



LEADERSHIP AND PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK ORGANISATIONS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Odonye Dauda Yusuf Department of Public Administration, Nasarawa State University, Keffi
Kadarko Esther Dizaho Department of Public Administration, Nasarawa State University, Keffi
Odonye Dauda Emmanuel Department of Business Administration, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Abstract

Leadership has been identified as one of the main factors affecting productivity in every work organisation. This paper examines leadership-productivity nexus using Nigeria as a focal point. The paper reviews critically the concepts of leadership and productivity. It examines the various theories of leadership as well as other empirical works on the subject matter within the periods 2015 to 2019. Using data generated through secondary sources and subjected to descriptive analysis, the study explores the various meanings of productivity, how it is measured, factors that affect it and some benefits associated with productivity improvement. From the analysis of leadership-productivity nexus, the paper finds out that situations usually determine the leadership style that may be applied to motivate higher productivity among employees in work organisations. The findings further reveals that due to poor style of leadership, productivity of workers in both public and private sectors has remained dismal in Nigeria work organisations. However, this is not surprising considering the fact that work organisations are the microcosms of larger Nigeria society in which poor political leadership has deprived the nation from transforming from a poverty stricken country to a more prosperous and buoyant one. On the bases of the findings, the paper recommended that government and other employers of labour should set up efforts to improving productivity through effective and responsible leadership both at the micro (individual work organisations) and macro (nation at large) levels. The paper, therefore, concludes that unless there is effective and focused political and organisational leadership and virile followership both at the organisational and national levels, the vision of improved productivity in work organisations and national development will remain a mirage.

Keywords: Leaders, Leadership, National Development, Productivity, Work Organisation.

Introduction

In recent times in Nigeria, within academic and professional discourses, the involvement and contributions of the workers in productivity improvement has been a subject of interest. When the issue of productivity is mentioned, two major actors are easily identified: *government* and *labour*. Quite a number of management theorists and practitioners have examined the pertinent issue of workers motivations, commitment and satisfaction with wage employment in their separate efforts to identify how best to optimise the efforts of labour in production, with little or no attention paid to one of the most significant factor - management¹ or leadership in organisation, i.e. means of influence and the patterns of behaviour that are most effective, leading others to

attend organisation's objectives (Akande, 2013).

One of the fundamental means of ensuring improved productivity is through effective leadership. Besides the fact that employees and employers need to meet regularly to discuss wages, the work environment, fringe benefits and issues of common interest, there is a need to influence the behaviour of workers positively in order to establish a basis for industrial harmony and mutual inter-relationship between employees and employers to ensure high productivity (Okoh, 1998; Okafor & Bode-Okunade, 2005).

In recognition of the importance of industrial peace, government is expected to provide an enabling environment for effective leadership in work organisations. With sound and effective leadership established, labour productivity becomes easier to

nurture for higher attainments (Ogunbameru, 2004; Onyeonoru, 2005). Work, therefore becomes an outlet for strength, energy and fulfillment. It affords the workers an opportunity to demonstrate their qualities and full potentials. When increased productivity is attained with a peaceful work situation, it sometimes manifests itself through increase in output of goods and services. When increased productivity is achieved through resource combination the production cost per unit of output falls. Consequently, this reduced cost will improve consumer's purchasing power, and ultimately, workers will enjoy higher real income and its attendant higher standard of living. The foregoing sets the pace for an understanding of the concept of leadership and productivity as well as their relationship. Hence, the relevance of effective leadership in a work organisation for productivity improvement and national development cannot be over emphasised.

Theoretical and Empirical Analysis

Leadership

There are different definitions of the concept of leadership. For instance, Tannenbaum (1966) defines leadership as the exercise of power or influence in social collectivity such as groups, organisations, countries or nations. Leading therefore presupposes that all parties to the leader relations have a common goal, i.e. leadership may be said to occur within a group, and a leader in that group is fulfilling a group role. For Davis (1967) leadership is part of management but not all of it. It is ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically. It is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it toward goals. Also, Lipham (1964) defines leadership as the initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organization's goals and objectives. For Stogdill (1950) leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organised group towards goal setting and goal achievement. And finally, Morphet, Johns & Reller (1982) define leadership as the act of influencing of the actions, behaviour, beliefs and goals of one actor in a social system by another actor with the willing cooperation of the actor being influenced.

From the features of leadership enunciated above, it is possible to define who a leader is. A leader is generally

a person in a group who has influence on the group's activities and beliefs. He is the one who initiates action, gives orders, makes decisions, settles disputes between members and makes judgments. He is also the person who dispenses approval and disapproval, offers encouragement, serves as an inspiration and is in the forefront of any of the group activities. These functions enumerated are merely examples of the general influence or functions the leader exerts over the group. However, any particular leader may not perform all these functions, but to be a leader, he must perform many of them.

There are several empirical studies done on leadership and leadership style. Prominent among these are the studies carried out by Stogdill (2014; 174). In his studies, he emphasised the importance of roles to the determination of leadership. These roles include: expectations that define individual role in a group are status and function of the position occupied, and perception of group members of what leadership is, and, role differentiation. This may be in terms of achieved role, ascribed role, etc. For instance, it may be difficult for women to occupy certain positions, (like being the President of Nigeria). In other words, there are some roles or occupations that are exclusively reserved for men, while such jobs, as nursing, catering, typing, teaching in primary schools, etc. are generally regarded as women's calling. Thus, from this perspective, it can be seen that there is a horizontal and vertical segregation of roles along gender lines. Stogdill (2014) therefore, argues that leadership is the initiation and maintenance of the structure, expectations and interaction. For instance, most people always do everything possible to maintain their privileged position in the hierarchy.

Another empirical study was the one by Likert (2006; 167). According to him, successful leadership must involve a process of employee participation in the structuring of work and work environment. He also made a case for democratic supervision. His emphasised the importance of open and full communication within a group as a necessary condition for effective leadership. For Likert, effective leadership is where conflict is averted or reduced to the barest minimum.

Furthermore, Likert (2006; 196) argued that *the job-*

centred versus *employee-centered* continuum is one possible way to classify type of leadership styles in work organisation. The job-centred manager, also referred to as task-oriented manager, is primarily concerned with the design of work and the development of rewards to increase productivity. A good example of the job-centered Manager was F. W. Taylor, who structured work according to engineering principles of efficiency, and financially rewarded workers who exceeded a quota determined by careful measurement of potential outputs.

On the other hand, the primary concern of the employee-centered manager is people. He focuses on improving performance through human relations. The employee-centred leader emphasises supportive relationship, allows maximum participation in decision making, stays away from detailed supervision and sets high performance goals for the work unit. Furthermore, he encourages the employees to grow or develop. Likert (2006) later suggested four basic systems of leadership style. These are system one (Exploitative authoritative); system two (Benevolent authoritative); system three (Consultative democratic) and system four (Participative democratic). According to Likert (2006), system one managers are exploitative. These managers have characteristics of the autocratic leaders. Also, system two managers referred to as benevolent authoritative, have authority relationship with subordinates, but they allow a limited amount of decision making by subordinates. Motivation in this system is by rewards and some of punishment. Generally, system two leaders correspond to the benevolent autocrats. The system three managers, called the consultative democrats, show considerable, but not total confidence in subordinates. There is always a two-way communication and some trust between supervisors and subordinates. Also important decisions are made at the top, but many specific ones are made by the subordinates. System four management (participative democratic) style is the one Likert (2006) argued to be the most successful in most organisations. These managers have total confidence and trust in their subordinates. In this system, superior-subordinate relationships are friendly and characterised by mutual trust. Decision making is highly decentralized. Also, communication is both two-way and lateral. System four managers are highly employee-centred in direct contrast to highly job-

centred system one managers.

Likert (2006) concludes by arguing that supervisors with the best records of performance focused their primary attention on the human aspect of their subordinate problems, creating supportive relationship, building effective work groups and setting high performance objectives. They use group style supervision instead of the traditional style of individual discussions with a subordinate.

Related to the works of Likert (2006; 167) is that of Fiedler (2007). His work is based on the contingency model of leadership. His main argument is that there is no single best type of leadership. His contingency model challenged the Human Relations perspective on the leadership as being too exclusively oriented towards leadership style without taking into consideration or account for some intervening variables. For instance, if a manager has a good leadership style, there is going to be increase in productivity, however, there are certain conditions that must be met before satisfaction that will motivate workers comes in. He distinguishes two components of leadership as; the way a person achieved his leadership position; and, the degree of success he enjoys once he acquired the status of leadership. For example, in an organisation, the way a manager acquired his leadership position (in the face of severe opposition) might affect his leadership style, not because he is incompetent.

House (2011) in his contribution distinguished between two leadership styles. These are *supportive* and *instrumental*. Supportive leadership is similar to employee-centred or relationship-oriented leadership. On the other hand, instrumental leadership is similar to job-centred or task-oriented. According to House (2011), supportive leadership is demonstrated by a friendly and approachable leader who shows concern for the status, well-being and needs of subordinates. A supportive leader is always concerned with how to make work more pleasant and congenial. He treats members as equal, seeks good counsel from them and is friendly and approachable. In contrast, instrumental leadership is demonstrated by letting subordinates know what is expected of them, giving specific guidance as to what should be done and how it should be done, making the leader's part in the

group to be understood, scheduling work to be done, maintaining definite standards of performance and asking that group members follow standards and regulations.

Hersey and Blanchard (2012) identified maturity as the most important factor that determines effective leadership style. Maturity, in this sense, is not defined in terms of age. Rather, the maturity of an individual or a group refers to the ability to take responsibility for one's behaviour, being desirous of achievement in one's education and experience relative to a specific task to be performed. However the authors argued that the concept of maturity is not a general condition of a person or group, but a situationally specific characteristic. In other words, depending on the task at hand, individuals or groups can differ in their maturity. Therefore, a leader must vary his behaviour, depending on the relative maturity of the individual or group.

Productivity

One of the major purposes of industrial organisation is mainly to make profit, at least in the private sector. Hence, the primary goal of a business organisation is to increase productivity. Without a satisfactory level of productivity, a profit-oriented organisation cannot survive. However, industrial organisations must attain the goal of high productivity, but not at the cost of human happiness and health. One can therefore argue that organisational effectiveness is based on the extent to which an organisation as a social system fulfils its objectives without incapacitating or jeopardizing its means and resources and without placing strains on its members.

Productivity is a relative concept. There are quite a number of definitions of this concept as there various authors. Simply put, productivity refers to the measure of how all operating systems function. Yesufu (2004) defines productivity as the measurable relationship between production, output and all forces of production. On the other hand, Kendrick (2007) defines it as the relationship between *output of goods and services* (o) and the *input (i) of resources human and non-human* used in the production process. The relationship is usually expressed in ration form 'O/F. In essence, productivity is the ratio of output to input. The higher the numerical value of this ratio, the greater the

productivity. Therefore, productivity is a measure of the performance of a worker or an operations system relative to resources utilisation, output divided by input (Okafor and Bode- Okunade, 2005).

Further, according to Adewale (1992), output, in the above context, includes all goods and services which satisfy wants. They can be tangible goods, such as cups, furniture, etc. or the intangibles as different services rendered in an organisation. Mali (2008) has defined productivity as the means of how well resources are brought together in an organisation and utilised for accomplishing a set of results. Productivity is reaching the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources. This definition suggests efficiency. Efficiency implies the attainment of a level or range of result that is acceptable, but not necessarily desirable. For Mali (2008) therefore, productivity is not *production* nor is it *performance*. He argues that production and performance are components of productivity but they are not equivalent terms.

From the above definitions, it is possible to deduce that productivity is the combination of effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness in this sense relates to the performance, while efficiency relates to resources utilisation; that is, achieving the highest result possible while utilizing the least amount of resources. Usually quality and quantity indie resources are brought together and utilised.

Productivity can be measured in terms of *an output per employee, per hour, quality considered*. In order words, when twenty units of a product were produced by one person in one hour last month and twenty two identical units of a product were produced by the person using the same amount of resources and time in an hour today, one safely argue that productivity has risen by 10%. On the other hand, if twenty units were produced last month and twenty units of higher quality were produced using the same time and resources today, one can also argue that productivity has risen (Isamah, 2008).

It is pertinent to note, however, that output per employee per hour rests not only from people's efforts alone, but jointly from all the factors of production used such as labour, management, capital, machines, raw materials, etc. Therefore productivity may also be

expressed in terms, for example, output per N100 invested. This can be illustrated as shown below;

$$\text{Productivity index} = \frac{\text{Output obtained}}{\text{Performance achieved}} = \frac{\text{Effectiveness}}{\text{Input expended} \quad \text{Resources consumed}}$$

Research has shown that improvement in technology is more often than not offset by change for the worse from the human side of productivity so that when productivity is expected to go up, it either remains the same or increase less than predicted or even goes down (Isamah, 2018). Human factors that can positively influence productivity include; firstly, ability and motivation. Ability results from knowledge and skill. Knowledge is affected by education, experience, training and interest while skill is affected by aptitude and personality as well as by education, experience, training and interest. Secondly, motivation results from the interacting force, effective leadership, and the physical conditions of the job, social conditions of the job and individual needs/aspirations and expectations. For instance, one might conclude that employees whose needs are well met through effective leadership will be highly motivated to improve their performance. This though may not be entirely accurate, for ability and motivation work together to enhance performance. Consequently, no matter how well-motivated a worker is, if he lacks the ability, his performance will be low. On the other hand, no matter how highly the ability of a worker is, if he is not adequately motivated, his performance will be similarly low (Isamah, 1998; Okafor, 2004; Bode-Okunade, 2005; & Oni, 2007).

The Nigerian economy has been plunged into a state of decline since early 1980s, however, with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in the mid 1980s, this has worsened. Against this background, productivity improvement has become the major challenge facing all work and business organisations and the Nigerian economy as a whole. It has, therefore, become imperative for government, and all stakeholders to take adequate measures that would improve productivity in Nigeria for the following reasons;

First, productivity improvement results in conservation in the use of scarce resources per unit of output. That is to produce the same amount of output; one only needs

to use a smaller amount of scarce resources.

Second, productivity improvement in an economy functions as a dynamic feedback process. In this case, the importance of productivity improvement in a given period is not only the increase in output one obtains as inputs are used more efficiently, but also the implications for the future - the increase in output during a given period leads to additional saving and capital formation.

Third, productivity improvement relates to a higher standard of living since more output is produced per capital. A closer look around the world shows that it is those countries like United State, Britain, France, Japan, etc. that have attained a very high productivity levels which today enjoy high standards of living with income per head. Conversely, it is those countries with low productivity levels which have very low standard of living.

Fourth, labour productivity has a special significance. As every manager in an organisation recognises, labour costs constitute an important share of the total cost of production, hence, improved labour productivity may lead to lower unit cost of output. This, in turn, provides incentives for firms to increase production and this can lead to either one or all the following results: lower output prices, higher wages for workers and more employment opportunities as firm increase their production.

Finally, as productivity improves, work may tend to absorb a smaller amount of time per year, per life time as well. Thus, a greater proportion of one's time may be devoted to leisure, which is increasingly becoming a very important consideration in the modern society (Isamah, 1998).

Researchers (Eze, 2001; Nwachukwu, 2002; Soley, 2004; Okoh, 2004; Okafor, 2005a; Oni, 2007) have often contended that the attitude and productivity of an average Nigerian worker is very poor. Mohr (1997); Okoh (1998) and Okafor (2005a) also identified inefficiency, poor achievement of results, shoddy handling of activities and programmes, poor rendering of services, abuse of office, lack of initiative, lack of maintenance culture, delays, corruption, unsatisfactoriness, irregularities, poor quality of work output, poor commitment, low morale truancy,

lateness to duty, idleness, laxity, indiscipline, sleeping on duty dishonesty falsification of official records and poor productivity as the main features of Nigeria workers especially in the public sector.

However, Nwachukwu (2006) and Oni (2007) have identified economic factors, sociological factors, obsolete technology, lack of qualified personnel and managerial/leadership factors as the major reasons for poor productivity in Nigeria.

Leadership - Productivity Nexus

There has been consideration debate over which of the leadership style that can lead to increase productivity in an organisation. This debate has been between the advocates of autocratic and job-centred style and those of democratic and employee-centred style. Those favouring automatic and job-centred style contend that;

- i. An autocratic style, especially benevolent autocracy, is inherently more efficient because it reinforces the leader's unilateral power and thereby increases his ability to influence subordinates to work towards objectives.
- ii. A job-centred focus yields maximum productivity because, although, a manager cannot change human nature, he can do a great deal to make workers work more efficiently.

On the other hand, those scholars favouring democratic and employee-centred style content that;

- i. if not recognised and tapped, the power of the followers is great enough to undermine the leaders' influence and cause organisation problems and set-backs.
- ii. artificially enforced efficiency, instituted by managers from above, is often resisted so hard that gains are lost. Therefore, an employee-centred style will yield maximum productivity because those managers closer to the workers are most capable of redesigning work for greater efficiency. Moreover, an employee centred style increases employee satisfaction.

Thus, those scholars who favour that a democratic or employee-centred style is always preferable to an

authoritarian style also believed that there is causal relation between leadership and productivity. The basic argument here is that a democratic style, when implemented correctly improves satisfaction, and the increased satisfaction will lead to increased productivity. From the foregoing, it is evident that these two positions regarding the relationship between leadership and productivity have obvious benefits and shortcomings. However, it will be intellectually deficient for any scholar to conclude outrightly that democratic leadership style will always produce a more effective result than authoritarian leadership style when followers/subordinates operate at a high need level. As a matter of fact, there are quite a number of well-documented cases in which a benevolent autocratic style proved extremely effective in certain situations. For instance, Thomas Watson Jr. had a reputation for being a tyrannical manager, yet he made IBM, the world's leading high-technology corporation - a record that tends to refute the assumption that a basically authoritarian style is less effective with mature, highly educated subordinates (Mescon, 2008). The basic argument here is that the autocratic leadership style cannot be dismissed as ineffective in all situations. On the other hand, since warm human relations and freedom to act are more pleasant than rigid job structuring, It is no surprise that the employee-centred style of leadership has won the sympathy of many people. Without doubt, many organisational problems will be solved if improved human relations and participation can lead to higher productivity. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. There are quite a number of studies which have shown that the employee-centred style has led to high satisfaction but low productivity (Mescon, 2008). For instance, employees might receive satisfaction from the friendly atmosphere of the workplace and spend so much time socialising that they may become complacent and unproductive. Therefore, determining the true relationship between leadership style and productivity is not once and for all affair but requires continuous extensive empirical research.

However, whatever the case may be some factors should be taken into consideration when examining the relationship between leadership style and productivity in the Nigerian context. According to

Okafor and Bode-Okunade (2005) these factors are; personality factors, cultural factors, nature and structure of task, attitude of members regarding the task, personality of supervisors, nature of organisational goals, wider social context of leader-employee relationship, situational factors (i.e. in a crisis situation, an authoritarian leader may be most expedient). On the whole, Isaacs (2013) has suggested that irrespective of the leadership style and nature of organisation, an effective leadership should imbibe the following techniques to spur their followers or subordinates to greater productivity. These are;

- i. Effective leader should confer with employees when the situation permits. He needs to confer on assignment, plans and how a job might be done.
- ii. He should encourage employees to come to him with questions and clarifications. Weak leaders have a tendency to hide from problems.
- iii. He should encourage communicate, using group meetings and provide for two-way communication (i.e. input and feedback) in the process. This is especially important when he plans to introduce changes.
- iv. He should show concern for the employees and avoid showing concern for how well he may be liked by the subordinates.
- v. He should use every opportunity to stress the importance of work and the importance of employee to operations.
- vi. He should commend good work publicly, and criticise only in private.
- vii. He should set an example for the employee in terms of responsible attitude and behaviour.
- viii. He should show respect and courtesy to all employees.

So far, the discussions on the leadership and productivity in this article have been restricted primarily to formal work organisations. However, it is a known fact that a formal organisation is only but a sub-system of the entire social system. In essence, what happens in the wider society has direct or indirect effect on the various work organisations. Political leadership no doubt affects the productivity level of any nation.

In sociology, particularly in industrial sociology, emphasis is usually on two categories of leaders i.e. the *political leaders* and *bureaucratic leaders*. The political leaders are largely responsible for publicly initiation and formulation of programmes, while the bureaucratic leaders made of up of the bureaucratic officials (in the civil service) are saddled with the function of execution and implementation. On the broader scale, leaders are found in every segment of the society in the various areas of jurisdiction. The main objective of each leader in his/her own sphere of influence is to ensure growth and development, and when these are done well and put together, the organization will achieve its objective and the country will develop faster. Nigeria as a nation has been ruled more by the bad/ineffective leaders than good/effective leaders exhibiting *transactional* character with no real *transformational* character. In relation to work organisation, the former starts with the idea that team members agree to obey their leader totally when they take on a job: the *transaction* is (usually) that the organization pays the team members in return for their efforts and compliance. The leader has a right to *punish* the team members if their work does not meet the pre-determined standard. The team members can do little to improve their job satisfaction under transactional leadership. The leader could give team members some control of their income/reward by using incentives that encourage even higher standards or greater productivity. Alternatively, a transactional leader could practice *management by exception*, whereby rather than rewarding better work, he/she would take corrective action if the required standards were not met. Transactional leadership is really just a way of managing rather than a true leadership style as the focus is on short term tasks. It has serious limitations for knowledge- based or creative work, but remains a common style in many organizations. The latter (i.e. transformational leadership) is a true leader who inspires his or her team constantly with a shared vision of the future. Transactional leaders are highly visible, and spend a lot of time communicating. They do not necessarily lead from the front, as they tend to delegate responsibility amongst their team. While their enthusiasm is often infectious, they generally need to be supported by *detailed people*. In many work organisations, both transactional leaders (managers)

ensure that routine work is done reliably, while the transformational leaders look after initiatives that add value. The latter are dynamic, innovate and effective leaders. As Peter Drucker (1954) points out this type of managers (business leaders), they are the basic and scarcest resources of an}' business enterprise.

In the context of Nigeria as a whole, poor political leadership has been the bane of Nigeria. The nation over the years has been bedevilled by a prolonged ineffective or inept autocratic leadership and self seeking and corrupt politicians (Okafor, 2005b; Keshi, 2008). The various mismanagement perpetuated at different times by ineffective and corrupt autocratic and democratic leadership have adversely affected productivity level in most public sector work organisation so much that government companies in which over N100 billion was invested over the period of fifty years have privatised and sold at a given away rate of £435 million (Ikejiani-Clark, 2006). Infact the cases of Nigerian Telecommunications, (NITEL), Nigeria Electric Power Authority(now Power Holding Company of Nigeria), the Nigeria Airways and a host of other privatised, concessioned or liquidated public enterprises attest to this bad/ineffective leadership both the national and organisational levels (Amaefule, 2006; Okafor, 2007; 2012).

Chinua Achebe, in his book, *The Problem with Nigeria* (1983), blamed Nigeria's embarrassing stunted growth on the failure of leadership. The failure of leadership in Nigeria is replicate in all sectors of Nigerian public life including economic, social, political and religious institutions (Agbese, 2010; Akande, 2013). The thesis that leaders make their societies is well- grounded on the facts of history.

History provides many societies that achieved their collective visions through determined and focused leaders either elected or appointed For instance, during the period of depression in the Unites States, in the 1930s President Franklin D. Roosevelt came out with an agenda entitled *The New Deal*, which created crash employment that put money in people's word power emboldened his people to face the menacing army of Adolf Hitler. Kemal Ataturk, the father of modern Turkey tilted his country towards secularism. Also, Gandhi was to India what David Ben Guroin was to Isreal. In essence, leaders are the engines of national

productivity and development. The visions and energies of Headers are transformative. In the case of Nigeria, many people in political leadership position appear not to have the faintest idea about leadership. A society without a visionary leader such that exists in Nigeria faces uncoordination and disorder; such a society breeds focuslessness, indiscipline and corruption with many other attendant social vices (Adegbamigbe, 2008; Okecha, 2010).

Politics in Nigeria tends to show constant struggle for power not for service and productivity but for primitive accumulation material things. Over the years, people that have found themselves in political leadership position either as military administrators or civilians often engaged in a rat race for accumulation of material wealth in terms of big mansions, in and outside Nigeria, choice parcels of land, posh cars, business house and shares in blue chip companies (Okecha, 2010). Hence, the case of Nigeria is the case of failed political leadership, as many leaders in positions of authority failed to use mandate (either real or stolen) given to them by the electorate to transform the country from a depraved country to a buoyant countries despite the huge human and natural resource in the country (Ajanaku, 2008; Keshi, 2008).

Sadly, this has resulted in paralysis In all the sectors of the Nigerian economy. Nowhere is paralysis more evident and more visible than in the manufacturing sector and in the provision of basic infrastructure that should facilitate productivity and by extension national development (Akande, 2013). For instance, many manufacturing industries in Nigeria have been trudging and evidently many of them in this sector have succumbed to the country's intractable energy problem. The evident of decay in the manufacturing infrastructure, particularly the epileptic power and gas supply situation imposes additional burden on cost sometimes amounting to about 40 per cent to these industries (Ayorinde, 2008). A survey conducted in Lagos showed that the *British American Tobacco* (BAT) Pic spent about N67.5 million in 2005 on diesel and maintenance of its private power generation plant. *Dunlop Nigeria PLC* similarly spends N96 million on annual averages, while *West African Portland Cement* spends N90million on the average. Others are *Friestland Foods PLC*: N50 million, *Nigeria PLC*: N36million and *Cadbury Nigeria PLC*: N49million.

By Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN's) statistics, nine companies within its fold spent a total sum of N69.5 billion to generate power in 2005 alone and since then the situation never improved. This has forced some companies to either relocate to a more friendly business environment or to scale down local manufacturing operations (Odiaka, 2006; Akaeze, 2010; Akande, 2013). It has been reported that since the inception of civilian regime in Nigeria, not less than 150,000 employees in the textile industries have lost their jobs (Ayorinde, 2008).

Discussion on poor leadership will be incomplete without making reference to the issue of followership in Nigeria. It has been argued that the docility of Nigeria in the face of unpopular government policies is probably responsible for bad leadership. Even avoidable, often harsh economic, political or social policies which impinge on their wellbeing are forced on them by inconsiderate, kleptomaniac leadership, Nigerians have been known to put up a lack-lustre protest and thereafter abandon the struggle way. They never have the history of sustaining struggles (Orilade, 2008). In contrast, in other countries in North African like Tunisia, Egypt and Libya where dictators have held sway for over three decades, people have revolted against the system. Though these countries can say to be less democratic than Nigeria, yet the living condition of the people in real economic terms is better (Abati, 2011; Adejumobi, 2011).

In a nutshell, in Nigeria docile followership appeared to emboldened poor leadership. Such followership is passive. It led by the nose. It lacks critical mind to question leadership rather it feeds leadership with praise singing. Hence docile followership cannot be absolved of the poor leadership (Agbese, 2010). The combined effect of poor leadership and docile followership in the large society on the Nigerian workers is that in both private and public organisations, workers have been applying all kinds of measures to cope with various neo-liberal reforms of government and this has greatly reduced their commitment to work and by extension their productivity levels (Okafor, 2005c).

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper we are able to establish that leadership is perhaps one of the most important factors in the work

situation especially when it relates to increase in productivity. Leadership position consists of such important functions as supervision, motivation and communication. The implication here is that those who are entrusted with the task of leadership have responsibility to motivate employees. No matter how well thought out the plan or efficient the organisation is, nothing happens until the people who make up the organisation are stimulated to perform through effective leadership. In this case, therefore, the basic physiological, psychological, security and social needs of the employees must be substantially met.

Because productivity is largely an attitude, and that it is workers perception of authority and control that effect their productivity level, government and other employers of labour should set up efforts to improving productivity through effective and responsible leadership both at the micro (individual work organisations) and macro (nation at large) levels. By so doing, various work organisations and the nation at large would have overcome low productivity which has remained the bane of the country for several decades. Finally, unless there is effective and focused political and organisational leadership and virile followership both at the organisational and national levels, the vision of improved productivity in work organisations and national development will remain a mirage.

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