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Female Gender Empowerment and Leadership Challenges in Sport Organization

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ABSTRACT

This paper centered on female gender empowerment which resulted from the rate at which male counterparts dominated the sport industry in term of planning, staffing, organizing and control of sport programmers.

The gender gap in sport is most evident hence the need for gender equality. Female gender empowerment delegates more authority to employees and places more responsibilities in their hands. The paper further highlighted the leadership challenges in sport organization. Conclusively, the paper opined that the female gender must be given the chance to participate and excel in sport policy formulation, conducting researches for sport development, planning and organizing of sport progranmles.

INTRODUCTION

Every organization can function effectively only if it has its disposal the necessary resources. These resources are grouped conveniently into material resources in the from of capital, facilities and equipment and human resources. The human resources comprise employees and their manager. While sufficient importance, that the organization gives adequate attention to the human resources into use and covert them into wealth for the organization, (Challaduri .P 1999).

Over the years in the sports industry, there existed a wide gender gap, with male dominance in national and international sport associations. The likes of Nigeria Football Association, University, Sports Councils, National Sport Association, Confederation for Africa Football, Federation International Football Association etc are controlled and leadership roles dominated by the male garden. This phenomena development has not given the female gender in sports organization the opportunity to fully exhibit the leadership potentials in them. The need for gender equality in terms of recruitment, selection and placement of personnel in sports organization must be given a priority. Women must be given leadership role and opportunities to excel.

However, one of the millennium development goals is to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. The clarion call for women empowerment in the sports industry is a conscious way to promote self motivation, innovation and system wide continuous improvements. Female gender empowerment describes condition that enables people to feel competent and in control, energized, to take the institution and persist at meaningful tasks. Women in this present age are much more informed, brilliant, sophisticated, disciplined, dedicated and viable in their chosen field of endeavor. Women in sport such as administrators, coaches, managers, secretaries, lectures, athletes must take the challenge to bridge the gap created by laid down bureaucratic bottlenecks and forge ahead to reduce gender discrimination and inequalities in organization in terms of rewards, employment, postings, recognition and participation in sports administration.

One of the significant processes in management of human resources is leadership. The leadership that the immediate supervisor, and top-level administration provides helps employee understand their roles and performance expectations and their relationships to organization goals, and reward system. In addition, good leadership enhances employees' personal growth and development, motivation, performance and job satisfaction.

A leader in sport organization faces a lot of challenges, sport administrator have the primary duty of formulating sport policies and programmer to fall within the overall government objective of economic and social development. The element of sport development is based on these concepts which are: sport infrastructure and facilities (maintenance), Athletes development, welfare of personnel, recognizing and rewarding, planning and organizing, problem solving, consulting and delegating monitoring operation and environment, informing and clarifying roles and objectives.

Therefore, gender equality in sport and female gender empowem1ent in sport organizations will create an avenue for the achievement of the United Nations (UN) Millennium development goals. This in turn will equip our women in the field of sport to grow and compete favorably with male counterparts.

CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is the process of sharing power with employee, thereby enhancing their confidence in their ability to perform their job and their belief that they are influential contributor to the organization. Empowerment result in changes employee's beliefs from feeling powerless, believing strongly in their own personal effectiveness. The result is that people take more initiative and persevere in achieving their goal and their leader vision even in the face obstacles.

Specifically, Bateman (1999) stated that empowerment encourages the following beliefs among employees. First, they have a sense of self determination of having some choice over the tasks, methods and pace of their work. They an impact, that is they have some influence over important strategic, administrative and operating decision or outcomes on job.

To foster empowerment, management must creates an environment, in which everyone feels they have real influence over performance standards and business effectiveness within their areas of responsibility. An empowering work environment provides people with information necessary for them to perform at their best, knowledge about how to use the information and how to do their work; power to make decision that gives them control over their work, and the rewards they deserve and earn the contribution they make. Such an environment reduces costs, because fewer people are needed to supervise, monitor, and coordinate, to improve quality and services, bec:1use high performance is inspired at the sources, the people who do the work. It allows quick action because people on the spot see problems, solution and opportunities for innovation on which they are "empower".

Robbins (1996) emphasized that effective leader share power and responsibility with their employees. The empowering leader role is to show trust, provide vision, remove performance-blocking barriers, offer encouragement, motivate, and coach employees.

EMPOWERMENT ENHANCES SELF PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIOURS

When the female garden is empowered in sport organizations, it describes condition that female that enable people to feel competent and in control of their work, energized Lo take initiatives and persist at meaningful tasks.

Empowerment therefore brings about positive self perception (self concept, self esteem and self efficacy) and tasks directed behaviors. Changed self-perception are manifestation of empowerment. Self concept is encouraged when you see yourself in a role. It change as you shift roles. Self esteem is enhanced as you feel about your own worthiness your self acceptance that you are worthy of self respect.

Empowerment may be self-initiated, promote by manage. As a management particle, empowerment also means managers open communication, delegate power, share information and cut away at the debilitating tangles of corporate bureaucracy.

Managers encourage empowerment by designing jobs to promote self reliance, providing challenge goals, meaningful reward and exerting considerable leadership other people are empowered if they are accepting, provide a model for others to be self-motivatedperformers and exert the patience to be mentors.

Figure 1: Graphical portray of forces and interplay among them in empowerment as it grow out of self perception and behavior.

Schneider and Bowen (1995) stated that two components of empowerment are (i) having authority or power (ii) and having the ability to exercise that authority which are derived from organization process that include

(i)   Designing jobs to ensure that individuals enjoy challenge, responsibility and autonomy in jobs.

(ii)   Sharing power throughout the organization so those individuals are able to exercise appropriate authority in execution of their jobs.

(iii) Sharing information about the organization, its units, and their performance so that individual can make intelligent and effective decision carrying out their assignments

(iv)   Sharing knowledge to perform various tasks of the organization to enhance the expertise and information base of members: and

(v)   Sharing rewards based on organization and individual performance.

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES IN SPORT ORGANIZATIONS
The female gender participation

One of the significant processes in management of human resources is leadership. The leadership that the immediate supervisor and top-level administrators provide helps employee understand their roles and performance expectation and their relationships to organization goals and reward systems. In addition, good leadership enhances employee's growth and development, mutation, performance and job satisfaction. Therefore manages need to have a clear understanding of leadership within organization (Chelladuria P. 1994)

Sport organization according to Fasan (1994) and Park house (1996) is a social group comprising people with different specialized skills but united by a common purpose of accomplishing sport objectives. Leader in sports organization faces a lot of challenges I order to accomplish organization goals. Since majority of the leaders in sport are of male dominance; is it deal therefore that women empowerment in sport industry be given a priority so as to join hands in facing the leadership challenges in sport organization. Women empowerment in sports or will encourage flexibility, teamwork, trust, competitive individualism and control. The leadership challenges in today's sports organization are in the following dimensions: (i) networking (ii) supporting (iii) managing conflict and term building (iv) motivating (v) recognizing and rewarding (vi) planning and organizing (vii) problem solving (viii) consulting and deleting (xi) monitoring operations and environment (x) infornling.(xi) clarifying roles and objectives.

Networking: Socialization informally; developing contact with people who are a source of information and support; and maintaining relationships through periodic information including visit, telephone relationships correspondence and through attendance of meeting and social events.

Supporting: Acting friendly and considerate, showing sympathy and support when someone is upset. listening to complaints and problems, looking out for other's interests, providing helpful career advice, doing things to aid other's career advancement.

Managing conflict and team building: Encouraging and facilitating constructive resolution of conflict fostering teamwork and cooperation and building identification with the organizational unit or team

Motivating: Setting an example of proper behavior by ones own actions generate enthusiasm for the work and commitment to task objectives or to induce someone to carry out a request for support, cooperation assistance, resources, or authorization. Recognizing and rewarding: providing praise, recognition, and tangible reward for effective performance significant achievements, and special contribution and expressing respect and appreciation for others accomplishments.

Planning and organization: Determining long-range objectives and strategies for environmental change; intensifying necessary action steps to carry out a project or activity; allocating resources among activities according to priories; and determining how to improve efficiency, productivity, and coordination with other parts of the organization.

Problem solving: Identifying work-related problems; analyzing problems in a systematic, but timely, manner to determine causes and to find solutions; and acting decisively to implement solutions and to manager crises.

Consulting and delegating: Checking with others before making changes that effect them, encouraging suggestions for improvement, inviting participation indecision making, incorporating the ideas and suggestions of others in decisions and allowing others to have substantial discretion in carrying out work activities and managing problems.

Monitoring operations and environment: Gathering information about the progress and quality of work activities, the success or failure of activities or projects, and the performance of individual contributors; determining the needs of clients or users and telling others about the organizational unit to promote its reputation.

Clarifying roles and objectives: Assigning tasks, providing direction in how to do the work; and communicating a clear understanding of job responsibilities, task objectives, deadliness and performance expectations.

CONCLUSION

Given that men have historically held the great majority of leadership position in sports organizations, it's tempting to assume that the existence of the noted difference between men and women would automatically work to favour men. It doesn't. In today's organizations, flexibility, team work, trust and information sharing are replacing rigid structures, control and secrecy. The best leaders listen, motivate, and provide support to their people. And many women seem to do those things better than men. Good leaders must be skillful negotiators and the leadership style women typically use, can make them better at negotiating than men.

Based on this assumption, the concept of structuring organization is empowerment. The female gender empowerment in sports organization must be given adequate support for sports development to be actualized.

It must be noted that this approach has some important structural implications. Organisation s must be decentralized where decision making is increasingly placed in the hands of capable employees. An organization that decentralizes derives decision making responsibility deeper in the organization. It delegates more authority to employees and places a broader range of responsibilities in their hands. This in turn will eliminate layers of management and streamline it structures', reengineer efforts that can produce creativity, innovation and improve employee utilization and commitment which leads to better performance. Through female gender empowerment, there will be equity in sports administration in terms of leadership participation in policy formulation, planning and organizing of sports programmes, conducting researches for sports development, procuring equipment and provision and maintenance of sports infrastructures and facilities, sponsorship and marketing of sports programmes.

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