

ORGANIZATIONAL DIPLOMACY AS A CATALYST FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT

The problem which arises in thinking about efficiency in the public organization is that it is far more complicated to value and determine than in commercial organization where the confusion of efficiency is largely guided by the profit objective. In public administration, the values which public service seek to realize are seldom expressible in concrete terms of quantification. The paper therefore interrogates the role of diplomacy and capacity building in fostering efficiency in public organization, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. The study adopted documentary research methodology, specifically, content analysis tool was adopted. Areas of lethargy were x-rayed and properly interrogated. The paper therefore concludes that all activities of any organization are initiated and determined by the persons who make up that organization. Working organizations presumably begin with ideas but their next requirement is people. Whatever may be their organizational goals and objectives they can be implemented only through the efforts and capabilities of people. Human efforts therefore are centered to the attainment of any organizational goal. The ability to give

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the employees the required professional training via well-articulated diplomatic strategies is very imperative to ensure organizational efficiency. Therefore, we conclude that the success or failure of an organization depends largely on the effectiveness of diplomacy and capacity building.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since administration is concerned with all patterns of cooperative behavior, it is obvious that any person engaged in any activity in cooperation with other person is engaged in administration. Further, since people have cooperated with others in their lifetime, they have some basic familiarity with administration and some of its problems. The social clubs, the town unions, the churches, the student unions, the schools, the family, the military, the various levels of government and their specialized departments, the private firms and business organization-all these require administration to achieve their goals.

Many administrative organizations are informal in their structure e.g. the family. Thus much of the administration that goes on in such organization is not deliberately planned. Most persons, while they are engaged in administration every day of their lives, seldom think formally about the process. That is to say, that they seldom deliberately get out considering the ways in which the cooperative activities of group are actually arranged, how the cooperation could be made more effective or satisfying, what the requirements are for the persistence of the cooperative activities.

The governmental organizations are more complex than the usual every day administrative situations we are all familiar with. In most governmental organizations, the problems of securing effective cooperative actions in performing large and intricate tasks become so great that they attract the attention of scholars and practitioners. If large-scale organizations are to accomplish their purposes, and to survive, people who participate in and operate such organizations must know what makes cooperation effective and what hampers it. Either through experience or through formal education, they must study administration and its intricacies.

Today there are numerous professional bodies that train those who are performing administrative functions but did not study administration or management in school.

We have today engineers, geologists; medical doctors etc who perform administrative functions. People in this category require professional management training to acquire management ethics and practice.

2. CONTEXTUAL DISCOURSE

2.1 Diplomacy, capacity building: A conceptual clarification

The term diplomacy derives from the ancient Greek *diploma*, composed of *diplo*, meaning “folded in two; and the suffix – *ma* ‘an object’. The folded document conferred a privilege – often a permit to travel – and the term came to denote documents whereby princes granted such favors. Later it applied to all solemn documents issued by chancelleries, especially those containing agreement between sovereigns. Diplomacy became, identified with international relations, and the direct tie to documents lapsed (except in diplomatic, the science of authenticating old official documents). In the 18th century, the French term *diplomate* (diplomat) became current for a person authorized to negotiate on behalf of a state.

It is currently used to refer to the established method of international discourse or art of managing international relations, chiefly by negotiation. In the past, diplomacy referred to official relations between sovereign states, but in the 21st century it has expanded to cover summits and other international conferences and the activities of such entities as the United Nations, the Red Cross, etc.

‘Diplomacy is often confused with foreign policy, but it is instead the chief instrument through which the goals, strategies, and broad tactics – often politically determined – of foreign policy are implemented. Foreign policy is usually publicly stated. Diplomacy, on the other hand, is generally conducted in secret, though its results are often made public.

Diplomatic tasks have broadened to include economic, cultural disarmament, organizational negotiations, usually conducted by or with the support of negotiators who are specialists in the field., Diplomats themselves have become more specialized in training and education, though some countries, especially small ones, continue to favor generalists in staffing their diplomatic corps.,

2.2 Diplomacy and the Organization

The main purpose of diplomacy is to prevent conflict and organizational catastrophe. However as each employee in the organization pursues his or her interest, conflict may develop at one time or another. When conflicts begin to develop either of the two sides (management and employee) contacts the other through the established diplomatic channels. This is the work of organizational administrators, who are regarded as organizational diplomats. During exchange of views on an ensuing conflict each side explains its views to the other with the aim of having the conflict resolved. Many conflicts have been resolved through such an approach.

However, there are times when the usual friendly exchange of views of one side changes to mild threats or picketing. If the other side responds to the mild threats, then the conflict assumes the nature of a potentially serious conflict. Depending on the nature of the issues involved, and the

conditions of the parties to the conflict, diplomacy and persuasion may give way to serious threats. At that stage open hostilities and conflict may be imminent.

2.3 Interrogating the concept of capacity building

Capacity building often refers to assistance that is provided to entities, usually societies in developing countries, which have a need to develop a certain skill or competence, or for general upgrading of performance ability. Most capacity is built by societies themselves, sometimes in the public, sometimes in the non-governmental and sometimes in the private sector. Many international organizations, especially those in the UN family, have provided capacity building as a part of their programs of technical cooperation with their member countries. Bilaterally funded entities and private sector consulting firms or non-governmental organizations, called NGOs, Professional bodies, have also offered capacity building services. Sometimes NGOs in developing countries are themselves recipients of capacity building (Chukwuemeka, 2016, Eze, 2015, Uguanyi 2015)

Capacity building is, however, not limited to international aid work. More recently, capacity building is being used by government to transform community and industry, approaches to social and environmental problems.

Capacity building is much more than training and includes the following:

- (a) Human resource development, the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively.,
- (b) Organization development, the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community).
- (c) Institutional and legal framework development, making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities (Wiki, 2012)
- (d) Capacity building is the elements that give fluidity, flexibility and functionability of a program /organization to adapt to changing needs of the population that is served.
- (e) It increases the capacity of any developed or developing society to improve trade, employment, economic development and quality of life. It is also true that where institutional capacity is limited, infrastructure development is probably constrained.

UNDP (2003 in Agunai, 2015) defines capacity building to cover human resources development and the strengthening of managerial systems, institutional development and involves community participation and creation of an enabling environment. Capacity building in the context of development implies a dynamic process which enables individuals and agencies to develop the critical social and technical capacities to them. Azikiwe (2006) also defines it as the process by which an individual, irrespective of sex, are equipped with skills and knowledge they need to perform effectively and efficiently

in their different callings. It is also the ability to enable the people to make use of their creative potentials, intellectual capacities and leadership abilities for personal as well as national growth and development. It cuts across planning for people to acquire knowledge and advanced skills that are crucial to a country's economic growth, its standard of living and individual empowerment. It is the planned programs that will impart skills which will enable the recipient put the knowledge and skills acquired into productive uses to solve wide range of individual and national problems. Capacity building from the human capital point of view could be explained to mean when people possess the needed knowledge and advanced skills that are critical to individual growth as well as the country's growth and development. The capacity needed by any country for sustainable development is primarily dependent on the adequacy and relevance of its entrepreneurship (Nwazor, 2012).

Therefore, we can make bold to say that there is a strong nexus between diplomacy and capacity building. Without a good administrator with diplomatic skill, capacity building, cannot be effectively implemented in public organizations. Without effective capacity building, we cannot formulate good policies, programs, and reform agenda. Thus, when a public administrator with good skill in diplomatic administration is in charge of a public organization, good programs are mapped out and the enabling environment is created to ensure sustainability.

2.4 Diplomacy and Capacity Building: The nexus

We have made a broad overview of diplomacy in this paper, taking it from the international relation perspective. For the purpose of this paper, we shall discuss diplomacy beyond international relations or as a foreign policy instrument. In many writings of scholars of public administration (Chukwuemeka, 2011), Dutta,(2011), and Ugwu (2006) it is argued that an administrator is a diplomat. In the word of Graham (2010) *the Administrator must Balance Competing Goals*. The modern administrator at any moment faces a lot of organizational goals, problems and needs all of which compete for the manager's precious time and resources, (both human and material). As a result of the scarcity of such resources, a balance must be made between the various goals and needs. Concurrent with this is the fact that the administrator must also decide who is to perform a particular task. Other diplomatic functions of the manager/administrator include:

Methods: organizations are made up of people, and at times people disagree and quarrel. Dispute within a unit or organization can affect morale and productivity and may even cause some competent employees to leave the organization. No manager wants any of these things to happen; he must mediate and try to iron out all disputes before they get out of hand. It must be borne in mid that dispute settlement required skill and tact.

The administrator is a diplomat: the manager/administrator is an official representative of his work unit and organizational meetings. When dealing with clients, customers, contractors, government officials, personnel of other organizations, nominating employees for training and of course in dealing with the general public the manager/administrator is more often than not considered a representative of the entire organization as well as of a particular unit.

Therefore we could feel free to say that diplomacy and capacity building are synonymous. An administrator or a manager will find it difficult to succeed if he does not apply the tool of diplomacy in his models of capacity building.

Human resources development via employee training as one of the major functions of a manager is sine qua non to organizational productivity. Training is learning processes that involve the acquisition of skills by employees to enable them increase their performance. Most organizations tend to ignore employee training on their bid to maximize profit, little did such organization know that this practice is to their own peril. Training costs the organization in the short run but at the long run the organization stands the chance to gain a lot. Training programs help in no small measure in the development of the individual towards a more secure and productive career. Nwankwo (1988) believes that this futuristic element plays against public service training on program that bear fruits within the budget year not for some abstract future data. The Manager therefore should take the matter of human resources development very seriously, hence the success or failure of an organization depends on the caliber of the human element.

2.5 Diplomacy and Conflict Management

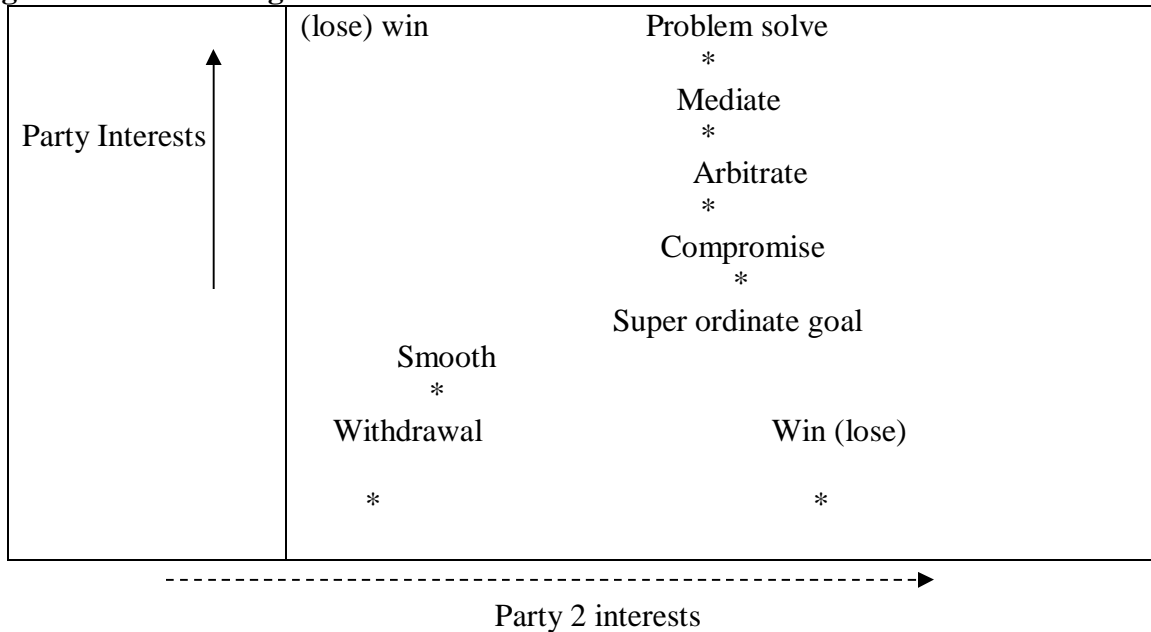
Conflict occurs when two or more people or group perceive that they have incompatibility of goals and interdependence of activity.

The first step in the resolution of conflicts is their discovery and exposure. There are many upward channels of communications that can be developed in the organization for the purpose of bringing dissatisfactions to the surface. After a brief discussion of these channels, greater attention will be given to the grievance procedure, which is perhaps the most significant means of discovering and resolving employee complaints and dissatisfactions. On the other hand, there is the distinct possibility that the organization will become dissatisfied with a particular employee. Though the skinner approach to conditioning of most organizations includes programs of negative disciplinary actions ending up with the maximum penalty of discharge from the organization.

Employees and organizations as a matter of fact need each other and are therefore interdependent. Employees and organizations have some values that conflict e.g. ego versus control, self-actualization versus division of labor, and freedom versus efficiency.

The traditional managerial approach to conflict is one of suppression and elimination; conflict is the antithesis of cooperation and organization. Behavioral scientists have ultimately worked through for the betterment of all. Both appears to agree that the final goal is the elimination of conflict, they merely disagree on means.

fig.1 – Conflict management models



Sources: Adapted from Edwin Flippo, *Personnel Management*, London McGraw Hill book Co

To sum up this discourse, conflict management could be achieved through compromise, which is always the result of collective bargaining. Arbitration is placed just above compromise to indicate what often happens in such proceedings. In like manner, conflict situation could be minimized through the following diplomatic methods:

1. Adopting participatory leadership style, whereby managers must be dynamic and amenable to situations.
2. Employers/ managers should demonstrate sincerity of purpose.
3. Periodic review of salaries, wages and other fringe benefits
4. Prompt payment of salaries, wages and other incentives

3. METHODOLOGY

The paper is documentary typology, and therefore content analysis techniques was used to interrogate the variables relevant to the study.

4. CONCLUSION

All activities of any organization are initiated and determined by the persons who make up that organization. According to Yoder (1972), working organizations presumably begin with ideas but their next requirement is people. Whatever may be their organizational goals and objectives they can be implemented only through the efforts and capabilities of people? Skilled people. organizational structure must be manned or staffed if they are to accomplish anything. Human efforts therefore are centered to the attainment of any organizational goal. The ability to give the employees the required professional training via well articulated diplomatic strategies is very imperative to ensure organizational efficiency. Therefore, we conclude that the success or failure of an organization depends largely on the effectiveness of diplomacy and capacity building.

4.1 Recommendations

- (1) Public administrators especially in developing countries should undergo rigorous training in the area of organization diplomacy to enable them manage the human resource for efficiency,
- (2) They should adopted the contingency approach to conflict management to ensure organizational harmony.
- (3) Staff training should be based on skill gap not on favoritism basis

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