AN EXAMINATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP STYLES OF NIGERIAN QUANTITY SURVEYORS

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ABSTRACT

Nigerian clients have been appointing Nigerian quantity surveyors with differs leadership styles and experience as project managers on construction projects in Nigeria over the years and this is expected to have positive or negative effect on construction works. This study examines different project management leadership styles been exhibited by Nigerian quantity surveyors using different factors as criteria. 57 questionnaires were used for the analysis out of which 15 of the respondents are quantity surveyors. Jerrell/Slevin management instrument was used in the analysis based on the identified questions on the noted 4 leadership styles and construction professionals were also involved in ranking the Nigerian quantity surveyors based on the 10 identified leadership styles using mean internal score. On the general note, Nigerian quantity surveyors were found to be autocratic using Jerrell/Slevin measuring instrument while in the opinion of Nigerian construction professionals; they are more of task oriented in discharging their duties as construction project managers. The study finally recommends democratic and transformational leadership styles for Nigerian quantity surveyors in discharging their duties as construction projects managers.

Keywords: Competencies, Construction professionals, Nigeria, Perception, Quantity surveyors.

Introduction

The realization of construction projects brings together a diversity of individuals and organizations, variously forged into groups and teams, in which power is important in shaping leader/follower behaviour. Fellow, Liu, and Miu Fong (2003) observed that Quantity surveyors, being primarily project cost consultants and procurement/contractual advisers, are employed both by the clients' and the contractors' organizations in their quest for value for their money and this undermine the reason for their choice as construction project managers.

Benator (2003[a]) observed that the project manager's responsibility is to manage the financial, technical and schedule requirements of the project in such a manner as to bring the project in on-time, within budget and with a technical quality that meets or exceeds the contractual performance specifications. The project manager is ultimately responsible for the productivity of the people in the project team; it is therefore the project manager's job to maintain cohesion in the project. Hence, the project manager must be a leader; one who can inspire and motivate people who have ties both to the project as well as to the functional organisation. Benator and Thumann (2003) observed that the project manager plays an important role in development of the overall estimate of the total costs of the project. In addition the project manager develops checkpoints to ensure the overall project is completed within budget. The project manager usually develops the budget in conjunction with a cost estimating department.

A project manager is often a client representative and has to determine and implement the exact needs of the client, based on knowledge of the firm they are representing. The ability to adapt to the various internal procedures of the contracting party, and to form close links with the nominated representatives, is essential in ensuring that the key issues of cost, time, quality and above all, client satisfaction, can be realized. Odusami, Iyagba, and Omirin (2003) observed that project management practice is still at infancy stage in Nigeria. Virtually all the Nigerian construction professionals— architects, builders, civil

engineers, estate surveyors and quantity surveyors—practise project management as consultancy services along with their primary profession.

Leadership style as observed by Goleman (2002) is crucial to success of a project and construction project delivery. Leadership according to Benator (2003[b]) is a process and not a one-time, fire and forget evolution. To be an effective leader, there is a need for one to continually exercise good leadership skills. You don't need to be perfect, but you should always strive to apply sound leadership principles to your leadership efforts. Leadership involves influencing individuals or groups and good leaders are effective influencers of others because they know leaders can't do everything. Good leadership is designed to accomplish an organizational goal or mission, i.e. leading a project team and managing project to a high quality, on time and within budget conclusion with a customer who is happy with that conclusion.

Giritli and Oraz (2003) opined that different approaches to the subject have led to various classifications of leadership styles. Although behaviour categories may be labelled similarly, their conceptualization and operationalization may be totally different in most cases. Leadership style is in general of two types: the first one is the employee-centred type, described as democratic or participative, and the second one is the task-centred type, described as autocratic or authoritarian

Organizations have paid attention to leadership styles of their people who occupy managerial positions, holding the belief that leadership is an important factor in achieving business success (Giritli and Oraz 2003).

Literature Review

Project Management

Chartered Institute of Building (2008) defined project management as "the overall planning, control, co-ordination from inception to completion aimed at meeting a client's requirements and ensuring completion on time within cost and required quality and standard. In another opinion, Project Management Institute (2008) defines it as the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations which involves balancing competing demands among scope, time, cost and quality.

The management of a construction project has unique features such as the relationship with the client and the inter-organization nature of the process. The project manager is usually in the position of leading contributors over whom he has limited authority. A significant outcome of this is that each contributor will be subject to leadership form of both the project manager and the manager of his employer's organization. Project managers will be leading a group of mature, experienced professionals, consequently, his leadership will tend to be democratic and rely on impulse and persuasion rather than authority.

In a broader form, project management is the planning, control and co-ordination of a project from conception to completion (include commissioning) on behalf of a client; the identification of the clients objectives in terms of utility, function, quality, time and cost and the establishment of relationship between resources it is also concerned with the integration, monitoring and control of the contributors to the project and their output, and the evaluation and selection of alternatives in pursuit of the client satisfaction with the project outcome.

Quantity Surveyors

Quantity surveyor according to Wikipedia (2008) is "a professional trained, qualified, and experienced in handling construction cost, construction management and construction communication on behalf of the client".

Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (2004) defined a quantity surveyor as the expert professionally trained and experienced in dealing with construction cost, construction management and construction communication. This he exhibit in various types of projects including building construction, civil and structural engineering, mechanical building and engineering services, petrochemicals, mineral extraction, cost and production engineering, environmental economics, planning and urban development, landscaping, interior design and all other relevant areas.

Project Management Leadership Styles

In considering leadership styles in construction industry, the first thing that needs to be determined is whether the construction industry is a special case (Giritli and Oraz, 2003). According to Harvey and Ashworth (1993), the construction industry has characteristics that separate it from all other industries. These characteristics that can have an impact on leadership styles in construction are: (a) project characteristics, (b) contractual arrangements, (c) project life-cycle and (d) environmental factors. A construction project is composed of a multitude of organizations. Individuals or groups from several parent organizations are all drawn together for a short time related to a specific task. The project-based organization is disbanded upon the completion of that task. This project-based nature of construction industry with its temporary multi-organizations will almost certainly have an important influence on the managerial leadership styles of professionals working in the industry. Lee-Kelley and Loong (2003) observed that there is no definitive skill and style mix that is appropriate for handling different types of projects.

Liu, Fellows and Fang (2003) believed that styles of leadership emerged from the behavioural studies as analysis of the ways in which leaders execute the functions. Researchers have identified the major leadership styles as, laissez-faire, democratic, and autocratic (Halepota, 2005). It was further affirmed that democratic leadership style has achieved higher productivity and effectiveness from the perception of behavioural scientists.

Chan and Chan (2005) adopted transformational and transactional leadership styles in a study. It was stated that Bass's transformational leadership theory, comprising transactional and transformational leadership styles, described the leader as one who helps to develop and maintain a sense of commitment, and raises aspirations and motivation among colleagues and followers. Transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality while transactional leadership was described as simply contingent reinforcement.

In Love, Davis and Lopez (2007) opinion, two leadership styles dominate the construction management literature and they are charismatic and transformational. The former provide a vision that followers accept and believe in while the later tend to obtain followers compliance

Furthermore, construction professionals need different leadership styles in different phases of the project life cycle (Giritli and Oraz 2003). The style of leadership changes as the project progresses through its life cycle. During the different phases of the design process, styles may need to allow for more debates, fine-tuning and deliberation. Yet, during the construction phases, they may be more structured and dominant

Four leadership styles were identified by Slevin and Pinto (1998) using Jerrell/Slevin measuring instrument and they are:

1. The Shareholder manager (D, I) (0–50, 0–50). This position means literally ''poor manager''. There is little or no information input and exchange between the leader and the group. The group has authority in the final decision
2. The Autocrat (D, I) (50–100, 0–50). Such managers solicit little or no information Input from their group. They make managerial decisions solely by themselves.

3. The Consensus manager (D, 1) (0–50, 50–100). This is purely consensus manager. He throws the problem opens to the group for discussion and also allows or encourages the group to make a relevant decision.
4. The Consultative autocrat (D, I) (50–100, 50–100). In this managerial style intensive information input is elicited from the members, but such formal leaders keep all substantive decision making authority to themselves.

Research Methodology

Leadership styles of leaders as perceived by their employees can be assessed according to Chan and Chan (2005) through the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Jerrell/Slevin management instrument which was claimed by Slevin and Pinto (1988) to have been used effectively with thousands of managers both in explaining the theory and providing them with a diagnostic on their particular style can also be employed. The employees are to assess their leaders using the MLQ while individuals were to assess themselves when Jerrell/Slevin instrument is to be employed.

Jerrell/Slevin management instrument and Mean internal Score were employed in the analysis for this study. Jerrell/Slevin instrument is such that respondents were asked 20 questions using 5 Likert scales rating of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree (Slevin and Pinto, 1998). The first 10 questions were to determine the “D” (decision authority) value while the other 10 were meant for “I” (subordinate group’s information input to decision) value. The mean for each category of respondents were determined and the raw score “D” and “I” were identified on a Jerrell/slevin management instrument table in order to determine their corresponding percentile score. These percentiles were plotted on the Bonoma-Slevin leadership model in order to determine the leadership style of Nigerian quantity surveyors using various criteria. The Bonoma-Slevin model identified 4 leadership styles i.e. Autocratic, consensus, shareholder and consultative autocratic and it is presented in form of a graph in which “D” is plotted on the X-axis and “I” on the Y-axis.

52 construction professionals that are eligible and competent to act as construction project managers were also involved in ranking Nigerian quantity surveyors with respect to identified 10 leadership styles. These professionals are architects, quantity surveyors, builders and engineers.

Findings and Discussion

Using Jerrell/Slevin management instrument, table 1 shows that Nigerian quantity surveyors do exhibit autocratic leadership style on the general note while only 2 of the identified categories exhibits shareholder and consensus styles. Based on the survey, the respondents were of the opinion that Nigerian quantity surveyors do exhibit more of task-oriented leadership style than other identified styles. Giritli and Oraz (2003) classified leadership styles into democratic and autocratic. The former was described as employee-centred and the latter was described as task-centred depicting a relationship between the result of the management instrument and the perception of construction professionals. As expected, laissez-faire leadership style – described as “hands-off¨ or “leave it be” style - was ranked least in term of execution by Nigerian quantity surveyors.

Conclusion and Further Research

Professionals acting as project managers should posses the ability to adapt different leadership styles depending on situation at hand. Nigerian quantity surveyors are more autocratic in their project management leadership. They were also found to be task oriented, bureaucratic and transactional in exhibiting their leadership role. Halepota (2005) affirmed that democratic leadership style has achieved higher productivity and effectiveness from the perception of behavioural scientists. None of the identified categories of quantity surveyors exhibit this leadership style and it was ranked 4th in term

of exhibition by Nigerian quantity surveyors when acting as construction projects manager.

More so, quantity surveyors were found to be more transactional than transformational and this study recommend a need for improved transformational style since the style is more participatory and allowed suggestions from followers without fear.
This research has made use of Jerrell/Slevin management measuring instrument. Other study can make use of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or both and compare the results. Project management leadership styles of other construction professionals can also be assessed since the study only assess Nigerian quantity surveyors and more professionals can also be involved for future studies.

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Appendix

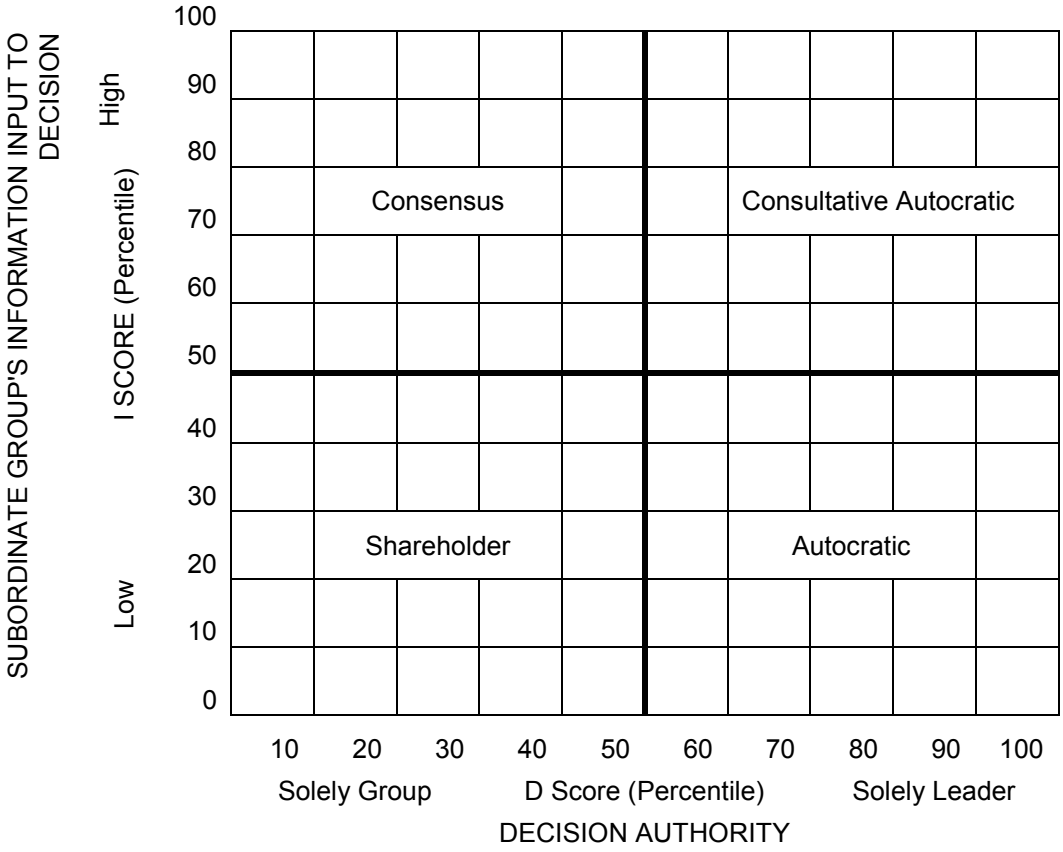

Figure 1: Jerrell/Slevin Management instrument
Source: Slevin and Pinto (1988)

Table 1: Leadership styles of Nigerian quantity surveyors using Jerrell/Slevin instrument

Categorization	Quantity Surveyor
Overall	Autocratic
Type of organisation	
Consulting	Autocratic
Contracting	Autocratic
Government establishment	Autocratic
Years of experience	
1 - 5	Autocratic
6 - 10	Autocratic
11 - 15	Autocratic
16 - 20	Shareholder
21 - 30	Autocratic
31 & above	
Membership type	
Probationer	Shareholder
Graduate	
Associate	Autocratic
Fellow	Autocratic
No of projects handled	

1 - 5	Autocratic
6 - 10	Autocratic
11 - 15	Autocratic
16 - 20	
21 - 30	Consensus
31 & above	Autocratic

Table 2: Perception of construction professionals to quantity surveyors' leadership styles

Styles	Mean	Rank
Task oriented	3.84	1
Bureaucratic	3.72	2
Transactional	3.67	3
Autocratic	3.58	4
Democratic	3.58	4
Charismatic	3.53	6
Transformational	3.41	7
People oriented	3.33	8
Servant leadership	2.80	9
Laissez-Faire	2.56	10