

DIFFERENT CULTURES, SAME LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION MANAGERS

Aboko A. 

Department of Secretaryship and Management Studies, Tamale Polytechnic, Ghana

aboko166@yahoo.com

Sophia Ayaric

Department of Secretaryship and Management Studies, Tamale Polytechnic, Ghana

Kaboasop2@gmail.com

Abstract

Many leaders have the intellectual capacity to understand the logic underlying western management principles and practices but revert to their pre-training behaviour after participating in several training programmes. And that indicates a fundamental weakness in the Western leadership training programmes. This study employed qualitative approach to examine the influence of African culture on the performance of agricultural extension service directors/managers in Ghana, trained in western leadership style. The study revealed that, extension service work schedules are task-oriented and structured, with minimum or no flexibility, and employees are expected to faithfully implement policies. Leaders perceive employees as containers for dumping instructions. Workers basically have instrumental orientation towards work; they expect their jobs to bring substantial benefits to themselves but show very little if any loyalty and commitment to the organisation. Leaders fail to treat organizational goals with the importance they deserve and are frequently engaged in the search for personal power and privileges. Collectivism based on family ties and religious relations are significant. Much respect is also given to caring centred values such as self-sacrifice, kindness, and love, which are learnt from family and cultural norms. Leadership is vital in agricultural extension service delivery since they function as extension workers, catalysts, solution givers, process helpers and resource linkers. Current knowledge is needed to determine the extent to which the existing leadership practices influence efficiency and effectiveness of extension service delivery in Ghana.

Keywords: leadership, African culture, management principles, training, performance

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, there has been a relentless search for factors responsible for the disappointing performance of developing economies, particularly in Africa. These economies are normally compared with their high performing Asian counterparts such as China, Malaysia and South Korea among others which experienced similar levels of performance in the past. Whereas these Asian economies are now being touted as “economic miracles” (Akyu`z and Gore, 2001), the situation in Africa is typically labeled as a “disaster”, “tragedy” or a “scar” (UNCTAD, 2004; Blair, 2005). Explanations for this unacceptable level of performance have been attributed to a cadre of factors which includes, management incompetence (Kamoche, 1997) inadequate staff motivation (Okpara, 2006; Okpara and Wynn, 2007) institutional and structural weaknesses (Killick et al., 2001), insufficient attention to private venture development (Fafchamps et al., 2001), weak governance system (Nwankwo and Richards, 2001) and leadership weaknesses (Obasanjo, 2013; Ochola, 2007).

While insufficient studies have been conducted on African leadership (Bolden and Kirk, 2009), empirical literature available suggests that leaders in the continent are awfully unproductive and are unable to act to meet the demands of the progressively more unpredictable global economic system (Ochola, 2007). As a result, Edoho (2007) asserted that until the leadership capacities of Africans are properly harnessed, economic growth on the continent would continue to be a mirage. To address this, Leadership training and capacity building efforts has occupied the centre stage of policy taking cognizance of the fact that the religious implementation of western leadership styles would guarantee the expected outcomes in both private and public institutions. Kuada (2001) posited that, this view has provided intellectual legitimacy for the unending stream of donor funded management training programmes and organisational development interventions delivered to African organizations by Western experts. In Ghana for instance, a cadre of leadership institutions have emerged all in the name of providing leadership skills for the intended beneficiaries. Among others, the establishment of former president Kufuor’s Foundation which was launched in September 2011 aims at advocating and promoting leadership and democratic governance in Africa while promoting the common good of their citizens. Besides, the Youth Leadership Training Institute (YLTi) at Afienua was built in the 1960s under the presidency of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah to help improve the lives of students in all vocational and training institutions across the country.

The significance of this Western-oriented leadership styles has generated a lot of controversy as thriving leadership styles abound all over the world (Whitley, 1994; Sørensen and Kuada, 2001). Kuada, (1994) postulated that, the fact that many African managers have the intellectual capacity to understand the logic underlying western management principles and

practices but revert to their pre-training behaviour after participating in several training programmes indicate fundamental weaknesses in the Western management-oriented training programmes themselves.

The disturbing views expressed above offer an opportunity for more studies to be conducted in that area of research. The fundamental premise of this study is to determine whether western leadership styles could be applied in the delivery of extension services to the Ghanaian work setting to produce a more satisfying work climate for employees. In most public organisations in Ghana, work schedules are task-oriented and structured, with minimum or no flexibility, and employees are expected to faithfully implement such decisions and policies (Edoho, 2007). In organisations where leaders perceive employees as containers for the depositing of instructions, employees would pretend to be satisfied with the current job because they may not have superior alternatives. For workers to carry out their assigned tasks voluntarily and enthusiastically, leaders have the responsibility of encouraging employees and creating an organisational climate that would produce the needed results because the human factor is so vital to the survival and sustenance of the organisation.

Webb (1989) asserted that, Extension services organizations are loaded with tradition. In practice, Directors of Extension are chosen to their positions as a result of long service or seniority which is similar to the practice in Ghana. Little or no interest is paid to leadership styles or behaviors that could be exhibited by these individuals. However, as human as they are, employees at all levels form impressions relative to whether they are appreciated or not based on relevant signals that originate from their work setting, particularly from their immediate superiors (Altman, 2002; Roberts, 2001)

This research therefore provides a strong case for the positioning of Ghanaian leadership styles on the global management studies platform and its potential influence in the delivery of extension services to farmers. The paper proceeds by reviewing existing published works in the area of study whiles highlighting noticeable present knowledge gaps in the literature. Following this, the paper would offer some basis for more scholarly work to be undertaken and provide a conceptual picture that could be relevant to the research community and management practitioners in particular.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Leadership styles

The performance of any organization depends largely on its human capital. Organizations are run by human beings categorized into employees and management whose collective interest is to attain a desired goal. Leaders and employees play very vital roles in any organization. As

opined by (Obasanjo, 2013), “The major cause of our underdevelopment is leadership, leadership and leadership. Leadership is crucial to achieving our goals; if leadership is lacking, we will continue to wallow in hardships”. Organizations need effective leaders and employees to achieve their objectives. The leadership style that would be employed by an organization becomes a vital determinant in the employees’ job satisfaction and efficient performance.

Researchers have defined leadership in different ways based on their understanding of it according to (Dimmock and Walker, 2005; Northouse, 2010); Yukl (2002), Simkins (2005). The explanation of the concept of leadership is pervasive, subjective, arbitrary and elusive (Dimmock and Walker 2005). Northouse (2010) claimed that the concept is opened to various interpretations and could be likened to popular terms such as love, democracy and peace. The concept though well researched does not have a universally accepted definition as posited by (Bush, 2003; Bush and Middlewood, 2005).

Some theorists of leadership consider it from the angle of the leader’s capacity relative to the person’s skills and knowledge, whereas others look at it from the side of the leader’s relationship with his followers relative to power. Bass (1997) sees leadership as a group process where the leader becomes the axes for the other team members to cluster and that is in consonance with this research context where extension managers or directors’ work with extension staff, and this process of interaction within the group shapes the leadership. Therefore, this study considers leadership as a process whereby extension directors/directors influences a team of extension workers to accomplish a shared aim of the institution.

There are a number of leadership definitions which consider leadership as a process through which a leader influences a team of followers to accomplish a shared goal (Davies *et al.*, 2001; Dimmock and Walker, 2005; Northouse, 2010). Leadership style in such cases is reflected in the leader’s interaction or behaviour that s/he exerts while influencing followers in order to guide, structure and facilitates activities and relationships in an institution (Northouse, 2010).

Consideration of leadership as a ‘process’ means that it is a two-way phenomenon and both the leader and the followers are integral parts of leadership (Hollander, 1992). This approach understands leadership as an interactive phenomenon between a leader and followers, which is neither a highly structured top-down relationship nor confined to the person who is nominated within the team officially, rather it is accessible for each and every member of the team (Northouse, 2010; Simkins, 2005).

Involvement of ‘influence’ in leadership implies the way a leader affects their subordinates/colleagues. Leadership happen in ‘teams’, which means that the group is the setting/situation in which leadership takes place, and it is the team which allows the

phenomenon of leadership to happen or to be complete (Northouse, 2010). This stresses the ethical aspect of leadership through the combined responsibility of both the leader and the followers, and has the potential to decrease the chance of unethical leadership behaviour towards subordinates (Northouse, 2010). Rost (1991) argues that it might also enhance the likelihood of joint effort by the leader and subordinates towards a common good. Different theorists and researchers broadly link leadership with vision, values, establishing the institutional culture, change and movement through maintaining direction, people and inspiration (Gunter, 2001).

The field of leadership research involves analysing the concept of leadership itself, the types and styles of leadership and their relevance to organisational settings” (Briggs and Coleman, 2007). In spite of the increasing literature on leadership, Ribbins and Gunter (2002) assert that research in the two essential fields of leadership has not been conducted sufficiently. Firstly, the research related to leading: “what individual leaders do, why they do, and with what outcomes” (Ribbins and Gunter, 2002). Secondly, the research related to leaders: “what leaders are, why and by whom they are shaped into what they are, and how they become leaders” (Ribbins and Gunter, 2002). The present study is located within the first category and it addresses ‘what individual leaders do’ in terms of leadership styles as perceived by extension workers, and ‘with what outcomes’ in terms of extension service delivery.

The debate on leadership can be traced back to the era of Aristotle (Northouse, 2010) and the literature written by Confucius, Plato, Plutarch, and Caesar highlights discussion on leadership (Bass, 1985). A review of literature related to leadership unveils an evolving series of ‘schools of thought’ (Bolden *et al.*, 2003). Early theories were focused upon leaders’ traits and their personality, whereas later theories considered the followers and the situation into the phenomenon of leadership (Bolden *et al.* 2003). Thereafter, researchers directed their focus towards the leader’s behaviour, and the movement of leadership theories shifted from the leader’s personality to the leader’s behaviour (Kreitner, 1983). Different researchers categorise leadership theories differently (Bolden, 2004; Bolden *et al.*, 2003; Bush, 2003; Northouse, 2010) and “many approaches to their classification are possible” (Simkins, 2005:11). Levine (2000, provided the following leadership theories to form the bases for conceptual discussion and analysis.

Early Theories

These theories perceive the leader as a result of a set of forces, and do not take into account the relationship among the leader and setting as important in the debate of leadership (Levine, 2000). ‘Great Man’ theories have their basis on the idea that a leader is an extraordinary person

who has inborn excellence and possesses superior characteristics designed to lead (Northouse, 2010). If a leader is gifted with greater features, then these qualities could be recognized.

In the 'Trait Approach', it is considered that key leadership characteristics can be identified and the individual who has the required qualities could be nominated as leader. This approach has strengths in that it has intuitive appeal, and provides a standard regarding leadership qualities (Northouse, 2010). The criticism, however, with this approach exists in the truth that more or less the same number of characteristics as studies conducted were found (Bolden *et al.*, 2003); in other words, there is a subjective determination of traits (Northouse, 2010). Although there have been a number of studies over a long period of time which have tried to find a universal set of leadership characteristics, the findings are, in general, inconsistent (Gray and Smeltzer, 1989; Green, 1994; Northouse, 2010; Yukl and Van Fleet, 1998). If a leader has some specific characteristics, it does not mean that in the absence of these traits he/she is no longer a leader (Bolden *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, this approach does not consider the attributes in relation to leadership effects/results, does not consider the situation, and cannot be used to train and develop leaders (Northouse, 2010).

Interactive Theories

These theories maintain that leadership is conditional to certain variables, for example, the setting, the individuals, the activity, the organisation and other environmental factors (Levine, 2000). 'Situational Approach' maintains that different leadership styles might be required at different levels of the same institution (Bolden *et al.*, 2003). This means that in order to be an effective leader a particular leadership style needs to be adopted by the leader according to the requirement of the situation (Northouse, 2010).

This theory was expanded by Hersey and Blanchard (1996) through their situational leadership model. They introduced the terms 'directive behaviour' and 'supportive behaviour'. Directive (task) behaviour might include giving directions to team members, usually through one-way communication; whereas, in supportive (relationship) behaviour leaders are likely to maintain personal relationships with their team members through open channels of communication, providing support, recognition, appreciation and positive feedback to followers (Hersey *et al.*, 1996; Mosley *et al.*, 1989; Northouse, 2010). In this approach a leader matches their leadership style to the competence and commitment level (development level) of the followers (Northouse, 2010); however, this approach could not clearly define the followers' development levels and the matching of leadership styles with these levels (Northouse, 2010).

The 'Contingency Approach' is a modification of the situational point of view. This approach takes into account leadership style and situation, and here situation is characterised by three variables: "leader-member relations, task structure and position power" (Northouse, 2010). In this approach the effectiveness of the leader depends upon the appropriate matching of the leadership style and the context or setting (Northouse, 2010). Therefore, a leader's effectiveness is contingent to the situation within which the leader operates (Fiedler, 1989; Northouse, 2010), and leadership styles here are labelled as 'task-motivated' or 'relationship-motivated'. Leaders with a task-motivated style are more inclined towards the accomplishment of targets, whereas leaders with a relationship-motivated style prefer to build interpersonal relationships (Northouse, 2010). The 'relationship-motivated and task-motivated' concepts are similar to the 'consideration and initiation structure' notions respectively put forwarded by the Ohio State studies.

Regardless of the strengths of this approach, it is unable to clarify the link among certain styles of the leader and subordinates' satisfaction and performance (Grosso, 2008). Hemphill (1955) and Homans (1950) give central importance to the interaction between the leader and team members, and the leader's concern for their subordinates (Evans, 1999), in order to make the leadership successful and to achieve the required performance from team members.

Style Approach

This approach "focuses exclusively on what leaders do and how they act" (Northouse, 2010), that means it specifically emphasises the behaviour of the leader rather than the leader's personality traits (Bolden, 2004). Lewin *et al.* (1939) started to recognize different leadership styles, although later studies have found many specific leadership styles, Lewin *et al.*'s work is still considered seminal as it was they who identified three main styles of leadership authoritarian, participative and laissez-faire. A leader with an authoritarian style presents targets and instructions very clearly to followers, such as what to do, when to do it, and how to do it (Lewin *et al.*, 1939). The problem with this leadership style is that it is perceived that the leader has total control, behaves as a boss and dictates (Druskat and Wheeler, 2003; Fiedler, 1989; Sagie, 1997). A leader with the participative style contributes to the group and tries to be a member of the team, provides guidance to the team members, and obtains participation from the members of the team in the decision making process, and because of this the participative style is commonly believed to be the more useful in practice (Druskat and Weeler, 2003; Koopman and Wierdsma, 1998; Lewin *et al.*, 1939). A laissez-fair leader provides no supervision to subordinates and the followers take decisions on their own (Lewin *et al.*, 1939); in other words, there is no leadership in this style.

Moreover, significant research into the style approach was done by Blake and Mouton in 1964, 1978 and 1985. They utilised the concepts of 'concern for people' and 'concern for production' in their Managerial Grid, later renamed the Leadership Grid, which describes how a leader enables an institution to achieve its goal (Northouse, 2010). Concern for people considers how a leader treats the followers who are striving to attain their aims. It comprises promoting friendship, developing institutional dedication and trust, facilitating employees to accomplish their job through a conducive working environment, enhancing the followers through self-respect, and considering those issues which are concerned with employees, such as reasonable pay and good social environment (Blake and Mouton, 1964). Concern for production means a concern for accomplishing institutional activities/assignments towards attaining whatever an institution is trying to achieve for its success (Blake and Mouton, 1964).

Furthermore, important studies were conducted at two American universities: The Ohio State University and the University of Michigan. The researchers at The Ohio State University were concerned with analysing the behaviour of leaders which influenced the satisfaction and efficiency of the team members. They maintain that leaders using the 'initiating structure' style try to provide supervision at each stage and maintain a very strict check to achieve excellent performance and standardized processes. The spirit of this style is to keep the focus on achieving the aims dominant (Grosso, 2008). In contention, 'consideration' is leadership behaviour in which a leader prefers and maintains camaraderie, mutual trust and respect, liking and affection in the leader and subordinate relationships (Northouse, 2010). This style of leader is worker-oriented; the leader is less concerned with task, and gives more importance to the relationship.

The researchers at the University of Michigan initially perceived that 'employee orientation' and 'production orientation' are at opposite ends of the same continuum; however, later they conceptualised these two concepts as independent, similar to the Ohio State investigators. Thereafter, researchers from both Ohio State and Michigan universities carried out a large number of studies to find out "how leaders could best combine their task and relationship behaviours to maximise the impact of these behaviours on the satisfaction and performance of followers" (Northouse, 2010). The results were generally contradictory, unclear, and inconclusive (Yukl, 2002); however, these studies directed the focus of future research towards finding out the effects of leadership styles upon followers' satisfaction and performance (Grosso, 2008).

Modern Theories/Full range leadership theory

House (1997) argues that leadership style affects followers' job satisfaction. The qualities of a leader determine a specific style for the leader, which creates a positive picture of the leader among subordinates. This constructive opinion about leader may lead towards a positive change in the group members' attitude and behaviour, which in turn may enhance the subordinates' job satisfaction and efficient performance (Grosso, 2008). This assumption signals the transformational capacity of charismatic leadership and the influence it may have on the subordinates (Grosso, 2008).

However, changes in the field of extension service delivery have highlighted the need to study the full range leadership behaviour. This full range model involves the passive/avoidant (management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire) leadership behaviour at one end, and leadership behaviour such as inspirational and charismatic on the other end (Bass, 1997). The shift of institutions away from more rigid power hierarchies, which demands more transactional leadership behaviour, towards more flexible structures of authority, emphasises the investigation of the full range of leadership styles (Bass 1997). (Grosso, 2008) asserts the demand to develop and exercise transformational leadership characteristics because of the changes, such as the increase in the diversity of employees and more networking and interdependence of institutions due to globalization.

Leadership in Africa and Ghanaian Context

The global leadership and organization Behavior Effectiveness Research Program (GLOBE), as well as a substantial amount of other empirical research (House, Wright, & Aditya, 1997), has demonstrated what is expected of leaders, what leaders may and may not do and the status and influence bestowed on leaders could vary considerably as a result of the cultural forces in the countries or regions in which the leaders function. For instance, Americans, Arabs, Asians, English, Eastern Europeans, French, and Germans and Latin Americans tend to glorify the concept of leadership and consider it reasonable to discuss leadership in the context of both political and organizational arenas.

In Africa, a range of different leadership styles are practiced, some very much adaptive to the user environment and thriving, and some unsuitable. Grosso (2008) described these by reference to three ideal type of management systems made up of: post-colonial (based on coercive leadership and alienative involvement); post-instrumental (based on remunerative reward and contractual involvement); a renaissance (based on normative leadership and moral involvement). African management systems appear currently to be predominantly results and control oriented (post-instrumental and post-colonial), with some country differences.

Democratic Republic of Congo is more control oriented. Mozambique, Rwanda, Burkina Faso and Botswana are more people (normative) oriented. Obasanjo (2013) has attributed the lack of development in most African countries to poor leadership on the part of some Presidents on the continent. He said it was only dedicated and selfless leadership that could “lead Africa to the Promised Land”. He stated that, leadership crisis and corruption are the greatest obstacles to Africa’s development. He asserted that, the continent’s resources are personalized at the expense of the people. Using Nigeria as a case study, abject poverty, inadequate health facilities and unemployment pervade the land and these are borne out of the failure on the part of leadership, and corruption.

Equally, Northouse (2010) posited that, African leaders are confronted with numerous challenges and in order to deal effectively with those challenges, the unique developmental needs of leaders need to be addressed continuously. In their view, leaders are confronted with unique challenges such as globalisation, cultural diversity, black economic empowerment and transformation. Organizations should place more emphasis on African leadership competencies in their leadership development programmes.

Undoubtedly, there are more convincing facts connecting leadership to employees and organizational performance globally (Avolio, 2004). While there is limited research on the leadership construct in certain parts of Africa, a massive body of data has emerged from other African countries. This growing body of research has extensively researched into transformational leadership. Available studies indicate that socio-cultural issues influence leaders’ effectiveness as well as its approval by followers (Elenkov & Manev, 2005). Further research points out that leadership and culture to some extent complement each other (Liden & Antonakis, 2009). According to (Hofstede, 2001) cultural-value dimensions in sub-Saharan Africa is high in collectivism and in human orientation (House *et al.*, 1997). Collectivist cultures have close social structure with effective and unified in-groups that are opposed to out-groups. Collectivism based on family ties and religious relations are significant. Caring centred values also include self-sacrifice, kindness, and love, which are learnt from family teachings, and cultural norms.

Existing findings on organizations in South and East African countries revealed that thriving leaders practice the Ubuntu values, a humanistic style to executing leadership functions in Africa, which places much premium on empathy, reverence, and human pride while focusing on nurturing relations, individual interface, and reciprocated respect (Browning, 2006). In Ghana, society is hierarchical and people are respected because of their age, experience, and wealth. Elderly people are viewed as intelligent and are granted respect and it is assumed that the most senior person will make decisions that are in the best interest of the group. These

characteristics are consistent with Hofstede's model of high power distance (Yates & Finikiotis, 2010)

In the Ghanaian context, (Owusu-Yeboah, 2010) posited that, chieftaincy has been the longest existing form of leadership in Ghana. There is nothing incongruous about a monarch advancing the course of democracy and most of the great democracies on the planet are built on the foundations of enlightened monarchies which provide them with their spirit of unity and national pride (Otumfo, 2013). It is still a potent force in the country's systems. However, British Colonial rule, the church and the rise of formalization in Ghana has had a toll on chieftaincy. In spite of this though, chieftaincy is deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of Ghanaians (Donkoh, 2002). This cannot be changed easily. It is believed that without the deep-rooted traditional values and norms of the collective nationalities, the constitution alone would be unable to sustain the state (Amoatia, 2010). In Nigeria, traditional rulers' long are able to take pre-emptive action through their familiarity with the different sections of the community, where the government has been observed to be reactive (Blench, Longtau, Hassan, & Walsh, 2006). However in the most formal settings, any informal activity by a leader must be done as chiefs do it to be recognized and also gain the full support of Ghanaians in the organization.

Interestingly, the dominant leadership style in Ghana currently is unknown as there is very little empirical data in that regard. Nonetheless, research undertaken in some countries around Africa appears to have some bearing on the Ghanaian situation because of the common socio-cultural practices. Earlier researchers, particularly Kiggundu (1988) and Chondry (1986), who researched on leadership styles in Southern Africa, have asserted that the overriding leadership style is authoritarian, personalised, inflexible, insensitive and conservative. Leaders in Ghana seem to bend towards the authoritarian style because of our colonial experience and socio-cultural influences.

Culture and Leadership

Culture provides a frame of reference or logic by which leadership behaviour can be understood (Dorfman et al., 2006). For these scholars, culture represents the shared values and norms that bind members of a society or organization together as a homogenous entity (Roberts, 1970). That is, people living within a particular culture have their conduct regulated through a collection of consensual aspirations and universal orientations.

Social structures that develop through the processes of regulated behaviour are perceived to be orderly, patterned and enduring. This perspective of culture has been popularised in the research works of such scholars as Hofstede (1980) and Sackmann (1997). Most of these scholars have found it purposeful to describe national (macro) cultures in

dichotomies such as individualism-collectivism (Hofstede, 1980; and masculine-feminine (Hofstede, 1980)

The central argument in many of these studies is that leadership styles and behaviours are culture-bound. Culture provides a frame of reference and guide for behavior of employees in work organizations. Cultures of some societies endorse autocratic leadership behaviours while others demand that their leaders must exhibit participatory leadership behaviours. Autocratic leaders may, however demonstrate benevolent dispositions towards subordinates that are very close to them (Kuada, 1994).

Muczyk and Holt (2008) argued that, an autocratic leadership style may be appropriate in cultures that are high in power distance, collectivism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance and that are characterized by external environmental orientation. Also, autocratic leadership might be more appropriate for societies whose members have a high regard for hierarchy and are reluctant to bypass the chain of command. Conversely, relationship centred or democratic leadership styles are more effectively practised in cultures that are low on power distance, high on individualism and femininity, low on uncertainty avoidance and characterized by internal environmental orientation.

Theoretical arguments advanced in the two streams of research are cultural theories and leadership theories which have influenced available studies on management in Africa. But the arguments have not been synthesized into a coherent framework that can guide empirical investigations in the field. A review of the current discourses on the link between African culture and leadership suggests that scholars are divided on the issue of how culture impacts leadership on the continent. Some scholars' use culture to justify the uniqueness of African leadership styles; culture serves as a unique descriptor. Others project African culture as an inhibitor of effective leadership practices. Scholars who argue in support of the view that African culture is largely responsible for the unique leadership practices on the continent include Jackson (2004) as well as Bolden and Kirk (2009). For example, Leonard (1987) argued that many of the differences in organisational behaviour between Africa on the one hand, and the United States and Europe, on the other, are not due to managerial failures but to fundamental dissimilarities in the value priorities of the societies that encapsulate them.

Similarly, Jackson (2004) found from his study of leadership practices in several African countries that African managers tend to be highly skilled in many aspects of management and leadership. They deal efficiently with cultural diversity and multiple stakeholders and enact "humanistic" management practices. Drawing a distinction between "an instrumental view of people in organizations, and a humanistic view of people," he argues that while the Western approach to management focuses on instrumental view of man (perceiving human beings as

resources) the African perception focuses attention on human beings as having values in their own right.

From this perspective leadership and management practices in Africa may be described as predominantly humanistic with an emphasis on sharing, deference to rank, sanctity of commitment, regard for compromise and consensus, and good social and personal relations. Building on this understanding Bolden and Kirk (2009) see leadership practices in Africa as complex and multi-layered and shaped by centuries of cultural values and historical events.

The view that African culture mainly inhibits effective leadership practices in Africa has been advanced in studies of such scholars as Kuada (2008) as well as Nwankwo and Richards (2001). Jones (1986), for example, showed that Malawian workers basically have instrumental orientation towards work; they expect their jobs to bring substantial benefits to themselves but show very little if any loyalty and commitment to the organisation. Similarly, Montgomery (1987) observed in his analysis of the management practices of African executives in Southern African countries that African leaders fail to treat organizational goals with the importance that these goals deserve and are frequently engaged in the search for personal power and privileges. They typically see their positions in their organisations as personal fiefdoms. Their personnel policies are influenced by patronage, resulting in limited organizational commitment by African employees. Public and organizational properties are therefore treated with indifference and irresponsibility by many employees:

Even arguments and negotiations over public vehicles, housing and equipment centred about the convenience of the individual user more than about the mission of the organisation to which they were assigned (Montgomery, 1987). In the same vein, Nwankwo and Richards (2001) argue that post-independence leadership styles in Africa have hitherto remained autocratic, dictatorial and incompetent in both public and private organizations. African employees tend to be inspected (i.e. closely supervised) rather than expected (i.e. motivated) in an age when other societies advocate for and practice employee empowerment and encourage independent thinking and creativity that ensures organizational agility (Kuada, 1994).

African employees therefore tend to act with extreme caution while at work in order not to invite the anger of their superiors for any mistakes that they may make in the course of their work. In Kuada's view, the principal function of the loyal employee in Africa is to serve as a buffer for the immediate superior. If anything goes wrong, the loyal subordinate must do anything to blame all others, including himself, in order to protect his boss. A variation of this kind of behaviour plays up in situations where several employees are aware of something that is a problem of mutual concern but they choose to act as if they do not know of it and therefore cover up the errors. Argyris (1990, 1993) coins the term "skilled incompetence" to describe this

type of defensive behaviour. The consequence is that employees become very reluctant to question existing practices in their organisations even if this would help rectify operational inefficiencies.

Leadership and Agricultural Extension Service Delivery

Leadership is vital in agricultural extension service delivery. In the field of agricultural extension, leadership has critical strategic importance since it deals with developing groups of farmers in the community. Agricultural extension worker in this sense serves as an administrative leader and coordinator for formulating, developing, implementing and evaluating agricultural extension programmes as well as develop farmers in managing resources in the rural areas. He guides the extension education activities for farmers as groups or individuals towards the purposeful pursuance of given objectives within a particular situation by means of extension communication methods.

Radhakrishna et al. (1994) emphasised that the leadership role of extension workers has become an increasingly critical element in the successful performance of extension programmes. Havelock (1973) identified four leadership functions of extension worker, namely, as a catalyst, solution giver, process helper and resource linker. This means that extension workers as leaders should raise the awareness of farmers, form functional farmers groups and make decision for solution together with farmers. Extension workers, who possess the desire to lead, may enhance their skills and abilities required for the leadership role that might influence their performance and success.

Furthermore, the importance of the leadership skills has become widely acknowledged as explanation of personnel and organisational performance in the various employment sectors. In the context of agricultural extension organisation, skilled extension workers are needed to coordinate human, capital and material resources required to accomplish the goals of agricultural extension services. So, leadership in extension context is indeed a social function which is necessary for the achievement of collective objectives. It can be said that the agricultural extension leadership within a rural community is not just a position in a hierarchy or a chain of commands in extension system, but it involves actions of the extension worker as a leader. It is a kind of mutual interaction between extension worker and farmers.

With the growing demand for technology by farmers, the understanding of leadership styles becomes even more important as the need to diffuse innovation to increase food production to feed the ever increasing population intensifies. An essential part of assessing key leadership skills in extension services is leaders' ability to understand and effectively deal with changes (Bryant, 2003). Though adoption rates for new technologies have increased in the

past ten years from an estimated 35 percent of all planted area, compared to just 23 percent in 1998, these rates of adoption are considerably far below those in other regions (Renkow & Byerlee, 2010). Adoption is slowed in Africa by high costs of marketing of inputs and output and related depressed productivity, poor systems of advice and mentoring to assist early adopters, and regulatory barriers that slow the release of new technologies (Brooks, Zorya, Gautam, & Goyal, 2013). Technological transfer is an essential component of the extension process, involving the transfer and spread of farming information from the researcher through subject matter specialist and the extension worker to the farmers. Farmers adopt, adapt and originate new ideas that are tried out in different settings, evaluated and assessed the results on which decisions are made for improving farming (Bonye, Alfred, & Jasaw, 2012).

The country's ability to fully realize its agricultural production potential lies squarely on the capacities of principal actors in the sector, particularly researchers, extension workers and intended users of such ideas. Low adoption of modern agricultural production technologies amongst farmers in Ghana has been identified as one of the main reason for the low agricultural productivity in the country (Akudugu 2012). The ability of actors along the agricultural value chain to innovate in their production activities is dependent on the accessibility and appropriate use of available technology.

STUDY FINDINGS

- Leadership is to be blamed for poor extension service delivery
- Extension service organizations are fraught with family and personal gains
- Socio-cultural issues have influence on leadership in Ghana.
- Transformational and transactional leaderships could enhance effective extension service delivery, while lazier-faire leadership has negative correlation with extension delivery.
- Effective leadership will determine how motivated the employees are to get work done correctly and quickly
- Good organizational leadership skills keep organisations in tune with modern methods of technology
- It is important that they keep searching for new inventive ways to use their leadership skills to create a more pleasant environment for all employees.
- Without leadership, organizations move too slowly, stagnate and lose their way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The literature under consideration is old and if leadership is to help halt Ghana's economic decline and place it on a consistent path of growth and poverty reduction, current knowledge is needed to determine the extent to which the existing leadership practices influence efficiency and effectiveness of decisions and activities in extension service delivery in Ghana.
- It is also worthwhile confirming whether extended family orientations as noted by Kuada (1994) or the assertions that Ghanaian leaders sacrifice organisational goals for their personal and family gains (Nwankwo and Richards, 2001; Kuada, 2009) are still valid and still exert dominant influences on leaders' behaviour and has to change.

CONCLUSION

There is the need to unfreeze some established traditions that have remained unexamined for centuries. However, not all aspects of Ghanaian culture act as constraints to effective leadership. Comprehensive empirical investigations into the impact of dominant Ghanaian cultural attributes on leadership and organizational performance are urgently required to guide leaders' development interventions in the country. The awareness that all cultures are constantly subjected to pressure for change from both internal and external factors provides leaders with opportunities to facilitate cultural change processes in the organizations they lead.

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