

The functions of leadership in administrative institutions

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ABSTRACT: John Adair (1964), one of the leading functionalists on leadership, argues that if leaders are needed beforehand then we cannot wait for the situation to produce the leader. He holds that groups, like individuals, have certain common needs which must be satisfied. Leadership is then defined as the function for the gratification of the group needs. Three categories of needs have been identified as:

- a. task needs;
- b. team maintenance needs and
- c. individual needs.

These categories of needs overlap and influence one another in the group situations, For instance, failure of the group task affects the feeling of solidarity and decrease the individual happiness; whereas success in the group enhances group pride and individual; happiness. The functions of leaders are to promote the solidarity of the group, to achieve the needs of the group, and satisfy individual needs. Several factors may influence practice of leadership functions in so far as delegation of authority is concerned, for instance, the personality of the leader himself; the knowledge, skill and experience of his subordinates, and the situation of the tasks are all central in the behavioural theory of leadership.

Keywords: functionalist leadership, common needs, individual needs, feeling of solidarity and delegation of authority

I. INTRODUCTION

From the comparative leadership studies, it becomes apparent that the functions of leaders are to:

- promote the solidarity of the group;
- achieve the needs of the group and
- satisfy individual; needs.

However, several factors may influence the practice of leadership functions. All these aspects constitute the subject matter of this article

II. PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE

The purpose of this article is to articulate the functions of leadership in an administrative institution in the context of various thinkers, writers and scholars.

III. FUNCTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Firstly, the functions of leadership in an administrative institution are analyzed in the context of the following relevant leading thinkers, writers and scholars’;

• Phillip Selznick	• Peter Drucker	• C. I. Barnard
• Hicks and Gullet	• F. E. Fiedler	• J. J. N Cloete.
• Chester Barnard	• Pfiffner and Sherwood	
• M. P. Follet	• John Adair	

Secondly, there is an analysis of the executive functions in the contexts of the views and contributions of the leading thinkers, writers and scholars most relevant to the behavioural theory or functional theory of leadership

Contributions of thinkers, writers and scholars

Chester Irving Barnard [1886 – 1961] further developed the line of thought initiated by Mary Parker Follett [1868 – 1933]. He also conceived organisation as a social system. He is regarded as the spiritual father of the social system school of thought. Barnard is considered as one of the pioneers of the behavioural movement in public administration. In fact, he is the first full blown behaviouralist. He emphasized on the socio-psychological aspect of administration and management. To him, administration is cooperative social system.

The ideas of Barnard influenced the decision – making theory of Herbert a. Simon; the new human relations theory of Chris Argyris, Rensis Likert and Douglas M. Gregor, the motivation theories of Abraham Maslow and Fredrick Herzberg; the institutionalist model of Phillip Selznick; and systems approach to organizational analysis. Barnard's contribution to the understanding of organizational behaviour is one of the significant landmarks in the evolution to administrative through. He works include the functions of the executive (1983) and organizational and management (1948).

Executive functions

Barnard observed, functions of executive relate to all the work essential to the vitality and endures of an organisation so far at last as it must be accomplished through formal coordination. Executive work is work is not that of the organisation, but it is the specialized work of maintaining the organisation in operation. He regarded the following three as the essential functions of the executive:

- a. establish and maintaining the system of communication in the organisation.
- b. securing essential efforts and services from subordinates by motivating them to exert themselves for the organization's purpose
- c. formulating and defining purposes and objectives

Contributions of some of the famous thinkers, writers and scholars

1. Phillip Selznick: according to him, the functions of organizational leadership includes the following:
 - a. The definition of institutional mission and role, that is, setting organizational goals and formulating policies.
 - b. The institutional embodiment of purpose that is, helping the meaning of policy to percolate down to lower levels of the organisation.
 - c. The defence of institutional integrity that is maintaining the core values and distinctive identity of the organizational
 - d. The ordering of internal conflict that is, maintaining balance of power among competing interests in the organisation.
2. **Hicks and Gullet;** They identified the following eight functions of a leader;
 1. Supplying organizational objectives to the members
 2. Arbitrating on disagreements among organizational members.
 3. Catalyzing to arouse the subordinate to action
 4. Suggesting ideas to subordinates.
 5. Inspiring subordinates to work effectively towards accomplishment of organizational goals.
 6. Praising subordinates to satisfy their recognition and esteem needs.
 7. Providing security to followers when they face problems
 8. Representing the organisations before others and serving as a symbol of the organisation
3. **Chester Barnard:** He states that a leader performs the following four functions:
 1. Determination of objectives
 2. Manipulation of means
 3. Control of the instrumentality of action, and
 4. Simulation of coordinated action
4. **M. P. Follet;** according to her, a leader should perform the following three main functions.
 1. Co ordinations
 2. Definition of purpose
 3. Anticipation
5. **Peter Drucker;** he mentioned the following functions of leadership:
 1. lifting of man's vision to higher sights.
 2. raising of man's performance to higher standards
 3. building of man's personality beyond its normal limitations
6. **F. E. Fiedler:** he identified the following two functions of leadership
 1. Directing group activities
 2. coordinating group activities
7. **Pfiffner and Sherwood:** Accounting to them, a leader is the modifier of organizational behaviour.

They commended: Get the right man in the leadership job, and all your problems will be solved.

8. **J. J. N. Cloete**[1985]: explains that personnel administration consists of four groups of functions namely:

1. provision function;
2. utilization functions
3. support functions and
4. training and development functions

Leadership activities are classified as personal utilization functions.

Professor J. J. N. Cloete's approach is that leadership, as one of the groups of functions of personal utilization, consists of those functions which must be performed specifically to make employees work to the utmost of their physical and mental capacities; namely;

1. inspiring employees – motivating employees
2. communicating with the employees
3. directing or commanding the activities of employees;
4. constructing work programmes; and
5. conducting suggestion schemes.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1.1 Summary

From the leadership studies, it is safe to say in summary form that leadership functions consist of those functions which must be performed specifically to make followers work either as individuals or in groups to the utmost of their physical and mental capacities involving inspiring followers – motivating them; constantly communicating with the followers; commanding or directing their activities in relation to the commonly desired goals and objectives; assisting to construct work programmes and, in certain cases conducting suggestion schemes in order to enhance goal achievement, solidarity and group belonging.

1.2 Conclusion

It can be concluded that the functions of leadership in administrative institutions are many and varied, multi dimensional, multi faceted and complex. No one social scientist can compactly deal with them in one book let alone in one chapter of any study. But one thing that is common of these functions is that there are dynamic and useful

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