Management In The Contemporary Society

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Abstract

The paper viewed the concept 'Management' from two perspectives-as a phenomenon (formation/body) and as a function (process) and what each of them stand for. It identified the essence of management to having the capacity to effectively marshal and shepherd the human and material resources of establishments to achieve the desired vision, mission, goals and objective at least cost. Viewed within the perspectives and antecedents of the 21st century paradigm, Contemporary Society is conceived as the technology/virtual/digital driven society and environment where effective adoption, adaption, application, and utilisation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and particularly the Cloud technology of Things (CoT) is of necessity and relevant in all spheres of human endeavour to ensure and enhance effectiveness and efficiency. The need for application of technology to management, the aspects management needing the application of technology, the challenges to successful application of technologies to management and the way out of the perceived quagmire were highlighted. It advocated for the transformation of the conventional work environment in typical establishments/organisation into Smart Work Place (SWP) where managerial systems, functions and operations are technology driven.

Introduction

Conceptually, the term ' Management' can be conceived as a phenomenon (formation/body) and as a function(process). As a formation, it is a constituted body vested with the responsibility of the general administration of the affairs of an establishment/organisation. Depending the share size, structure and functionality of an establishment/organisation/institution, the Management , which is mostly in three strata, is mastered by the 'Top Management' and 'Chief Executives', being the highest authority on the overall leadership , responsibility, evolution and sustenance of the strategic plans, programmes, policies, procedures, control, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation mechanism, and guidelines on the operations of an establishment. More often than

not, in ranked order, the Top Management is supported by the Middle Management and Lower Management. Basically, the Middle Management, also referred to Administrative or Intermediary Management, serves as an intermediary between the Top Management and Lower Management. It is essentially concerned with the coordination of the implementation of the policies, procedures, guidelines, overall strategic action plans, programmes and activities of an establishment. Whereas, the Lower Management , also referred to as 'Gate Keeper', is responsible for directing and ensuring the optimal implementation/ execution of the day-to-day functions, operations and activities of employees in accordance with the approved procedures and guidelines of an establishment. However, as a function/process, 'Management' can be conceived as the art of planning, organising, directing, controlling, evaluating, coordinating, actuating and supervision of the functions , operations and activities of an establishment aimed at achieving its vision, mission, goals and objectives. This perspective tend to evolve into creation of functional offices managers and administrators responsible for respective specific activities and functions such as: budgeting and finance, physical planning, research and development, public relations and marketing, production and quality assurance, human resource management, management information system, and for other strategic areas of functionality, operations and activities to ensure optimal attainment of the vision, mission and goals of an establishment effectively and efficiently. Be that as it may, whether viewed within the context of a body or/and function, it can be argued that by and large, the essence of management of an establishment/organisation/institution is to plan, organise, control and coordinate the actuation of the perceived functions, operations and activities aimed at attaining the vision, mission, goals and objectives of an establishment effectively and efficiently at least cost.

The successes or otherwise of the management of an establishment is largely a function of the extent to which its perceived vision, mission, goals, objectives and core values are attained and sustained. Ideally, the vision of an establishment should clarify what it stands for and exists on, especially as it relates to its core ideology defined as its self identity, belief and value; and its envisioned future defined as its future aspirations to be pursued in the long run and perhaps without predetermined end. The mission of an establishment which can also be referred to its purpose, should clarify its fundamental reason of existence which pursuance could be endless and continually stimulates disciplined and committed changes and advancement to meet up to expectations. The core values of an establishment should be perceived as its internal enduring tenets and intrinsic values needed to stare the overall leadership and followership (employees and customers). Similarly, the envisioned future of an establishment should be based on short and long term framework of vividly described goals to be achieved as translations of the vision; supported by realistic emotional attachment ,passion, conviction and commitment engraved in the hearts of the primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders to elicit and enhance the much needed corporate positioning and identity. Essentially, the corporate identity of an establishment is needed for it to have a focus on its products and services, perceived growth and market opportunities, what it stands for, and what it is up to. Also, it is to ensure the provision of rare opportunities for the existing and anticipated customers and indeed the general public to have a

clear understanding of what the establishment stands for particularly as it relates to its functions, operations, products and services. These perspectives are needed for establishments to have sustainable competitive advantage and strategic niche over their competitors.

The basic aim of management of any establishment/organisation at any level is to effectively and efficiently marshal and shepherd the human and material resources effectively so as to achieve the desired goals and objectives establishing it. Human Resource(HR) can simply be referred to as the hired workforce(personnel/employees) of all cadres engaged in the overall management and operations of an establishment at all levels. To this end, effective management of human resources is necessary as it could ultimately lead to availability of motivated, promising, committed, dedicated, disciplined and result oriented personnel (work force) needed to meet the expected and unexpected satisfaction of existing and anticipated target customers effectively and efficiently. The first step towards having the right workforce/employees in an establishment is to have in place, well defined, robust and best practiced human resource management practices (HRMP) particularly as it relates to staff recruitment and retention; insurance and compensation; statutory and fringe benefits; training and development; performance appraisal; health, security and safety; and other staff welfare packages for enhancement and sustenance of staff productivity, motivation, commitment and dedication to duty. Conceptually, HRMP can simply be referred to as the strategically designed internal policies and practices meant to elicit sustained staff optimal motivation, productivity, commitment and dedication to duty aimed at achieving the vision, mission, goals and objectives of an establishment to meet up to expectations effectively. However, the extent to which the personnel (staff) in establishments continually meet up to expectations effectively and efficiently is largely a function of the type and extent of application of the HRMP put in place. In like manner, Material Resource (MR) can simply be referred to as non HR assets such as finance, infrastructure and facilities in forms of machineries, land and working environment , tools and equipments, varied needed and relevant building structures, furniture and fittings, water and electricity supplies, raw/production materials, etc. essentially needed for effective operations and performance of an establishment at the required capacity and also for the comfort and convenience of the personnel to enhance and sustain their performance and productivity. To a large extent, it can be argued that the type and extent of available MR in an establishment have significant consequences on the capacity, performance and output of both the establishment and staff in achieving the desired goals and objectives to meet up to expectations effectively and efficiently. In effect , it can be said that the extent to which both the HR and MR of an establishment are effectively and efficiently marshaled and shepherd can determine the extent of the successes or otherwise of the overall management of the establishment.

Management in The Contemporary Society

Viewed within the perspectives and antecedents of the 21st century paradigm, Contemporary Society can best be referred to as the technology/virtual/digital driven society and environment where strategic adoption, adaption, application, and utilisation of Information and

Communication Technology (ICT) and particularly the Cloud technology of Things (CoT) is of necessity and relevant in all spheres of human endeavour to ensure and enhance effectiveness and efficiency. To this end, like in other human endeavours, management of establishments/organisation of all sorts in the public and private sectors is rapidly being made easy and effective with the adoption and adaption of ICTs. Conceptually, ICT can be conceived as the computer-based and other allied automated information and communication systems and devices employed to effectively and efficiently acquire, generate, process, organise, store, transmit and disseminate data and information of relevance regardless of the location for variety of actions, activities and decision making. Generically, the ICTs are technologies used for collecting, storing, editing, organising, coordinating and passing on or communicating needed information in different forms and formats within an environment, between and among given environments. In another perspective, ICTs can be conceived to include telecommunication technologies such as satellite systems, radio and television, telephony and digital technologies such as information networks, computer hardware and software, digital network, intranet, and the Internet. By and large, ICTs can generally be conceived as automated and virtual products (including software applications) and services that facilitate effective information generation, identification, location, organisation, storage, retrieval, dissemination, access and utilisation. Some of the contemporary ICTs include: cabled television news networks, digitised radio and television sets, computers, digital camera and projectors, satellite and wireless systems such as smart phones, tablets, the intranet and extranet, the Internet, Local Area and Wide Area Networks, and e-information resources, etc.

Fundamentally, the concept of ICT can be tallied with that of technology which can simply be conceived as an instrument; equipment; device; infrastructure; and tool used to support, facilitate and sustain effective and efficient management and performance of a system, an operation, a duty, a task, a function and provision of a variety of needed services (Mohammed:2014). The ICTs, particularly computers and the Internet, have provided wide spectrums of media and platforms for effective management of establishments more especially within the perspectives of effective and efficient retrieval, availability, organisation, dissemination, transfer, storage, access, and utilisation of variety of relevant and needed information on, for, and by an establishment directly and remotely regardless of the time of information need and location of the members the management of the establishment, the other stakeholders and relevant information seekers. However, it can be argued that the extent of the available of information in variety of digital formats and forms at wherever; and the ability and capacity to effectively and efficiently access and utilise the needed relevant information, be it for management purposes or otherwise; will be limited only by the type and capacity of the ICTs in use, the format in which the information is contained, and also by the user's ICT and information literacy skills and competencies. Thus, it is needless to debate that ICT has and is continually impacting on all human endeavours in all dimensions regardless of the society, establishment, location and environment, especially as it relates to what we do, how we do things, where we do things and

when we do things irrespective of the purpose to ensure cost effectiveness, cost benefit and efficiency.

While communication of all sorts by and for the management far and wide has been made easy and efficient through utilisation of smart phones, the Internet and other web technologies and tools, the common every day and routine managerial and administrative activities have been transformed into online-based operations, activities and reports preparations and submissions at the convenience of the stakeholders. Also, the gamut of managerial and administrative structures and systems have been transformed into platforms such as e- government; e-business; e-banking; e-marketing; e- commerce; e-management; cyber talks and squatting; e-document; e-library; e-ticket; e- services; e- transaction; e-mail; e-money; e-learning; and e-voting; e-conference and lecture; e-political campaign; e-examination and interview; e-application and registration; e-Community of Practice, e-payment; smart/e-offices and cities; etc. which can take place at the convenience of the stakeholders regardless of their physical locations (Mohammed. Z: 2015b). Thus, it can be argued that ICT has direct correlation with need for progressive ease, resilience, effectiveness and high efficiency of management, performance and productivity in any typical workplace.

Conceived as positive symptom of strategic development and advancement in virtually every realm of human perspectives, the emerging potentials of ICT technologies, particularly the computers, online networks, and more recently the Internet-based facilities and services (e.g. Websites, WebPages, Web links, Portals, E-mail, Social Media and Web Conferences), including mobile communication systems such as the smart phones and tablets have continually necessitate the need for their application on a host of varied activities, operations, organisation and management of public and private institutions, establishments and organisations. Going by the basic functions and essence of management of human and material resources of establishments of any type, ICT is tactically needed to effectively facilitate the planning, organising, directing, staffing, controlling, coordinating, evaluating, monitoring, communicating, disseminating, reporting, and actuation of the overall functions and operations of organisations/establishment at least cost. This assertion is even more eminent and instructional as all types of information resources and sources of relevance are essentially needed for typical management processes and functions at all levels. You do not have to agree more with me that, with the adoption and adaption of ICTs, tactical and strategic systemic operations and managerial processes and functions such as: policy implementation and compliance, data processing and management, budgeting and budgetary control, financial management, production and inventory control, security and safety, environmental management, staffing and recruitment processes, transaction processes and analysis, product quality control and assurance, performance monitoring and evaluation, managerial/executive decision making and support, workgroup scheduling and support, marketing and branding, literal information communication and dissemination are better carried out at least human and material costs with much ease, effectively and efficient. Today, the extent of technology compliance of establishments/organisations/institutions is a criterion

employed as one of the minimum standard and benchmark for measuring their managerial capacity, functionality, productivity and reliability.

In another dimension, the relevance and necessity of technology application in the management of other formal and informal establishments' workplaces is evident in homes, hospitals and clinics, legal establishments, educational institutions and scholarly activities, hospitality and tourism arena, and at social settings such as cultural centres, markets and shopping centres, mobile (hawking) and immobile petty business circles, etc. However, the perceived bottle-necks to effective utilisation of technology in the management of particularly public and private formal institutions include: lack of or insufficient ICT and information literary of the members of the management and the employees; under engagement, over engagement and inappropriate place of employees in relevant duty posts; insufficient/ inadequate financial backing and support; unnecessary delays in decision making and compliance; poor or none implementation and compliance to staff recruitment and welfare policy; lack of commitment and dedication of members of management to the ideals and expectations of the establishment; lack of access to relevant information; none availability and obsolence of relevant ICTs; lack of knowledge and appreciation of the potentials of ICTs by employers and employees; etc. This necessitates the need for the transformation and redesign of employees' and organisations' functions and operations especially in vital daily routine functional areas such as secretarial duties and communication chains in workplaces in both public and private formal and informal settings' offices, production lines, enterprise collaboration and networking, marketing and promotion, sales and customer care, etc. Also included should be the ways and manners they are being managed and sustained (managerial and administrative doctrines) to cope with the challenges and expectations of the globalised economy and revolution where time and physical location are not barriers to effective management, and societal development and advancement.

Technology Application To Management

Considering the emerging craze for ICTs applications in all sectors of the Nigerian economy, it can be argued that the country is steadily embracing digital technologies. For instance, in the banking sector, the systems and services have been digitised to conform with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) directive of cashless society. With the aid of online banking and smart card facilities(e.g. ATM), customers can access their accounts remotely and perform needed transactions irrespective of their physical locations and time of need. With the introduction of Bank Verification Number (BVN) customers' varied accounts within and in other banks are harmonised for ease of management, especially by the CBN. In the public and private establishments, web portals and websites are being created to facilitate the overall management, operations and services of establishments effectively. One important aspect of such endeavours is the introduction of the 'Treasury Single Account' (TSA) to enhance financial management and effective reduction of financial wastages and leakages in Government spending thereby checkmate incidences of corruption and corruptive tendencies such as payment of ghost workers salary, duplication of expenditure on goods and services, etc. In the transport sector, travelers can

book, cancel booking, reschedule bookings and confirm fight and other vehicular schedules, and also pay for their tickets online irrespective of their physical locations and time of booking. Also, in the media and entertainment sector, television and radio programmes and services as well as the newsprints, films and drama are being digitised thereby make access to them at will, irrespective of the time of access, such that previous broadcasts or programmes can be recorded especially in digital formats or replayed as the need arise. In effect, the potentials of the ICTs particularly the Internet facilities and services made it easily possible to access previous television news and programmes, films and drama, newspapers and magazines on 24/7 service mode and their digitised back sets conveniently kept in cupboards in office corners rather than on shelves which tend to occupy enormous spaces at the long run. Similarly, in response to digital expectations, publishing and book trade are being digitised for easy access, utilisation and management such that books, journals and other printed documents are produced and stored in digital formats and databases, and are also online for easy access, packaging, acquisition, processing, and utilisation at convenience.

In the commercial/business sector, especially the private business outfits such as shops, canteens, hospitality and tourism arena, estate, market and corner shops, etc., their operations, systems and services are being digitised and linked to the Internet such that they can easily be reached. Thus, businesses are transacted remotely, payment of goods and services paid online, and door step delivery of ordered products and services are made with ease. In addition, due to the lowering costs of mobile/smart phones, decreasing costs of Internet connectivity and provision of variety of discounted and unsolicited services by the service providers, as well as the increasing craze for communication mobility, the average mobile and stationary roadside hawkers, mechanics and food sellers; taxi, bus, truck and lorry drivers; truck pushers, water and firewood sellers; menial workers and artisans; and even other petty traders and owners of eateries, social sites/corners/platforms; butchers and meat sellers; house wives and maids; craftsmen, herdsmen and fishermen; school children and youths in towns and villages etc. at wherever, including those in the semi-urban and rural areas, now own their mobile handsets for the management of their affairs, communication with their worthiers and information access. They also use them for audio and video recording of events to post them to whoever, wherever and whenever especially using the social media platforms and tools.

Similarly, like the large scale farmers, the medium and small scale farmers are found to have and encouraged to possess and utilise mobile telephone systems for ease of communication amongst them and also with relevant government agencies, marketers, and farm implement suppliers, etc. Depending on their level of ICT literacy, some farmers manage their farm systems and communicate or receive information through email, SMS, voice call and Internet browsing. However, in the health sector, the functions, operations and services of some public and private hospitals, clinics and pharmaceutical stores are being digitised/automated. In fact, some elements of telemedicine are being practiced, especially in some specialised private and teaching hospitals in Nigeria, to enhance the management of their patients effectively.

However, going by the perceived managerial atmosphere of many of the average non-business oriented establishments, especially the publics', it can be said that the extent of technology acceptance, adoption and application to the management of both public and private establishments' systems, operations and services can greatly be inflicted by the consequences of the implications of the impact of the psychology of and theories of management and managerial/leadership styles and practices. This is even more evident especially when viewed within the context of behaviourism (human- characteristics and attitudes), cognitivism (brain-based- human memory and perceptions) and constructivism (management- administrator's and operator's own construct of fulfillment, achievement, experience and perspectives). In like manner, technology adoption, acceptability and application to establishments' management, functions, operations and services can significantly be affected positively or otherwise by variety of factors such as: the peculiar predispositions of the management; the attitudes, characteristics and information/ICT level of literacy and fluency of the administrator and operator; the prevailing circumstances surrounding the systems environments; the stakeholders' perceived usefulness, relevance, availability, adequacy and appropriateness of the technology being adopted and adapted; and the type and functionality of the technologies in use (Mohammed, Z: 2015a).

In another dimension, the application and/or non-application of technologies to the management of public and private establishments' systems, operations and services can strategically be influenced by: the operator's and user's characteristics, skills and experiences in using the technology; the type of technologies available, adaptable and useable; the type and feature of the systems environments; the users' perceived usefulness and relevance of the technology in actualising the mission, goals and aspiration of the management in one hand, and achieving their individual and collective objectives and aspirations on the other hand; the context of the vision, mission and objectives of the management; the level of access and ease of use of the technology by the stakeholders; the perceived attitudes, experiences and opinions of others on the usefulness, relevance and ease of use of the technologies to achieve the desired goals and target; the stakeholders' technology fluency, literacy and competence; the perceived levels and extent of the stakeholders' skills, potentials, motivation, capacity, ability, willingness and readiness to effectively utilise the technologies; the perceived implications of the cognitive outcome of applying the technology; and the methodology adopted to effectively queue in the stakeholders to accept, adopt and utilise the technologies to achieve the desired vision, mission, goals and objectives ahead (Mohammed, Z: 2015a). On the other hand, what could also constitute stumbling blocks to effective adoption of ICTs in organisation may include but not limited to: unstable electric power supply, lack requisite technical skills, inadequate requisite infrastructure, inadequacy of funds, unrealistic systems sustainable plans, negative attitude of staff towards ICT adoption and acceptance, lack of collaboration with other similar institutions, political and economic considerations, poor ICT project planning and implementation, lack of readily available options to fall back to, and lack of technical support.

In like manner, the extent of utilisation and or non utilisation of ICTs and other associated technologies for effective management of public and private establishments/organisations, for any purpose at all, can largely be influenced by factors and challenges such as: type and nature of the available technology being employed; the type and nature of services being provided; the management and leadership styles being adopted; the type, nature and environmental dispositions of the workplace; the type and nature of the managerial style, functions, operations and activities of the organisation/establishment; the type, skill, characteristic and attitude of the workforce; the type, skill, characteristics, attitudes, socio-cultural milieu and needs of the customers/users; the type, nature and essence of the service/information needs; type and nature of the human effort involved in the access and utilisation of the technology; the extent of the financial commitment involved in the technology adoption, application and use; the extent of user technology fluency and competence; the type and nature of maintenance culture/policy adopted; the extent of user friendliness of the technology being employed; extent of compatibility of the technology with similar others; the level of user information literacy; the extent of readily available genuine spare parts and expert technicians; the level of access and utilisation of the technology by both the service providers and users; the type and nature of the environment for operations and service provision; the type and nature of security provision; the extent of availability of funds for the general management of the systems; the level of availability or non-availability of alternative or complementary technology; the users' ignorance of the associated benefits of the technology being employed; the extent of user repugnance of the technology being employed; the extent of user general anxiety of technology adoption and acceptance, and particularly that being employed; the extent of the coverage and relevance of the technology documentation; and the type of user orientation and training provided.

Concluding Remarks

Even though it could be said that Nigeria is already getting plugged properly into the ICT ecosystem, there is the need to evolve effective ways and means of harvesting the yet fully tapped dividends effectively in all sectors of the economy and indeed by the management of both the public and private institutions and organisations. There is the is urgent need to have deliberate policies and strategies that will accelerate ICT penetrations through keying in the youth, government institutions, private and public establishments, academic and health institutions at all levels to fully adopt and employ ICTs in their systems, operations and services. This should be followed by provisions for training and retraining the stakeholders at all levels to cope with the contemporary and future challenges which include holistic adaption and application of varied relevant technologies, combating of cyber crimes and insecurity, indigenous software development, digital multimedia development and applications, etc. Such strategies are needed as the world is systematically moving toward deployment of the fifth generation (5G) network and Internet of Things (IoT) to catch up with the future. As found in some major cities of the world, it is appreciative that some major cities in the Nigeria, particularly the FCT, are in the threshold of deploying municipal Wi-Fi with chains of hotspots

for all and sundry to be connected through wired and wireless backhaul system using a cluster of Wireless Access Points(APs) on paid or free basis as the case might be.

In order to cap it all, and within the perspective of inclusive approach to effective technology application to management at all conceivable context and also to information dissemination, access and utilisation by all and sundry; irrespective of their socio-economic and political status, cultural lineage, physiological peculiarity, intellectual capacity and other primordial disposition; as a policy thrust, there the need to transform and sustain conventional work environments of institutions, organisations, and establishments into 'Smart Work Place' -SWP (also to be referred to as Virtual/ Digital Work Place -VWP/DWP)', as the case might be. By design, the SWP systems, management and services should be digitally/electronically or hybrid driven to derive value addition in the overall management of the establishments and also for effective access and utilisation its potentials by all and sundry in the establishments at convenience regardless of their physical and remote locations.

As a virtual/digital information environment, SWP is more of an interconnected information environment in which the members of an establishment can easily access and share information anywhere in the organisation. It serves to create an information environment where the employers and employees can easily access and utilise variety of information relevant to the overall interest of the organisation anywhere and at anytime through utilisation of different kinds of devices. As a veritable integrated ICT and Internet of Things (IoT) technology in secured conventional work environment for effective management of the establishments'/organisations' information assets, needs, access and utilisation; the stakeholders can similarly have enhanced access to relevant information about and from other relevant public and private establishments and services such as on: commerce and business enterprising, banking and finance, education, literacy and scholarship, archive and libraries, transportation services, health services, water and electricity supplies, fire services, legal and security services, sports and entertainment, culture and tourism, and other relevant neighbourhood services. Thus, through the creation of public website and portal, variety of information of interests are collected and delivered to the organisation and its members with ease and comfort regardless of their physical locations using different devices. The SWP infrastructure are expected to be of standard and up-to-date. However, the structure and scope of a typical SWP will largely depend on defined: a) vision, mission, goals, objectives and functions; b) nature, characteristics, predisposition and expectations of the organisation; c) managerial and operational policy put in place; and d) level of involvement of the stakeholders in the evolution and management of the SWP.

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