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Behavioural Aspects of Managerial Potentials of Nigerian Women

By Dr. Orok B. Arrey

Federal University Wukari Taraba State, Nigeria

Abstract- Management behaviour of women managers in Nigeria is base on agenda. It is truly believed, that management behaviour is expected of all manager be they male or female. Previous seminars on women in management major factors against more woman getting into management positions plus the problems they face on the job identified and discussed. The barriers to, reaching management position are both internal and external. These include socialization process, sex stereotyping process of jobs, education, family responsibilities, societal attitudes. Also a lot of constraints on job performance, have been identified as, lack of management training, lack of the need/will to manage, lack of the need for power, lack of the relevant experience, non-membership use of informal professional networks and lack of support by husbands. To acquire the right attitude and behavior consistent with effect with management, women ought to be aware of their constraints and struggle# to overcome them before they can be accepted by men in leadership roles.

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Behavioural Aspects of Managerial Potentials of Nigerian Women

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Abstract Management behaviour of women managers in Nigeria is base on agenda. It is truly believed, that management behaviour is expected of all manager be they male or female. Previous seminars on women in management major factors against more woman getting into management positions plus the problems they face on the job identified and discussed. The barriers to, reaching management position are both internal and external. These include socialization process, sex stereotyping process of jobs, education, family responsibilities, societal attitudes. Also a lot of constraints on job performance, have been identified as, lack of management training, lack of the need/will to manage, lack of the need for power, lack of the relevant experience, non-membership use of informal professional networks and lack of support by husbands. To acquire the right attitude and behavior consistent with effect with management, women ought to be aware of their constraints and struggle# to overcome them before they can be accepted by men in leadership roles.

1. INTRODUCTION

a) *Problem Defination and Purpose of Study*

Women in our Nigerian society today are being under-mind by the male counterparts; they are they are treated as "underdogs". The women are being regarded as new comers in the managerial environment. As underdogs, women are regarded as "square pegs ill round holes"; when it comes to leader ship and top management positions. For this reason and for the fact that they have arrived skills and technical competences but also the total behaviour, relevant and consistence with effective acceptance and successful managers.

Many reasons are usually advanced women as unsuitable material for leadership and top positions. that are either based on false premise or myths. Some of this include:

1. The long held societal view that biology is destiny as a fallacy. This view maintains that a woman's biological make up makes her unsuitable for managerial positions.
2. Sex - role stereotyping is a fallacy. The belief that some jobs are most suitable for females, while others are best for males is not based on tested knowledge.
3. It is not longer true that a woman's place is only in the home as a cook or a rearer of children.

4. It is erroneous to assume that for the man leadership is a birth - right even where a women is more qualified to hold such a position.

The manager is the key to organizational effectiveness. He functions in different ways and capacities to keep the organization on course. Understanding managerial roles or function will, therefore, be the first steps towards the improvement of managerial effectiveness. There are two different views about managing - the normative view which deals with what has become the acceptance universally as functions of management, and the descriptive view which describes what managers actually-do on their job.

b) *The Normative View*

The universal functions of management are often given as planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling.

1. Planning is deciding what to achieve and how to achieve it.
2. Organizing involves the assembling of human and physical resources needed to achieve planned objectives and assigning responsibilities to various work groups/members.
3. Coordinating is communicating with, motivating and leading employees, also coordinating other activities.
4. Controlling is seeing to it that employees perform their jobs correctly.

The task of seeing that employees perform their jobs correctly is usually the supervisor's middle managers. Lack of proper planning and organization leads to wasted resources. Managers who plan and organize the activities well tend to spend less time and energy in the implementation process.

c) *The Descriptive View*

Looking at what is supposed to be doing is different from what he actually does. Thus, another view point looks at management functions in terms of activities that managers perform. These activities may seem unrelated to the traditional functions, but. They are in fact the means by which they perform these functions. These are personnel intersectional, administrative technical.

i. *Personal Activities*

Some activities manager engage in serve personal needs as well as organizational functions i.e.,

Author: Department of Business Aministration Federal Unversity Wukari Taraba State Nigeria. P. O. Box 371 Wukari Taraba State, Nigeria. e-mail: orokbonifacearrey@yahoo.com

attending conference or performing ceremonial" duties such as wedding of one of the employees.

ii. *International Activities*

Managers spend considerable time and energy with other people. Subordinate, superiors, customers, unions, community leaders and so forth. Intersectional activities serve interpersonal roles such as liaising with others outside his vertical chain of command, leading others and playing the figure head role. It is through personal contacts that managers can collect vital information that will lead them to making the right decisions. Without personal contact important valuable information will be lost.

iii. *Administrative Activities*

Managers also spend some time in performing administrative duties, such as preparing budgets, processing paper work, monitoring policies and procedures and handling personal matters. There are activities that separate managers from non managers and yet less time is usually allocated to them. Other employees do not perform administrative activities. A manager has to keep abreast with government policies and legislation (e.g.) regulations, minimum wage, labour laws, industry laws on import licenses etc and comply with some.

iv. *Technical Activities*

Managers need to be technically competent (e.g.) use of tools, technical knowledge and skills as they cannot supervise effectively without adequate knowledge on the technical activities they are to supervise. The higher you go, the lesser the time a manager spends on such activities.

II. BACKGROUND LITERATURE

a) *The Nature of Managerial Work*

Chung and Megginson (1981:17) state that "Management activities are characterized by brevity, fragmentation, reactivity, oral communication and political inclination. Managers are doers rather than reflective planners and have to cope with 8 constant parade of challenges and surprise." Studies such as that done on Chief Executives seem to agree with these characteristics of managerial activities and have gone further to add to the list, a hectic pace, oral communication, reactive behaviour and political inclination.

i. *A Hectic Pace*

Although managers do usually plan and organize activities all round the clock, the actual performance of such activities is usually carried out in a hectic and at times chaotic manner, the activities managers are expected to carry within the available time become too many to be handled in a systematic manner.

ii. *Oral Communication*

In carrying out their day to day activities, managers prefer to use oral communication and rely heavily on it. This is because, written communication is slow and time consuming, it is less formal and brings any up-to-date or confidential information. By oral communication, the manager also maintains contact with workers.

iii. *Reacting*

That is reacting to various work situations as they arise. Many times things do not just turn out as planned due to unforeseen situations. Also when faced with a limited time span within which various activities are to be performed, managers tend to give closer attention to the more tangible and current things.

iv. *The Political Reality*

A manager does not only work with people within his organization. He has to maintain a network of interpersonal contacts with people outside the organization. He must give and receive information, favours, and support the need to perform their job effectively. He is usually a spokes person for his organization and therefore must perform public relations functions for the organization.

The manager must maintain contact within influential people who can "pull string" for his organization when the need arises.

View on the performance of women managers: women managers are not portrayed in a positive light. In a survey made by Harvard Business Review, majority of top bosses believed women to be unsuitable for top management positions because of their dispositions quoted in M. I. Okojie (1990). This view is in line with the cultural perception of women in many societies including Nigeria as soft, graceful, flexible, dependent and intuitive. The irony of such views is that the woman is a better manager for these qualities, lacking in the men. Flexibility, is a good managerial quality without which a manager can appear autocratic and overbearing.

According to Okojie C. E. E. in a paper titled: Nigerian women in Public sector management, describes the two management styles that have been observed among women managers those are the "battle-axe" or "martinet" approach, and conciliatory or "famine" style.

1. The Battle - Axe management style was said to be characteristic of the pioneer female managers, who finding themselves in an all male environment adopt an unduly aggressive, ferocious, dictator and hostile management style. Such managers are feared and often disliked by their staff. They display unpopular characteristics which have given rise to negative attitude towards female managers.
2. The feminine management style: at the other extreme from the battle - axe approach is the

feminine or conciliatory management style. Such women play on their feminine attributes in their approach to work. They are not aggressive or decisive in executing their duties. They lack the will to manage. Many of such women have reached management position not through any special effort, but through routine promotion exercises.

In Nigerian situation, many of such women managers have unduly glamorized management positions by their style of dressing as if that will make up for their deficiencies. Women who adopt this feminine style give poor image of women in management as frivolous and duly concerned with trivialities rather than serious issues.

Between these two extremes is the professional manager who has combined the firmness from the battle-axe approach with the conciliatory approach of the feminine style to yield effective leadership of subordinates. Neither the battle-axe nor the feminine style approach leads to high productivity.

III. PRESENTATION

a) *Strategies for Improving Managerial Behaviour*

There is a role that education plays in managerial behaviour.

1. Education: According to Gray et al (1988), there are many different types of education referred to as "generalist" as opposed to "specialist" education. The "generalist" specializes in the social science subjects and humanities which definitely tend to attract and develop individuals differently from the "specialist" type. The "Specialist" type of education includes law, medicine, engineering etc. The important thing is that in whichever profession you are managing, you need to acquire specialized knowledge. Knowledge alone will not make you an effective manager. You need to know about the society, the people and their expectations, interests and values and you need knowledge about your workers, and how to motivate them, etc.
2. To be effective women managers must learn to be in control of both themselves and situation. It is easy to lose balance and behave in ways unbecoming of a leader, if the manager has not come to terms with the different kinds of demands and problems that she is expected to grapple with by virtue of her position. To be effective, a manager must be ready to cope with the time expected.
3. Women managers must display the ability to exercise power and authority over others without being dictatorial or draconian. To achieve these goals, women managers must not allow themselves to be distracted from important issues in order to survive they must ignore many things, work hard, be dedicated and exert one's power in the right way, not failing to use disciplinary measures where and

when necessary. Female managers must consciously avoid being unnecessarily aggressive and antagonistic, as this will go a long way in dispelling negative opinions people have about them.

4. To use power and authority properly, self confidence is a must. Self confidence itself is best developed when one has sound educational background and takes well informed decisions.
5. Another important step towards acquiring the right attitudes and behaviour relevant in management positions is knowing oneself. A female manager must be realistic about her capabilities and shortcomings.
6. Some women managers in Nigeria have also been accused of lacking in the will/need to manage because they came into management position by appointments or through the rise in rank and file.
7. Being a good position has become a necessary ingredient for effective management. First the manager must perform the public relations duties for her company, organization etc. she has to sell her company to the community, targeted group etc, but she cannot do this effectively if she herself does not project a positive self image both to outsiders and insiders. Secondly, within the organization, situations arise where the manager must defend her position and where necessary "lobby" others on behalf of her subordinates. A well qualified hardworking and dedicated employee can lose certain privileges, promotions, sponsorship if the boss does not act or show enough interest.
8. Women managers should not strive to act like men in a bid to be accepted as leaders. They could lose the equalities that make them women. A woman can be graceful, treat people well and get the best out of them while she remains firm.

b) *Leadership*

To be successful, the manager must also be a leader. Management is a process of planning, coordinating and controlling, while leadership is the process of influencing other people for the purpose of achieving organizational goals. The following qualities have been identified as common with successful leaders:

1. A strong desire for task accomplishment
2. Persistent pursuit of goals
3. Creativity and intelligence used to solve problems
4. Initiative applied to social situations
5. Self-assured personality
6. Willingness to accept behavioural consequences.
7. Low susceptibility to interpersonal stress
8. High tolerance for ambiguity
9. Ability to influence others
10. Ability to structure social interaction.

Also a leader must be innovative as well as a risk taker. A leader must be committed to organizational goals.

must identify with its goals, or purpose. There must be a great sacrifice to achieve your goals and also be persuasive. That is in order to make people voluntarily identify and work. As a leader persuasiveness is necessary.

c) *Barrier's to Reaching Management Position are both Internal and External*

These include:

1. Socialization process where girls are discourage from learning certain attributes (aggressiveness, decisiveness, detachment, analytical, objectivity etc) which are often identified with managerial jobs.
2. Sex - stereotyping or jobs where management is identified as a male job, and girls were discourage from aspiring for such position.
3. Education, especially lack of university education.
4. Family responsibilities, house work and child rearing that tend to weight women down.
5. Societal attitude, which stems from prejudices from make bosses who regard women as ineffective managers.

Constraints on job performance:

1. Lack of management training
2. Lack of the need will to manage
3. Lack of the need for power
4. Lack of relevant experience
5. Non membership/use of informal professional networks
6. Lack of support by husband etc.

To acquire the right altitudes and behaviours consistent with effective management, women in Nigeria out to be aware of these constraints and struggle to over come them. The path to effective managerial behaviour or women will depend to a large extent on overcoming those obstacles that constrain them on job.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Behavioural aspect of managerial potentials of Nigerian women in the system is welcomed. For them to excelled to top management positions the Nigerian women have to put up good struggles before they can be accepted by the men in the leadership roles. For the Nigerian women to achieved this end requires proven ability, hard work, dedication and sacrifice. Once in top positions Nigerian women must learn fact and act in ways that will earn their respect, recognition and acceptability.

Once in positions of authority, women should realize that certain behaviours are necessary for holding and maintaining that office. They as managers must of necessity learn to play politics and lobby as their men counterparts.

V. CONCLUSION

Nigerian women managers can draw their lesson from 1991 Nigerian gubernatorial primaries as it

affects women. Also the case of Professor Alele Williams, female Vice Chancellor of University of Benin show that society is not ready for women leaders. women have to put up a good fight to compote with their males counterparts in leadership roles.

Women must learn fast and act in ways that will earn thorn respect, recognition and acceptability. Once in positions of authority-women should realize that certain behaviours are necessary for holding and maintaining that office, in order to survive, women must persevere and not let opposition and failure deter them. This is only the beginning and women have not performed poorly. Societal attitudes are hard to change, but will necessarily change when women show enough determination.

There are both historical and constitutional changes that signal some significant shift in the plate of women in the society. Such changes are most likely going to have the spillover effect on women in management.

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