Innovative Management Behaviour versus Enemies of Innovation in the Nigerian Public Service

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Abstract

Innovative Management Behaviour, we aver, is a sure strategy for ensuring survival and growth of organizations particularly in a turbulent environment. Whereas efforts are geared through Research and Development as well as training in whatever form to acquire such innovative skills and ideas, application of such skills and ideas are sometimes resisted vehemently by those who we christened "enemies of innovation". And these abound in the Nigerian Public Service. As a consequence, the innovator is frustrated and tends to resort to either the status quo ante/or, in extreme cases, an exit option. Either way, the action leads to loss of productivity to the organization. This may have accounted for non-improvement of the Nigerian Public Service despite the several reform exercises it had undergone. To ameliorate the situation, this article canvases an exposure of other colleagues particularly superior officers to similar experiences as their innovative subordinates. In addition, the article suggests that the innovator could adopt a strategy of patience, perseverance, persuasion and tact to convince his resistant superior officers as this may enhance pushing through the innovative ideas for applicability, thereby ensuring systems improvement particularly in the Nigerian Public Service.

Keywords: Innovation, Innovative Behaviour, Resistance to Innovation, Public Service

1.0 Introduction

Perhaps, a convenient point to commence our discourse in this Article, is to recall the prediction of Karl Max in his **Communist Manifesto** centuries ago that, a time will come when "Dogs will eat Dogs" and "Companies will swallow Companies". If we examine this prediction, against the backdrop of what is happening in Nigeria today, particularly in the Banking industry following the various policies being rolled out by the Central Bank of Nigeria, the high point of which was the "Recapitalization Policy", it begins to dawn on us that survival instinct is the fundamental disposition of every organisation as that prediction of Karl Max continues to hunt organizations all over the world.

It must be emphasised and re-emphasised that challenges posed by Socio-economic pressures impose corresponding consequences on organizations such that expertise is required for managerial competence to enable organizations cope with the demands of turbulently dynamic ecology of work. There is a pressing need for the managers that are sensitive to challenges which require sharp managerial analysis of situation and taking of appropriate actions. Routine characteristics of a rather stable climate cannot serve. The situation today is stiff competition among organizations for the much needed clients that can only be attracted by the quality of goods and services produced by such organizations. And such tendencies are the only guarantee of the survival and growth of organizations. Within this turbulent environment therefore, only cutting-edge organizations can remain afloat. And one sure way of ensuring that is, through acquisition of innovative skills by their managers. This, thus, informed the adoption of this article as a veritable contribution to knowledge.

Against this backdrop, the article is arranged as follows:

- Conceptual clarifications in which certain interrelated concepts are identified and explained. The purpose being to identify significant parameters for subsequent analysis particularly, the Nigerian situation.

- Innovation in Developing Countries which reveals the incapacity of Developing Countries to innovate as compared to their developed countries counterpart.
- Attitude to innovation which exposes reactions to innovation and change. This equally exposes the interrelationship between the perceived survival and growth of an individual employee and those of his organization on the one hand, and the priority placed by the employee on the other hand.
- The Nigerian experience with regards to attitudes towards innovation and application of innovative ideas, particularly in the public service.

2.0 Conceptual Clarifications

As earlier stated, the inevitability of innovation is informed by a dire need for organizations to survive and grow. As a concept, it entails the introduction of new ideas that would enhance achievement of organizational purposes thereby ensuring growth in the organization. This perception appears to agree with the definition provided by the New Oxford Dictionary of English, (1998:942), thus: "Making changes to something established by introducing something new". The foregoing definition is provided on the assumption that to innovate, we must build on the existing practices. The definition is further modified by Sullivan (2008:5) as stated hereunder;

Innovation is the process of making changes, large and small, radical and increment, to products, processes, and services that result in the introduction of something new for the organization that adds value to customers and contributes to the knowledge store of the organization.

He further posits that applying innovation entails adding some key words to the foregoing definition thus;

Applying innovation is the application of practical tools and techniques that make changes, …….

The views expressed by Drucker (1988) is equally instructive. According to him, innovation can be viewed as a purposeful and focused effort to achieve change in an organization's economic or social potential.

There are however some other interrelated concepts that are sometimes either perceived as synonyms of innovation or share the same purpose. For purposes of clarity, we shall attempt the definition of such concepts and establish relationships of each of them to the concept of innovation. One of such concepts is **invention**. This term is often used in the context of innovation. Again, we pay a visit to the New Oxford Dictionary of English (1988:960) and it has this to say.

Invention is creating something new that has never existed before. This definition, although relates to innovation in that something new is brought about but differs from the definition of innovation as provided by the same dictionary. Whereas the dictionary attempts to see innovation as introducing something new on an existing or established procedure, invention on the other hand, appears more radical in that what is being introduced has never existed before. Some authorities thus, classify invention as radical and innovation as incremental. Radical in that it starts on a new slate by introducing something new that has never existed before. Incremental in that something new is being introduced through modifying an existing technique or technology.

Another interrelated concept is **creativity** which Rosenfeld and Serves (1991) regard as a key building block of innovation. It is a mental process that results in the production of novel ideas and concepts that are appropriate, useful and actionable. Accordingly, Wallas, (1926) identifies four distinct phases in creativity viz: preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. To this is added by Kao, (1989), structuring and finalizing the idea in a form that can be readily communicated to others. Creativity entails a level of originality and novelty that is essential for innovation. Although it is a fundamental part of innovation, both terms are not synonymous. Innovation encourages the further processing of the output of the creative process (the idea) so as to allow the exploitation of its potential value through development. Creativity brings about new ideas which correspondingly lead to the introduction of new things. To that extent, both terms are interrelated.

In terms of ***Change,*** we view innovation as resulting in change but we cannot equate it to change. For change to qualify as innovation, it must have some degree of desirability and intentionality (West and Farr, 1990:11).

However, we do know that change can have a positive or negative impact on the organization, whereas innovation, by definition, must be positive because, it must add value to the customer. We can therefore posit that all innovations can be viewed as changes, but not all changes can be viewed as innovations.

Wither, Initiative? Recently developed proactivity concept such as personal initiative and voice behaviour may be crucial for the translation of creative ideas into successfully implemented innovations (Frese, 2000).

Personal initiative (Frese and Fay, 2001:133) comprises a range of self-started, proactive and persistent behaviours such as going substantially beyond the prescribed contents of one's job (qualitative initiative), spending additional energy at work (quantitative initiative),and demonstrating perseverance in the face of obstacles (overcoming barriers). To this extent, initiative may predict innovation. In a similar term, initiative may moderate the relationship between creativity and innovation such that ideas are more likely to be implemented if initiative is high (Frese 2000:424). Initiative may equally modify relations between innovation and outcomes (Bae and Frese, 2003:49).

What of **Proactivity?** - Proaction involves creating change, not merely anticipating it. It does not just involve the important attributes of flexibility on the adaptability towards an uncertain future. To be proactive is to take the initiative in improving business. At the other extreme, behaviour that is not proactive includes sitting-back, letting others try to make things happen, and passively hoping that externally imposed change "Works out okay" (Bateman and Crant, 1999:63). Proactive behaviour generally has a positive influence on how people are perceived by others. Proactivity entails forward looking, constantly peering into the future to identify opportunities and threats and providing solutions to anticipated problems.

Having established the common denominator among the identified interrelated concepts of innovation and drawing the thin lines of demarcation among them, our working definition has finally been established. We shall therefore examine in the next section of this article, the theories of innovation.

3.0 Innovation and Developing Countries

Although varying in their stages of development, developing countries have several characteristics in common when considering innovation. Mashelkar (2005:16) classifies countries according to their individual innovative capability i.e Science and technology base and economic strength. He presents this in a schematic form as shown below:

Table 1: Classification Of Developing Countries

		Innovative Capability	
		Low	High
Economic Strength			
	High	ii	i
	Low	iii	iv

Source: Mashelkar, 2005

In quadrant 1, Countries have substantial economic strength and innovative capabilities. Most industrialized countries fall into this quadrant. Quadrant II includes those countries that have limited innovative capacity but are economically sound (e.g. Middle –Eastern countries). Quadrant III, comprises of low income countries with limited innovative capacity and economic development (least-developed countries). In quadrant IV are those countries that, despite thier lack of economic strength, show advances in their science and technological base (e.g. Southeast Asia, India, Brazil, China, Mexico). This categorization is useful in showing why directly transposing existing innovation theories to Developing Countries might not yield the desired results.

Despite these differences, a certain consensus exists on the main features of the economic environment in Developing Countries. The "market-pull" effect is limited in Developing Countries, given the small purchasing power of the inhabitants. The institutional environment is characterized by the presence of high transaction costs, which often include corruption (Collier, 1998:38). These affect the functioning of the market and the transmissions of the signals- e.g. demand for certain goods-to the innovators.

Information failures are also predominant, that hinder the discovery of the economic cost structure of new process and product, hence slowing down adoption. Similarly, coordination failures exist, where the simultaneous, large-scale investments needed for projects to be profitable (or feasible) do not take place (Rodik, 2004).

Given their relatively lower innovative capacities, Developing Countries are generally dependent on industrialized countries for the provision of new technology and knowledge. However, they are often rich in traditional knowledge (Aubert 2005). Traditional knowledge is defined as a traditional technical know-how or ecological, scientific or medical knowledge, encompassing the content or substance of traditional know-how, innovation, information practices, skills and learning of systems such as traditional agricultural environment or medicinal knowledge (Wipo, 2005).

These characteristics, thus justify the need to modify innovation model to accommodate the ecology of developing countries.

4.0enemies of Innovation

Innovative ideas, acquired through invention, innovation or other sources such as research and development as well as training in whatever form, are supposed to improve the performances and fortunes of an organisation when adequately applied. However, an inevitable consequence of such application is somewhat adjustments and changes that accompany such application. The fact is that ***change*** is a consequence of ***innovation.*** And change, it is accepted, is the only constant thing in the world. Yet, there is that tendency to resist change, again due to the perceived consequences of change to the individual employee or his group or unit. People tend to clamour for dynamism, via dynamic society, dynamic organisation, and dynamic leadership e.t.c. Unfortunately, many people fail to realize that it is impossible to separate change from dynamism. Much as they would wish that the society is dynamic, they would want to resist the change that accompanies it. A static society is non-existent unfortunately. Any organization that is desirous of survival and growth therefore, must align itself with the dynamism of the environment in which it is situated. According to Alvin Toffler, in his book, "Future Shock":

"What is foremost in our lives today is the roaring current of change, a current so powerful today that it overturns institutions, shifts our value and shrivels our roots. Change is the proves by which the future invades our lives and it is important to look at it closely, not merely from the grand perspectives of history, but also from the vantage point of living and breathing individuals who experience it. The acceleration of change in our time is itself an elemental force. This accelerative thrust has personal and psychological, as well as sociological consequences".

Toffler's analysis of change and its implications thereof applies, in all its ramifications, to our own society. Change comes in various forms. But, perhaps, the most consistent form in which it comes and which is most relevant to the subject of our discourse, is through innovative ideas. And as we had severally pointed out, one of the most prominent sources of innovative ideas among employees is through seminars, conferences and other training courses at which such ideas are acquired.

It must be emphasized and re-emphasized that introducing and accepting change is perhaps one of most difficult challenges a manager faces especially in our own setting. This is because, people generally prefer the "comfort of the present to the uncertainties of the future". Machieveli, the renowned Italian Philosopher and Political Tactician captured the picture more vividly when he stated many years ago, that "the innovator has enemies in two camps: those who are likely to benefit from the innovation but do not know the benefit; and those who profit by the present arrangement but would resist change at all cost because change is likely to rob them off their vantage position even though the proposed change may enhance their vantage position in the final analysis". In every organisation either in the private or public sector, are these two groups of people. These, we referred to elsewhere as "reactive bosses, apathetic peers and uncompromising subordinates," who are always out to frustrate the introduction of change in any socio-technical system (Maduabum, 1999:252). Leadership as a factor appears to be the most influencing in this direction, hence we shall spend some time examining it.

Leadership Resistance to Introduction of Innovative Ideas

The critical question raised in this section is, to what extent do supervisors encourage their subordinates to be innovative, to apply new skills and ideas acquired from whatever source to the job or tasks at hand? We contend that individual and corporate performance is likely to be high where such support is freely and adequately given. The converse is also likely where it is denied.

Yet, evidences abound regarding the denial of this vital support by organisational superiors. One such evidence is provided by Taylor (1972: 1-22) who highlighted twelve strategies used by supervisors to stifle innovative ideas. These, according to him are:

i. By virtue of his position, the supervisor should see himself as being more intelligent than any of his subordinates, therefore, whatever innovative ideas that should be implemented must come from him and not his less intelligent subordinates.
ii. He should normally ignore scientific researches and results on creative talent that do not arrogate innovative wisdom to only supervisors.
iii. The supervisor should teach his subordinates only those areas of their jobs that could be performed strictly in accordance with the provisions of the rules and regulations.
iv. Since his own innovative ideas, as a subordinate were not accepted, the supervisor should not accept those that would emanate from his own subordinates.
v. Wherever new ideas are proposed, the supervisor should promptly react negatively to such ideas.
vi. He should normally oppose ideas that are not clear to him.
vii. He should adhere strictly to the rules because creative ideas that do not conform with the rules might spell trouble.
viii. The supervisor should develop the attitude of rejecting ideas from those who appear creative.
ix. He should strive to maintain the status quo because it is better than trying out new ideas.
x. He should also ensure that creativities within his control are killed.
xi. The supervisor should build into the organisation those designs or mechanisms that would kill creativity.
xii. He should jealously guard and keep prerogative for creativity and innovation to himself alone.

Such heads, Taylor emphasises, are killers of new ideas and innovation. Another evidence is from Megginson and Pedler (1976: 262-274) who carried out a follow-up evaluation of the effects of training and encountered such replies as:

"it was great on the course, but when I got back and tried it, it didn't work and I had to start all over again." I am sure what you say is right, but we couldn't do it here, neither my boss nor the men would have it".

These replies are similar to those reported by Mmobuosi (1983:37) from an interview with six newly trained personnel in the Federal Civil Service of Nigeria. Viz:

1. "They say I am revolutionary. They want gradual process. I can't force them. I can only recommend".
2. "I consulted a colleague …. and he replied, just do your work as they want and you are O.k."
3. "My colleague who was an expert in the field of the ideas I brought would not act because he said he was unfairly treated."
4. "I felt like asking (of what was being done with my recommendations) but I don't want to be seen to be applying pressure on him … There is a limit to which one can go."
5. "I wish I had tried to make people see how we could work better. Not that I would have succeeded but may be I would have."
6. "Well, when I returned to my organization, I did write a report …. Frankly speaking, I cannot tell you, I have no idea whether the report was useful. Nobody asked my opinion …. Well I did not think it was wise for me to pressurize him or to press him or to teach him what to do about my report… I kept quiet."

Leadership resistance to innovative ideas explicated in the foregoing and others must have led Boettinger (1971) to affirm that the trained personnel who applies learning to achieve change is himself a leader, so also the superior and/or others who help to push the idea into acceptance and implementation after due consideration and assessment of their practicality and benefit. For Lynton, and Pareek (1978: 77) obstructing the application of acquired skills and attitudes is not intrinsically different from resistance to innovations elsewhere. The problem, they contend, is real but can be successfully managed through a three step strategy which focuses on colleagues rather than superiors. These are first, that the returning trainee should stimulate and ensure sufficient interest on the part of his colleagues: second, he should help his colleagues evaluate the proposed change as an idea: and finally, he in collaboration with them should try one change out in practice. In this plan, whatever success the returning trainee achieves in an attempt to introduce new ideas is attributable, in large measure, to the co-operation he received from his colleagues.

It is noteworthy that this plan which places more weight on the influence or support of colleagues (i.e. peers) rather than superior officers found support with Kent (1982: 17) who argued that the boss might not influence the application of acquired skills and ideas as much as would peers and subordinates. Citing Schien (1965: 38) and Robinson and Robinson (1978: 49) who place greater emphasis on an unsupportive organizational climate which they claim can eradicate new behavior. However, in as much as Kent agrees that unsupportive organizational climate would inhibit the application of acquired skills and knowledge or ideas, he feels that too much emphasis is being placed on the boss as a factor which should not be the case.

About that, Jago (1982: 21) feels differently, at least on the basis of the result of his study of 22 trainees selected from 3 successive secretaries in personnel management courses. From that study, he concluded that the support and approval of bosses was essential for the effective implementation of ideas following training and that no lasting change of attitude is likely to be experienced in an unsupportive atmosphere. His point of view is replicated in other works: Weiss et al (1980: 17), Georgenson (1982: 78), Hoffman (1983), Stiefel (1974), Mmobuosi (1983) and Maduabum (1985). However, Kelly (1982) goes further to posit that the support of the superior officer is more if such a superior officer had attended a similar programme.

The Use of Bureaucracy as a tool by the Enemies of Innovation

The much expected support from superior might not be forthcoming. This position seems to be in place having regards to extent literature on this subject, particularly that in organization theory which dealt with bureaucracy. In it, Hicks and Gullet (1976: 144-152)X-rayed the ills of bureaucracy as they affect formal organisations as possible causes of inability of superior officers to appreciate contributions made by their subordinates especially where such contributions are seen as innovative and hence do not strictly accord with role-expectations of the subordinates. According to the authors, “Formal organizations may have built into their designs the seeds for many non-productive, dysfunctional, energy-consuming activities at all levels which tend to result in organizational rigidity, organizational defensiveness, and intergroup conflict, as well as less effective decision making process”.

Rigidity as highlighted by Hicks and Gullet appears to be one of the most dysfunctional elements of bureaucracy. Here, it is seen as non-adaptive and thus is in conflict with the basic adaptability laws of nature. It leads to strict adherence to regulations which in the author’s words produces ‘timidity’, conservatism’ and ‘technicism’. In an earlier work, Downs (1967: 100) explained that superior officers resort to being rigid in a bureaucratic set up for fear of loosing power, prestige and their income. This is because, they occupy positions in which decision making is inevitable because decisions can prove to be wrong, unpopular or both. Superior officers in such bureaucratic organizations therefore, tend to be avoiders who try to escape responsibility for making decisions. However, since it is inevitable that they make decisions, they resort to rigidly applying the rules of procedure promulgated by higher authorities. Many superior officers generally eschew even the slightest deviation from written procedures unless they obtain approval from higher authority. This attitude of rigidity and its attendant problems which include delays in obtaining official rulings for unusual situations leads to stereotyped conditions which Downs refers to as ‘bureaucratic mentality’ and ‘red tape’.

The rigidity in roles occasioned by strict adherence to rules and regulations often creates a situation where officers perform their jobs without any emotional attachment, particularly, where subordinates come up with official problems. This is another ill of bureaucratic organizations highlighted by Hicks and Gullet and referred to by Thompson (1975: 3-23) as ‘impersonality’ in the performance of official responsibilities. In fact, Thompson in his earlier book –"Modern Organisation (1961:152-177), referred to the ills of the bureaucratic organisation as 'Bureau pathology', a disease of bureaucracy which he further suggested are those dysfunctions which are produced by "bureaupathic behavlour'. However, the central theme of his later books "Without Sympathy or Enthusiasm”, is the impersonality of modern complex bureaucratic organisation and the search for objectivity at the administrative level in the process of decision making. In that book, Thompson explained the cause of a personal promise made to an individual which was not fulfilled. The question that emerged there from is whether institutions could make and honour personal promises made on their behalf by the employees. This stimulated the most widely distributed and deeply held sociological theory of bureaucracy, the notion that bureaucrats invent the means of administration with more value than they do the ends - the "inversion of means and ends" or the "displacement of goals". Administration has therefore been defined as the triumph of technique over purpose or objectives.

Here, therefore, is the critical dilemma of an individual who has a personal problem to be resolved by bureaucratic organisation, yet the organisation is lost in a complex maze of rules and regulations that prescribe processes and procedures for arriving at a particular decision, albeit, without sympathy or empathy, just because the bureaucratic organisationis constantly striving to maintain objectivity and impersonality in its quest for rational decision making.

In summing up the above arguments, Hicks and Gullet posit that bureaucracy has many unintended consequences or dysfunctions. They further describe bureaucracy as a "machine model" that is non adaptive and impersonal. Its rigidity, they opin, leads to its failure to account adequately for many important human characteristics. They contend that it offers numerous opportunities for members to displace objectives and to work for personal or subunit goals which may not contribute adequately to the achievement of overall objectives of the organization. In their views innovative ideas are seen by bureaucratic officials as disturbances to an otherwise ordered situation. Such ideas are therefore never seen as a necessary life - giving elements to an evolving, adaptive organization.

5.0. The Nigerian Experience

The dysfunctional characteristics of bureaucracy vis-a-vis implementation of innovative ideas clearly manifest in the Nigerian situation. The Public Service Review Commission thus, observed that the Nigerian Public services are' characterised by a spirit of animosity and jealousy rather than of cooperation and team work. This spirit of animosity, it further observed, exists between peers aswell as between superiors and subordinates. In fact, the animosity and jealousy become very high when a subordinate is perceived by his superior officer as being innovative and may supersede him. In order to forestall the implementation of innovative ideas that emanate from subordinates the superior officers resort to strict adherence to rules and regulations which they often argue are at variance with the innovation being contemplated. In obvious reference to this state of affairs, the Commission in paragraph 40 of its main report noted that:

"Our examination of the Ministry reveals that the majority of their staff take a narrow view of their responsibilities. There is a tendency to concentrate on rules, regulations and procedures. These rules are not sufficiently positive, nor are they devised to meet the new task and the development needs of government. They reflect more concern over rights and perquisites than obligations; more concern over security and job protection than innovation, creativeness and productivity. Personnel officers act as watchdogs of the rules and their application."

In a similar vein, Balogun (1983:8-9) identified resistance to innovative ideas as one of the factors that differentiate the Nigeria public sector from its private sector counterpart in situations where public administration is linked with the public sector while business administration is linked with the private sector. According to the author, the tendency to resist innovative ideas is higher in public management. It ought to have been 'killed' with the transformations which public sector management in Nigeria had undergone over time. Other factors identified by Balogun which are inextricably Iinked with 'resistance to innovative ideas are survival, maintenance of status quo, risk avoidance, mistake avoidance, self - protecting, fear of trouble, fear of the unknown, retroactive (fire fighting).

Another evidence of stifling innovative ideas particularly where such ideas emanate from subordinates in the Nigerian Public Service is provided by the Study Team on the Structure. Staffing, and' Operation's of the Nigerian Federal Civil Service headed by Professor 'Dotun Philips. In its report, the study Team observed that the decision-making process and implementation mechanics of the Civil Service have been highly criticized by both Government and Public as bureaucratic, slow, rigid, secretive and not development - oriented. A major cause of the aforementioned problems, according to the report, is the inability of senior officers to take decisions unless a clearance is obtained from the top - most senior officer in whom all authority is vested. The Study Team feels that the tendency is for trivial issues to go through a long chain of officers before a decision is taken. This situation, it continued, leads not only to time - wasting, but also kills the initiative and discretion of intermediate officers leading to frustration and lack of confidence in the ability of officers to take decisions. In such circumstance therefore innovative ideas emanating from subordinates are not accepted by a superior officer who feels that he is incompetent to implement such ideas and similarly feels reluctant to pass such suggestions to the point where a decision could be taken. Even when such suggestions are so passed, they never see 'the light of the day' because, they are 'killed' somewhere along the line.

The Study Team therefore suggested a short - circuiting of this long process of decision taking by limiting policy formulation to the Management and Directorate levels (i.e. Grade levels 13 to 17). This, it is hoped, would break what amounts to 'bureaucratic bottlenecks' in decision taking and encourage introduction of innovative ideas in the service.

The point of emphasis from the foregoing is that New Ideas Management principles are not applied in the public service probably because they infringe upon rules and regulations. This has thus led to the inability of superior officers to appreciate the contributions made by their innovative subordinates. This, however, has certain implications: The enthusiasm of the innovative subordinates will be dampened: the innovative subordinates are likely to withdraw, thus leading to loss of productivity in the service; and the innovators can be frustrated out of the service. What was highlighted in the literature was further confirmed by a recent study. The revelation from the study is that superior officers actually resist innovative ideas being suggested by their subordinates. The following seem to be reasons for such resistance: The fear that the innovative subordinates might supersede them; Envy at personal level; and Fear of infringing on the rules and regulations etc.

Resistance to innovative management practices, when and where initiated by subordinates tends to stimulate two types of adjustment behavior in the latter group. The usual adjustment strategy is for the innovative subordinate to reverse to the status quo ante' either on a permanent basis or temporarily until he has status and authority enough to install his ideas. A more unusual strategy which Fleishmen et al (1955), Sykes (1962: 227-243) and Bobbitt et al (1978:302) had, however, observed is recourse to the exit option whereby the stalled staffer withdraws his membership of and services to the organization. Sykes in his study of 1962 had reported that 19 of the 97 participants in a training programme he studied left their organizations within one year in reaction to resistances to innovations they had initiated or were attempting to initiate. Where disengagement occurs, the loss to ogranisation is higher and irreconcilable as the probability of future gains from the skills being lost reduces to zero level.

6.0 Treatment Variables

The study earlier referred to further revealed that superior officers cooperate with their trained subordinates in introducing and implementing innovative ideas acquired from training only if such superior officers were similarly exposed. This phenomenon could be explained using the Linking – pin model adopted by Stiefel (1974: 13) from an earlier work by Likert (1961). Stiefel thus uses this model to advocate a strategy that would ensure the successful application of knowledge, skills, attitudes and innovative ideas acquired from training courses back on the job. The strategy he advocated can take either of two forms: (i) for intact work group members to be trained together: or (ii) for linking – pin group members to attend the same course. He contends that where these are done, the likely result is a commonality of attitudes and behaviors. Thus, everyone will cooperate with an attempt to implement ideas emanating from such exposure, since they have similar experience.

The superior officer may even use his leadership position to ensure that other organizational members particularly in his department similarly support and cooperate with their peers in implementing the innovative ideas.

In this circumstance, a more plausible conclusion with respect to leadership support for innovation in the Nigerian public service is that such support is more likely to be given where the superior had similar exposure. The more widespread such superiors are in the Service, the greater is the chance for new ideas in Management practices to be accepted and allowed to take root.

One way of ensuring systems improvement at a more specific level seems to be (i) the expansion of opportunities so that more staffers can benefit, and (ii] the creation of opportunities for the innovator to rise to leadership positions as conditions for diffusing and sustaining innovative management behavior in the Nigerian Public Service.

This article equally posits that the challenge is not to be frustrated by the resistance to the introduction of innovative ideas either by superior officers, or subordinates. To gain the much needed leadership support therefore, patience, perseverance, persuasion and above all, tact are the key words in introducing innovative ideas. Tactfulness and persuasive tendencies in convincing superior officers about the relevance and positive contributions of innovative ideas have been found to work for many. On the contrary, assuming an egoistic posture in marketing ideas to superior officers jeopardizes the acceptance of such ideas, no matter how noble or useful to the organization.

In view of this, it is desirable to capitalize on the 'Factor of Criticality' in bringing about innovation in organizations. What this means is that, instead of attempting to effect innovation in the entire organization, one could look for critical areas or leverage points within the system where the positive effect of innovation can easily be felt. This could be in one's section. division or department. The positive result may be all that one needs to convince his reactive bosses, apathetic pears and uncompromising subordinates.

7.0. Conclusion

Innovation, innovative ideas and applicability of such ideas, we aver, guarantee survival and growth of organizations. Thus perceived, organizations that are desirous of such growth, invest heavily on Research and Development as well as training activities which have been identified as fast sources of innovation and acquisition of innovative ideas. In this article however, we undertook an exploration of the subject of discourse for purposes of identifying significant parameters for analysis of the situation in organizations today. Our exploration reveals that whereas innovation and application of innovative ideas as theorized and modeled are more adaptable in industrialized countries than in developing countries because, such models fail to take into cognizance the socio-economic and technological environment in which developing countries are situated.

The article equally explored studies including that carried out by this author to identify the norms at an individual level within the organization at a more micro level. Findings from such studies reveal that sources of innovative ideas at that level are Research and Development activities and more commonly, exposure to training activities in whatever form. And that the belief is that acquisition of such innovative ideas is the panacea for systems improvement. However, it appears that innovators meet with stiff resistance particularly from superior officers who were not similarly opportuned. To ameliorate such a situation therefore, this article canvasses leadership support for the introduction of innovative ideas by ensuring that (i) superior officers are similarly exposed to sources of acquisition of innovative ideas as their subordinates; and (ii) creating opportunities for innovators to occupy leadership positions. In such circumstances, they would assist in diffusing such ideas down the line.

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