It could be perceived as a process of working through people to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Leadership style can be described as the method or the style that a leader adopts in management of resources in the organizations including human resources. Findings have shown that there are various leadership styles adopted in the administration of organizations; (Khan, Khan, Qureshi, Ismail, Rauf, Latif, and Tahir 2015; Sharma & JAIN 2013; Onuoha, 2013). Some of these styles are autocratic, democratic, and laissez-fair. Other researchers also classified leadership styles as transactional, transformational and situational.

In general, leaders at one point in time adopt a style of leadership in the day to day administration of their organizations; and the style of leadership that is prevalent in an organization/library and information centers will have effect on the organizational resources, functions and services or products. Leadership is a process or an act of inspiring people so as to get the best out them and at the same time achieve expected results. The leadership style adopted by managers or leaders at one point or the other will have effect on services delivery. Various researchers pointed out that leadership style is crucial for staff's job satisfaction, bearing in mind that lack of staff satisfaction can increase the gap in turnover intention rate and manpower deficiency in any organization including library and information centers; and that leadership and supervision are important in employees' job performance that affects services delivery. Leadership style is important factor of workers' job satisfaction, dedication, retention and turnover intention (Kaladeh, 2013; Izidor & Iheriohanma 2015). A suitable leadership style existing in any kind of organization could possibly enhance services delivery by fostering innovation and creativity in library management.

Moreover, in a service organization, service delivery is the main concern that the organization usually looks forward to, it is a comprehensive measure that can include productivity, quality, consistency, and so on. On the other hand, performance or service indicators may involve (criterion-based) results, behaviors and (normative) relative measures, concepts of education and training and instruments, involving management development and leadership training for developing attitudes of performance management and essential skills (Richard, 2022). Library service delivery is a procedure, activity and program of libraries, which is organized with the aim of ensuring that the needs of patrons, which will in turn ensure that the learning and research goal of users are met (Nanjundeswarawamy and Swamy, 2014). Balance scorecard is one of the most critical tools which provide help or framework to ensure that the strategy is translated into a rational set of performance measurements (Kaplan & Norton, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

In the academic library, leadership is a major driver of service delivery. It is believe that effective leadership will make effective service delivery and it is considered an essential characteristic for librarians. Today's highly knowledge and information driven environment presents an

opportunity for librarians to assume their meaningful leadership role both at the level of the library management, and at the level of the institution. Academic librarians possess many of the capabilities required of excellent campus leaders. They are trained as researchers whose curiosity and tenacity lead to innovation and experiment as they continuously seek to integrate and improve the services they provide. Effective leadership is crucial in university libraries, yet the relationship between leadership style and services delivery remains understudied and service delivery in university of Ilorin library is declining and unacceptable. The lack of understanding of this relationship hinders the ability of library administrations to optimize services delivery. It is against this background, therefore, that this study examined the effect of leadership style on services delivery in university of Ilorin library.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of leadership style on services delivery in the university of Ilorin library. Specific objectives are to:

1. ascertain the prevalent leadership style in the university of Ilorin library
2. find out the types of services delivery available in the university of Ilorin library
3. examine the challenges of services delivery in the university of Ilorin library

Research Questions

The study answered the following questions:

1. What is the prevailing leadership style in the university of Ilorin library?
2. What are the types of services delivery available in the university of Ilorin library?
3. What are the challenges of services delivery in the university of Ilorin library?

Concept of Leadership and Leadership Styles

Instrumental to the attainment of the laid down objectives and goals of any organization with high level of efficiency and effectiveness is the input of human beings who are in most cases, influenced by leaders and the type of leadership style employed (Segun-Adeniran, 2020); hence the issue of leadership cannot be over flogged. Ogbah (2023) defined leadership as 'the manner in which the leader executes and motivates his subordinates towards accomplishing or achieving organizational set goals'. Similarly, the Business Dictionary (2024) explained leadership as a team that involves outlining a definite vision, selling the vision to team members, and equipping or furnishing the team members with information, knowledge, skills and methods to actualize the vision.

Leadership is basically the act of influencing others to direct their determination, abilities and efforts to achievement of a leader's goal; it is the process of influencing an employee or group effort to the optimum achievement of the organizational goals and objectives (Aida, 2024). This author further pointed out that leadership focuses on the human resources aspect of management and it is based on the belief that organizational effectiveness and productivity depends on the employee's motivation, hard work and prowess.

According to business News Daily (2016), quoting Stan Kimer, reiterated that 'effective leadership is being able to provide the vision and necessary motivation to a group of people or a team in order to ensure that they work together toward the same goals, and then understand the

inherent talents and temperaments of each individual and effectively motivating each person in the team to contribute individually their best toward achieving the corporate objectives. In other word, the process of accomplishing and achieving these organizational objectives requires high level skill and depth knowledge from the leader; it is in this light that Sharma and Jain (2023) opined that leadership is made up of this four components:

- a. Leaders
- b. Followers
- c. Communication
- d. Situation

It is paramount to note here that 'leadership' and 'management' are not the same; a leader, in terms of operation, is said to do the right, create change, uses influence, articulates a vision and serves his subordinates, while a manager, in terms of operation, is said to do things right, manage change, utilize authority, execute plans and serve his superior/supervisor (Lunenburg, 2016). It is however necessary that both firm management and effective leadership are put in place for the actualization of organizational goals.

Leaders are concerned with not just managing the organization, but in setting up a framework for future prospects of the library and for service delivery to bring about results through jobs performed by the librarians to achieve stated and desired goals as services are delivered. Through the leadership prowess exhibited, the followers (librarians) have no stress but to reciprocate the gesture of delivering their services to the users in terms of information retrieval and dissemination, classification and organization of knowledge, and other jobs that may require their attention and expertise. Leadership is a behavioral pattern that suggests „taking initiative“ and bringing people together to „achieve the desired goal“ and service delivery. A leader in the library and information science (LIS) profession can visualize the strength and weaknesses of the profession and try to improve its status in a country or region through various means. Wong (2017) stated that for leadership in an academic library to aid effective service delivery it should be placed on three leadership modes which are emergent, team, and headship. However, Wong reiterated that team and emergent leadership have not been adequately explored. Ifidon and Ifidon (2007) opined that headship has been the very conversant mode for running the daily affairs of the academic libraries. It is through this headship mode that heads of libraries have the prime responsibility to blend the library's resources and ensure their efficient use for the accomplishment of the library's objectives. Jain (n.d), stated that the librarian's effective leadership is considered to be an important element in library functioning. It is the key to success in creating a vibrant and innovative environment to achieve an excellent workforce and service delivery. He further explained that the library literature shows that leadership concepts and theories came into existence in the 1980s and that now, many leadership development programs are available to enhance leadership skills, which help a professional create a niche. This in his word states that a blend of leadership competencies of LIS professionals in the workplace brings corporate and organizational success (Garcia, 2013). Leadership is all about leading and being a leader. According to Cronin in Proceedings of the 8th seminar of the committee of university librarians and their deputies (CULD) (2012), described a leader as an individual who can help create options and opportunities, clarify problems and choices. Build morale and coalition, inspire others and provide a vision of the possibilities and promise of a

better community. To Henein and Morissette (2007), in Lussier and Achua (2013), leadership is like art, the artist sees beauty where another person only sees reality. The scholar further stated that in leadership, there is the need for an appealing style with no flash or ostentation but charisma, trustworthiness, humility, collaboration, attention, and based on values. Henein and Francoise (2007) opined that leadership is not just about being on top, having a bigger office, or more money but rather that it is all about taking care of your people, helping a cause, and fulfilling a purpose. It is a big responsibility with one ensuring that you are operating for the greater good of the people you are leading knowing that it is not about you but about them (Eriksson, n.d). The amount of leadership varies over time and across libraries in different locations. The university librarian and deputy librarian cannot succeed alone, they need to mobilize libraries and other support staff to enable them to transform and make major changes in their libraries. At present, libraries and other information agencies face increasing competitiveness, limited resources, accountability for service, and a technologically astute and demanding user population. In addition, effective organizational leadership is of growing importance. Leadership is necessary to define more effectively what types of knowledge and skills are needed for leaders to contribute to organizational success. Competency development is a major area. A recent study in the area of leadership competencies has focused on the value of identifying, knowing, and understanding users. (Winston & Gretchen 2013). Lambert (2005) assures that leadership can be performed by anyone so long as they have the following attributes.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the transformational leadership theory, which posts that leaders can inspire exceptional performance (Bass, 1985). The framework integrates the following theories: Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985), Servant Leadership Theory (Greelaef, 1970), Path-Goal Theory (House, 1971), Social Exchange Theory (Emerson, 1976).

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study comprise of 133 library staff of University of Ilorin. The total enumeration technique was used to include all 133 library staff. A validated questionnaire was used for data collection and the instrument was a self-structured questionnaire. The type of data collected for this study was primary data. The collected data from the field was analyzed using statistical techniques like frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Statistical Package for the Social Service (SPSS 12.0 version) where used for data analysis.

My library head corrects my actions before enforcing rules all the time	42 (17.4)	193 (79.8)	6 (2.5)	1 (0.4)	3.14	0.44
My librarian is keen about me obeying his commands and instructions	44 (18.2)	185 (76.4)	13 (5.4)	-	3.13	0.47
She closely monitors me to ensure I perform my duties diligently	38 (15.7)	195 (80.6)	9 (3.7)	-	3.12	0.42
Transformational (Mean = 2.95, SD = 0.56)						
My Supervisor do encourage me to take great ownership of my work	34 (14)	193 (79.8)	15 (6.2)	-	3.08	0.44
My librarian respects my contribution to the team	26 (10.7)	187 (77.3)	28 (11.6)	1 (0.4)	2.98	0.49
My librarian keeps open communication	31 (12.8)	173 (71.5)	33 (13.6)	5 (2.1)	2.95	0.59
My library head stimulates and encourage creativity in us	39 (16.1)	149 (61.6)	53 (21.9)	1 (0.4)	2.93	0.63
My library head believes respect is earned not commanded	34 (14)	159 (65.7)	47 (19.4)	2 (0.8)	2.93	0.60
My library head advocate assumptions, takes risks and solicits ideas from staff when making important decisions	35 (14.5)	152 (62.8)	53 (21.9)	2 (0.8)	2.91	0.62
My library head know my strengths and weaknesses so as to optimize my performance	22 (9.1)	166 (68.6)	53 (21.9)	1 (0.4)	2.86	0.56
Average Overall Mean		3.05			0.50	

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 2 reveals the responds of librarians as it regards to their leadership style in University of Ilorin Library. Based on the result on the table librarians agreed that there exists a style of leadership at the National Library of Nigeria (x 3.05). The leadership style utilized at University of Ilorin Library are transactional (x 3.15) and transformational (x 2.95) styles of leadership. However, the prevailing leadership style University of Ilorin Library is the transactional leadership style transactional (x 3.15). Under the transactional leadership style the ability of library heads to clarify tasks requirements and demand results regardless of the quality of resources provided to staff was rated high with a mean score of (x = 3.17). This is followed by the library been able to reward or punishes librarians based on their level of performance with a mean score of x 3.16) but under this style of leadership monitoring to ensure librarians perform their duties diligently was rated lowest (x 3.12). Furthermore, the transactional style of leadership was followed by transformational leadership style at University of Ilorin Library (x 2.95) where the respondents rated high the ability supervisors to encourage them to take great ownership of their work (x 3.08) followed by respects for librarians x 2.98 while the poor knowledge of the strength and weekends of librarians as it relates to work optimization was rated lowest (x 2.86).

Research Question three

What are the challenges of services delivery in the university of Ilorin library?

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D(%)	SD(%)
Budget constraints	53(26.24) 48(23.7)	54(26.72)	47(23.27)	
Changing User Needs	91(45.0) 17(8.4)	51(25/02)	43(21.3)	
Technological advancement	129(73)	23(11.4)	27(13.4)	3(1/4)
Information Overload	20(9/90)	94.(4.46)	52(25.27)	121(59.90)

Source: Authors field work 2024

Discussion of Findings

The study examined leadership style and service delivery by librarians in University of Ilorin Library. This section reports the findings of this study with previous studies. This research question one sought to find out the types of service delivery available in University of Ilorin Library. The findings of this study revealed that, services are available at University Of Ilorin Library. Some of the services that are available in the University of Ilorin Library include: circulation services, reference services, customer's services, current awareness services, selective dissemination of information and e-resources/ICT services. This agrees with Yaya, Opeke and Onuoha (2016) who reported in their study that service delivery by librarians in the

University libraries was high but were quick to state that despite the high level of service delivery, libraries do not have adequate infrastructural resources in providing these services to their patrons. Perhaps, one can empirically argue that the reason why some service delivery in University of Ilorin Library are inversely available may be as a result of lack of infrastructural resources to deliver some of these services to the users. This means that University of Ilorin Library cannot always deliver services in a regular manner in the absence of adequate and efficient means of delivering services to their users.

The finding of the study reveals that there is a leadership style at University of Ilorin Library. However, the prevailing leadership style being utilized at University of Ilorin Library is the transactional leadership style followed by the transformational style of leadership. The finding of this study is in agreement with Makinde (2017) who argued that Nigerian libraries need a transformational leadership style. He was of the view that a transformational leadership will enable the library solve problems using good judgment. It will help the library to become productive, work under pressure and take responsibility for their actions as well as accept errors associated with service delivery. This means that transformational leadership style makes librarians to effectively perform their duties.

Moreover, the findings of this study revealed that there is dominant of transactional leadership in the library. The findings of this study corroborates with Ardichvili and Kuchenke (2017) who reported that transactional leadership style is a style of leadership in which leaders encourage and motivate the employees. It is the style of leadership that promotes organization for immediate action to the changes that will profit both the leaders and the employees for an instant result. Transformational leaders trust and trained employees to take authority in the respective departments of work as well as on any assignment assigned to them. Hence, they allow employees to do their assigned jobs freely. A leader who is transformational initiates changing and tries to achieve higher level of performance that would lead to the effective and efficient services delivery. This researcher based on the established findings of this study can argue that with the level of services deliver in University of Ilorin Library, a transformational leadership style needs to be more practiced.

Conclusion

The study has succeeded in investigating the influence of leadership style on service delivery by librarians in University of Ilorin Library. Leadership style has a significant influence on the service delivery of librarians in University of Ilorin Library and leadership styles are important elements that can drive effective and efficient service delivery in University of Ilorin Library. Conclusively, for the sustenance of services delivery in University of Ilorin Library, the present leadership in University of Ilorin Library needs to be maintained. Finally, the findings of this study suggest that increased adaptability, mission, involvement and consistency in University of Ilorin Library will result in improved service delivery by librarians. Hence, as a result or with the prevailing leadership style and service delivery in University of Ilorin Library, the federal government and state government should step up to ensure the sustenance of service delivery in University of Ilorin Library.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Even though the study revealed that the level of service delivery by librarians in University of Ilorin Library is high, there is need to sustain the service delivery as well as to add more services that was not within the scope of this study. This is important because it will help with the ongoing effort of repositioning the University of Ilorin Library.
2. The study revealed that the prevailing leadership style is the transactional leadership. Hence, this study recommends that the leadership of the University of Ilorin Library should adopt more of transformational leadership style to total inclusiveness in the management of University of Ilorin Library.

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