

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERSHIP

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The Global Fund OIG Audit of 2009 highlighted that the lack of “leadership and management capacity” within the MoHCW which in turn has led to Zimbabwe’s health delivery system, once amongst the best in Sub-Saharan Africa, has suffered severely in the period 2000 to 2009. This decade witnessed significant declines in key health indicators. A summarised review of the Zimbabwean health status notes the following; HIV prevalence of adults between 15-49 years at 13.7% by 2010, child health status indicators were worsening, with infant mortality and under five mortality rising from 53 and 77 per 1000 live births in 1994, to 60 and 86 per 1000 live births respectively in 2009 (MIMS). By 2011, these indicators had not improved with under 5 mortality at 84 per 1000 live births and infant mortality at 57 per 1000 live births (ZDHS, 2010-2011). In addition, the nutritional status of children indicators are unacceptably high with stunting increasing from 29.4 % in 1999 to 35% among children under 5 years old [1].

In addition to these above mentioned indicators, Zimbabwe’s health delivery system has in recent years been hampered by a massive internal and external brain and skills drain. By 2006 Zimbabwe had 237 medical doctors working in the Organization for Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) countries [1]. This has resulted in the loss of experienced and qualified health professionals from the public sector. The remaining health professionals are now spread out thinly, to the extent that some institutions are now staffed by untrained cadres. This has reduced access for the population to treatment by trained and experienced health workers. The exodus has also

reduced capacity to train, mentor additional health professionals and above all proffer quality service delivery.

Furthermore, in the Zimbabwean health sector this has not been the case. Most urban and rural nurses have not been given the full protective clothing and other necessary equipment during this recent COVID- 19 virus and as a result they have been turning away patients suffering from other ailments fearing they might contract the corona virus. This subsequently resulted in public health conflicts. The health sector is one of the most critical/essential service in the country but the doctors and nurses have not been given sustainable salaries, hence they resort to demonstrations or strikes often than not. At one point a directive was given by the Zimbabwean government to fire 77 doctors who were on strike in November 2019 and this served to have detrimental effects of the health of the general populace as they had none to attend to them at various health care centres. In addition the firing of the skilled and experienced doctors also meant that a valuable skilled and experienced crop had been extinguished yet these qualities are the core of the health sector.

This study seeks to analyze the current leadership behaviors and styles in Zimbabwe and Ukrainian public sector and to explore the reasons why the leadership has been ineffective or effective.

According to the survey carried out by the researcher, most of the research participants in the health public sector noted lack of incentives as the major stumbling block to effective leadership. Horstein and Guerre highlighted that when the employee has negative emotions like feeling frustrated, angry and disregard, the employees might generate a defensive attitude in order to protect himself or herself [2]. This defensive attitude will in turn affect how they communicate with others and it might also create a feeling of “apathy and fatigue” [2, p.1]. This “apathy and fatigue” feeling has a negative affect the employee’s performance, as the employee feel low job satisfaction and hence under underperform.

This observation concurs with a survey done in the Ukrainian public sector. Incentives/rewards proved to be the highest ranked reason why employees stay at their work place as it scored 90% and above across the 5 organizations including All Ukrainian Brotherhood 'Elita Nation'. Employers need a leader that appreciates their efforts at the end of a hard work and also in turn to motivate them to go an extra mile when doing their job.

Furthermore, Horstein and Guerre underline that the organizational design has a big impact on the employee's distress and underlining that the traditional bureaucracy increases this distress [2]. A traditional bureaucracy is an organization where direction is directed of somebody at least one level above the employee and where the levels are formally stated like hierarchies. It must be noted that this form of organization was mostly common in government led institutions both in Zimbabwe and in Ukraine. One may argue that even if the employees are empowered over their work task in a bureaucracy organization the distress does not decrease. One reason is that the manager still has the main responsibility for the employee's performance and therefore will evaluate and give feedback according to how the work accomplished according to the goal [3]. To evaluate and give feedback on performance does not give the employees negative behavior and emotion, if the employees has "clarity on goal and measures, as well as responsibility for them" [4, p77].

A survey in the Zimbabwe's government hospitals and Ukrainian's Local Government showed that that bureaucracy organizations are less productive and had lower intrinsic motivation around the employee, than organization that "encourage the employee to do their best, have environment of mutual support and respect" [2, p.2]. In the Zimbabwean government hospital lack of motivation was cited to be one of the greatest challenges of the current leadership owing to poor salaries and lack of adequate hospital equipment especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, bureaucracy organizations tend to have higher cost for employee turnover. One reason for the high turnover gathered from the survey is that of low feedback and support might which

results in anxiety, which, together with low job satisfaction, creates their intention to change jobs” [2 p.3]. An additional reason for increased turnover is that, the organizations values and goals and their strategies to reach the goals are not compatible with the employee’s values. If the employees choose to continue the employment even if the organization does not represent the value and goal of the employee there is an increased risk for a decreasing job satisfaction, which will affect their performance [2].

However, the All Ukrainian Brotherhood ‘Elita Nation’ public organization in Ukraine seems to be doing well in as much as leadership is concerned. According to the survey done based on five dimensions of leadership behavior namely; accountability, lawfulness (following governmental rules/regulations), ethics, political loyalty, and network governance. Accountability refers to leadership that stimulate employees to justify and explain actions to stakeholders. Lawfulness leadership refers to leadership that encourage employees to act in accordance with governmental rules and regulation [5].

Political loyal leadership is leadership with the ability to stimulate employees to align their actions with the interest of politicians, even when this is costly. Last but not least, Network governance can be defined as leadership capable of encouraging employees to actively connect with stakeholders [5]. According to a survey done by the researcher it can be observed that the ‘All Ukrainian Brotherhood recorded the highest average scores in all the leadership dimensions except the political loyal leadership in which they scored the lowest. This can be attributed to the fact that they do not impose their own political affiliations on their employees rather they give room for ambiguity which matches with their mission statement that of reaching highest standards of friendship established by the founders of the Brotherhood.

In conclusion the public sector should, from my point of view, be democratic and transparent, which can be accomplished through documentation of the work and high compliance with various laws and regulations. The public sector needs to develop a

basic structure that enhances the employee's openness, creative and pro-active behavior as these create room for effective communication and feedback. There is need of a trustful and open environment to stimulate a pro-active and creative behavior which would be vital in motivating the employees. Furthermore, there should be a balance between trust and control from all parts can be a way of enhancing a pro-active behavior in the employee in the public sector. I also suggest that there is an opportunity for the public sector to utilize the employee's creative and pro-active behavior in order to increase the quality in the public sector service. From another perspective, an organization in an environment that has high compliance to the regulations and law might not be an amphitheater where creativity is wanted or can be enhanced. But, I strongly believe that the public sector can exploit the professional's openness, creative and pro-active behavior even with these restrictions.

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