MOTIVATING THE SCHOOL WORKFORCE FOR EFFECTIVE RECORD KEEPING

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Effective record keeping is a task that is basic to the smooth running of the school system. To accomplish this, however, the workers need to be motivated. We shall consider the issue of motivation under the following headings:

a. What is motivation?

b. Motivation theories - an overview;

c. Motivating your staff via;

(i) recognition and appreciation;

(ii) effective communication.

d. The role of motivation in school management.

a. *What is motivation?*

According to Omisakin (1987), the term motivation has been identified as unquestionable fact of human experience, an indisputable fact of behaviour, and not a mere explanatory fiction. Motivation is closely connected with the reasons for acting in particular ways and it can also be described as a hypothetical cause of behaviour.

Motivation as a concept is used to described forces acting on or within an individual to initiate and direct his behaviour. It is also used to explain the differences in the intensity and the direction of behaviour. There is a popular saying that "there is no smoke without fire". People behave in certain ways at one time and yet at another time they behave in another way. The concept of motivation helps to explain why certain behaviour occurs in one situation but not in others. But the intervening nature of the motivational process makes the study of motivation difficult. The temporary nature of motivation is another obstacle to the study of motivation. Psychologists, however, describe the temporary nature of motivation by pointing out that motivation is a performance variable. As a performance variable, motivation is often contrasted with learning where more permanent changes

in behaviour occur. Though we learn many things not immediately demonstrated in behaviour, however, the actual demonstration of learned behaviour depends upon adequate motivation.

According to Petri (1991) there are certain learning conditions that can result in demotivation of behaviour. This phenomenon has been termed "learned helplessness". Petri goes on to define helplessness as "a psychological state involving a disturbance of motivation, cognitive process, and emotionality as a result of previously experienced uncontrollability on the part of the organism".

Some of the symptoms of learned helplessness include:

a. Passivity, which is a motivational deficit, it is an aspect of learned helplessness which can develop even if the situation is a positive one such as uncontrolled reward. Learned laziness can even result from uncontrolled reward. Seligman (1976) found out that uncontrolled reward makes animals less able to behave in order to receive reinforcement in the future.

b. Retardation of learning which is also referred to as 'associative retardation' can occur when people are exposed to helplessness in their career development and this can bring about what is called 'learning deficit'.

b. *Motivation theories - An overview:*

Basically, the assumption is that people work to satisfy various needs or desires. These needs may even be far less tangible, such as recognition or personal development. The general motivational theory that best defines this assumption is the expentancy theory.

According to Mitchell (1974), expectancy theory states that a person will perform some behaviour if that be-

sired outcome.

While this theory helps us to understand why people seek employment in the first place, it tells us little about why people sometimes cease to work toward organisational goals or even begin to work against them. Maslow (1954), supported by Herzerg (1968) provides more explanation for these areas. Their theories propose that human needs are arranged in hierarchy and that lower level needs (for survival and security) must be satisfied before higher level needs (for interaction with others, recognition and self actualization) before important motivation of behaviour. The reason many people lose interest in their jobs later in life, according to these theories, is that their jobs only offer satisfaction to lower-level needs and when satisfied, these needs no longer motivate behaviour. To tap human potential therefore, these theories contend that opportunities must be provided for people to satisfy their high level needs.

The theories, of Maslow and Herzberg do not explain why some people decide to make their living laying bricks while others become teachers, nor do they explain why two persons doing the same job under the same conditions, may react to the job in different ways.

What the need-hierarchy theories do not state explicitly is that satisfaction of higher level needs tend to be an extremely idiosyncratic affair. What one individual desires in the way of recognition, responsibility or achievement may be quite different from that of another, depending on each person's background, values, cultures, upbringing and prior experiences.

Hull (1943) in his one-drive interpretation of the need-drive incentive theory says that any active drive contributes to a general state of activation that facilitates ongoing activity, whether or not it is relevant to the drive.

This interpretation which has a good

deal of support, depends upon a somewhat limited interpretation of drive, namely, that it is concerned only with the activation or energetic aspect of behaviour and not at all with its direction. When the direction of behaviour enters, then specific drive conditions become important. In the classical form of the drive incentive theory, drive is a push from within leading to energetic action, and the role of the incentive is to relieve the tension created by the drive.

It is recognised however that the drive incentive relationship is more complex than this, and the difficulties encountered in attempting to apply the need-drive-incentive theory to all behaviour have caused a number of theorists to question it.

Moving away from the drive aspect of the need-drive-incentive theory and paying attention instead to the incentive and other conditions of stimulation, it is possible to account for motivated behaviour without recourse to the concept of an energizing drive. This is explained by the cue-stimulus theory of motivation.

Anderson (1951) states that as motivated behaviour is repeated, the drive gradually becomes less serious so that the incentive takes on drive properties. The main idea is that all behaviour is under the control of stimuli. While a theory of this nature is not proposed without good reasons and must therefore be considered as a possible alternative to drive theory, those who refuse to accept it believe that there is some importance in distinguishing between the energizing behaviour and the directing of behaviour. In some cases these two roles can be performed by a single stimulus, while in other cases, the two functions appear separable.

The Affective-arousal theory stresses that the kind of behaviour that organisers seek, tends to have satisfying or pleasurable connotations while the kinds of behaviour that are avoided have annoying or unpleasant connotations. Hence, emotions may enter either as a determinant of motivated behaviours or at least an important aspect of it. This theory takes the position that affective consequences are inherent features of motivated behaviour.

McClelland (1955) proponent of the affective-arousal theory, defines a motive as a strong affective association, characterized by an anticipatory goal, reaction and based on past association of certain cues with pleasure or pain.
Thus the expectation of pleasure based on what has happened in the past, is said to control motivated action.

Cognitive theories of motivation emphasize some sort of understanding or anticipation of events through perception or thought or judgement, as in the estimation of probabilities or in making a choice on the basis of relative value. Motivated goal-seeking behaviour comes to be regulated by cognitions which are based on the past,. modified by the circumstances of the present, and include expectations about the future. The cognitive theories include level of aspiration, which is concerned with individual goal setting, cognitive dissonance which is concerned with the impulses to change associated with the disharmonies that persist after a decision has been made, and expectation - value theories, which treat decision making when both probabilities and costs, or risks are taken into consideration.

Motivating your staff through recognition and appreciation

Everybody loves to be recognised and appreciated in one way or the other. Murray (1938) conducted a lot of the early work on psychological motives. He believed that the motivational processes result from individual needs that can best be observed in natural settings or clinical situations. Needs, according to him can be viewed as "a recurrent concern for a goal state".
There are two components of needs. The first component is directional in nature and includes the object that will satisfy the need while the second component consists of the energy that drives the behaviours and can be thought of as the intensity of the need. The needs for achievement, dominance, autonomy, understanding and nurturant are a few of Murray's manifest needs.
If one consideres any given individual, one is likely to find out that he has several needs that direct and

energise his behaviour. Such needs could be learned and activated by environmental cues and hereditary traits.

The need for achievement which Murray (1938) has defined as the need to accomplish something difficult; to master, manipulate or organise physical objects, human beings or ideas. To do this as rapidly and as independently as possible. To overcome obstacles and attain high standard. To excel one's self. To rival and surpass others. To increase self-regard by the successful exercise of talent".

From this definition, one can see that Murray considered achievement motivation to be a rather complex need that can be fulfilled in different ways by different ways by different persons. The need for achievement, as is evident in the definition involves doing difficult tasks quickly and doing them very well. The tendency and willingness to engage in a particular activity according to Omisakin (1991) is related to the strength of a cognitive expectation that the behaviour would result to a particular consequence the value of which is considered to be important by the person involved.

The Motivation to even approach an achievement oriented situation has been considered to be as a result of three variables:

a. the motive for success
b. the probability of success
c. the incentive value of achieving success.

Positive reinforcement is a form of incentive motivation. Changes in the quality and quantity of reinforcement would affect performance. The principal characteristic of a reinforcer is that it increases the probability of the responses that it follows.
Rewards, whether extrinsic, intrinsic or affective are good reinforcers. For example, when workers are praised for a job well done it would reinforce hard work. Good and beautiful and conducive working environment, adequate equipment to work with, promotion at the appropriate time, increase in workers salaries and fringe benefits, opportunities for further studies and on the job trainings through workshops, conferences and

short term courses are good motivators.

At times situational greetings can be very encouraging. Just saying "Mr. Bayo, this is a job well done". would encourage class teacher who has been busy for hours working on the class broad sheet. "Tolu, that is a very neat record" would motivate the young teacher to work carefully next time.

Social get-together and 'awards' can serve as a positive reinforcement for the teachers to keep the necessary records up to date.

Motivating your staff through effective communication:

Effectiveness, according to Reardon (1987) refers to "the degree to which behaviours help you attain personal and relational goals in a particular situation". Consensus on the effective ways to respond to situations is not always easily achieved; however, situational knowledge can help people to decide on how to act and react. It can also help to decide on what to expect from others.

The individual's level of interpersonal communication competence is dependent on the degree to which his behaviours are appropriate to the situation and help him attain personal and relational goals.

There are certain social skills both cognitive and behavioural which are basic to effective communication. These are:

a. Empathy which involves sensitivity to the thoughts and feelings of the other person. One has to recognise the individual differences, in that no two individuals are exactly the same and as such each person,may have different views of the same situation. To communicate effectively, therefore one should make conscious effort to understand the other person's perspective without necessarily abandoning one's own perspective. Empathy can be described as a means of visiting the minds of others to obtain an otherwise unavoidable information since most people are often unwilling to express their true feelings for fear of embarrassment or rejection.
b. Sensitivity to relationship stand-

cation. The type of relationship affects what one expects from others. The way one would address a superior officer would certainly be different from the way one would communicate with a subordinate.
c. Situational knowledge is an important key to the process of understanding why the other person is behaving the way he is behaving. Competent communicators know that there is a time and a place for everything. For example, it would be inappropriate for a superior officer to ask his subordinate who is about to get married to come to work on the eve of his wedding day, or to ask for the cumulative record files of a pregnant student from the school counsellor during the morning assembly. Cody and McLaughlin (1985) are of the opinion that people use their impression of situations to understand the behaviours of others and as an aid to help them in their own choices of behaviours.

Four uses of situational knowledge according to them are:
1. People use knowledge of situations as a framework for evaluating others.
2. People process information, as a situations unfold, on the basis of their purposes for being in the situation.
3. People elect to enter into, avoid, or change a situation according to their self-in-situation scenarios, self-knowledge or perceived competences.
4. People use situational knowledge as a guideline for knowing how to behave.

Behavioural skills:

When we talk of behavioural skills, we are referring to the physical behaviour during interaction and because thoughts cannot be separated from action, behavioural skills are not totally different from cognitive skills. Some of the behavioural skills for effective communication include:

a. Interaction involvement
b. behavioural flexibility (not being too rigid)
c. listening skill
d. social style
e. managing communication anxiety.

a. Interaction involvement:
Concerns the extent to which one par-

munication. This is based on three factors (i) responsiveness (ii) perceptiveness (iii) attentiveness.

b. Behavioural flexibility:
Refers to the extent to which one is able to make use of alternative behaviours to achieve the same goal. Conversational deviance may occur but it is left for you to choose your reaction.

c. Listening skills:
involves the ability to stop talking and hear the other person speak. Good listeners are not easy to find. Olusakin (1996) has restated the point that one should cultivate the habit of listening relevantly, in order to adjust one's communication to the needs of the other person.

d. Social style:
Refers to the manner of communication rather than the content. For example 'dominance' is a form of social style which tends towards 'might is right'. Even though 'might is right' it should be communicated in a friendly manner to ease the tension.

e. Managing communication anxiety:
Some people are afraid to communicate and this affects their mode of expression negatively. Such people should be reassured of good understanding of their situation.

The role of motivation in school management:

Akubue (1991) has described management as a method where a group of people at the highest level of organisation plan, organise, communicate, co-ordinate, control and direct the actions and activities of people who work for the organisation toward the achievement of organisational objectives. It is therefore goal-oriented. The role of management has been described as a process of designing and maintaining a conducive atmosphere for members of an organisation who are working together towards the realization of set objectives; as planning, organising, staffing, leading and controlling in order to reach the end; and as utilizing the physical and human resources through co-operative efforts.

Management is accomplished by performing the functions of planning, organising, staff-directing and controlling at different levels and degrees

nel in any given organisation. The school principal and the vice principal(s) /deputy principal as the case may be are the authority figure within the school system.

Motivation, when appropriately utilised, in school management would help to achieve the desired objectives.

Even extra work could be engineered regarding the objectives which are yet to be achieved when the members of staff are motivated to do so. The records would be properly kept, there would be job satisfaction, harmony and a marked reduction in the level of frustration in a school where the people are motivated and organised.

APPENDIX

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS SELF ACTUALIZATION

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ESTEEM
NEEDS

BELONGINGNESS
NEEDS

SAFETY
NEEDS

PHYSIOLOGICAL
NEEDS.
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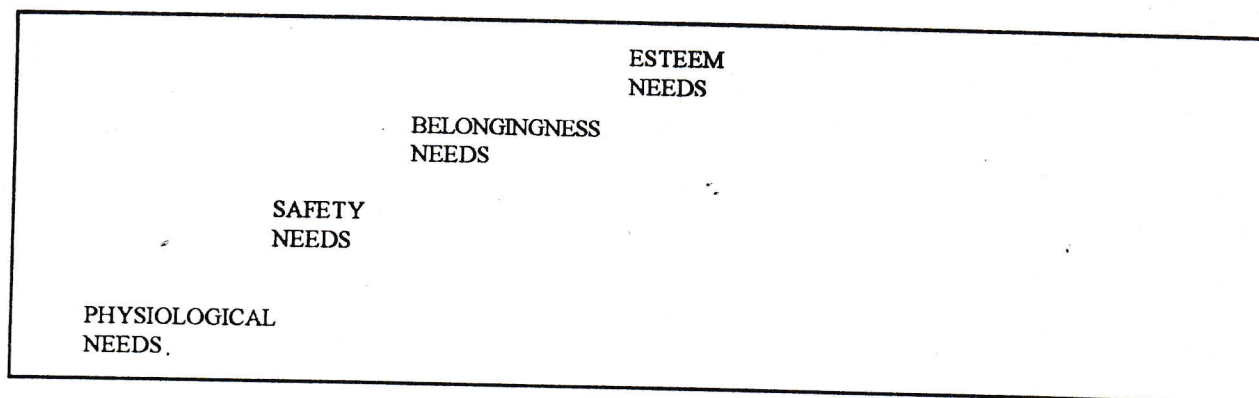
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EFFECTIVE GUIDANCE SERVICE