

Leadership and organizational goal attainment: A case study of the church of Christ in Nigeria (Cocin), Jos.

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Keywords

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Abstract

This study was undertaken in September, 2012 on the subject of leadership and organizational goal attainment in COCIN. Of the 85 questionnaires distributed to a sample of middle level leaders and workers of the church, 71 were duly filled and returned and 14 were not returned. Some 14 top leaders of COCIN were interviewed particularly on the role and styles of leadership in relation to goal attainment. Varied responses were received, analysed and discussed. Majority responses (37.50%) each of top leaders believed levels of leadership is to enhance division of labour and goal attainment. Majority (47.83%) knew COCIN's goal and another majority 85.71% believed it is very important for COCIN to attain its goal and 36.36% each believed it was the responsibility of leaders, workers and everyone to accomplish the goal while 27.27% believed it was purely the responsibility of leaders. For middle leaders, 45.90% believed leadership motivation would inspire work performance, 40.98% said it was effective supervision/training, and 13.11% said it was good interpersonal relationship while for top leaders, 43.48% believed it was teaching that enhances goal attainment, 21.74% each said it was being exemplary and communicating effectively. Although majority (76.92%) said it was participatory leadership style that gets results from subordinates, another majority 45.83% were autocratic while only 41.67% used participative style. Motivation (52.48%), proper placement of staff (24.75%) and proper recruitment (22.77%) were identified as ways leaders should imbibe to enhance goal attainment in COCIN despite the challenges faced by the leadership. It was therefore found that organizational goal attainment largely depends on leadership.

Introduction

Leadership has been identified as a key critical factor to organizational success and goal attainment. Gannon (1979) underscored this when he said 'leadership is so important to group accomplishment that mankind has been concerned about it since the beginning of recorded history'. He said without leadership, an organization would just be a muddle (confused) of men and machines. Gray (1984) concurs with Gannon (1979) when he also said that many managers believe leadership is the major determinant of productivity and organizational success. Hence Maxwell's (1998) confirms this by his definition of leadership as 'influence - nothing more and nothing less!' He goes on to say that everything rises and falls with leadership. It therefore follows that since an organization is a group of people or entity with predetermined objectives (Nwachukwu, 1988) to be achieved, that without effective leadership, it will be difficult for it to function effectively (Gannon, 1979).

Therefore this study is aimed at investigating the role of leadership in goal attainment in organizations using the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) as a case study. It is expected that the outcome of the investigation would help and also challenge the management of the church into seeing the need for pragmatic manpower planning and leadership development that would promote goal attainment and also serve as a panacea for other organizations who are seeking to attain their set goals and objectives.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Study Site

This study was conducted in the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) with headquarters in Jos. The headquarters of COCIN coordinates the entire activities of all its regions, departments, chaplaincies and mission zones within and outside Nigeria. COCIN headquarters is situated at No. 5 Noad Avenue, Behind Central Bank of Nigeria, Jos. Jos is the capital of Plateau State. Plateau State is located in the Middle Belt Zone. It is within latitude $80^{\circ} 22'$ East and 100° North and longitude $80^{\circ} 32'$ and $100^{\circ} 38'$ East and has a total land area of 26,899 square kilometres. Plateau State is bordered in the North West by Kaduna State, in the North East by Bauchi State, in the South West by Nassarawa State and in the South East by Taraba State (Butswat et al, 2011). The 2006 census figures show that about 3,178,712 million people live in Plateau State (Wikipedia, 2007). Figure 1 shows the map of Nigeria, location of Plateau State and Jos the state capital where the headquarters of COCIN which is the area of this study is situated while figure 2 shows the organizational chart of COCIN with its leadership structure.



Fig. 1 Map of Nigeria, showing the COCIN Headquarters.

2.2 Sample size

Eighty Five (85) structured (open and close ended) questionnaires were formulated and administered among Regional Chairmen and Secretaries, Heads of Departments, Heads of Units, Pastors, Staff and Elders of the COCIN. Of the 85 questionnaires distributed, only 71 which is about 84% were duly filled and returned. Structured interview questions were also

formulated and 14 top leaders of the church including 4 top officers (President, Vice, General Secretary and Deputy) and 10 Provincial Church Council Chairmen were interviewed.

2.3 Data analysis

Data collected was analysed; simple frequencies and percentages were used to describe the data and presented in tables as described by Adamu and Johnson (2001).

3.0 Results and discussion

Table 1: Distribution of interviewees according to reasons for levels of leadership in the COCIN constitution

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Division of Labour/ biblical	9	37.50
B	Communication purposes	6	25.00
C	Easier goal attainment	9	37.50
	Total	24	100

Source: Interviews 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to reasons for levels of leadership in the COCIN constitution is presented on Table 1.

Table 1 shows that 37.50% each of interviewees said that COCIN needs different levels of leadership for the purpose of division of labour which is biblical and to make goal attainment easier, while 25% said it was for communication purposes. All these reasons are important for a big and growing church like COCIN. Gannon (1979) said division of labor is a basic principle of classical theory which refers to dividing all work to be done. He cited Littener (1962) as saying that the size and complexity of task and desire for overall efficient operation are pre-conditions for division of labour. Scholars like Kreitner (2002) opined that effective communication is the

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life-wire of any organization and some top leaders of COCIN interviewed said that was why there were different levels of leadership in the church. It was to facilitate a two-way communication with feedback. Whether this beautiful structure was being used for effective communication might need to be a subject for investigation.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to the positions they occupy.

	Opinion	No. of Response	Percentage %
A	Pastors	13	18.31
B	Unit Heads	15	21.13
C	Elders	5	7.04
D	Staff	15	21.13
E	Directors	9	12.68
F	RCC Chairmen	14	19.72
	Total	71	100

Source: Questionnaire Response 2012.

The distribution of respondents according to the positions they occupy is presented on Table 2.

Table 2 shows that of those who filled and returned the questionnaires, 21.13% each were Unit Heads and Staff, 19.72% were Regional Chairmen, 19.31% Pastors, 12.68% Directors, and 7.04% were Church elders. These were leaders and subordinates at different levels of leadership in COCIN who were qualified to participate in this investigation. Hazeldine (2009) in a contribution to classification of leadership points out that it is important for each leader to understand at what level of the organization they are operating and what they need to be doing at that level, as similarly demonstrated by the respondents in this study. This result also concurs with the top leadership reasons of different levels of leadership in the church in Table 1.

Table 3: Distribution of interviewees according to broad goal of COCIN

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Bring salvation to mankind	11	47.83
B	Holistic evangelization	11	47.83
C	Build men to pursue COCIN vision	1	4.35
	Total	23	100

Source: Interview 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to broad goal of COCIN is presented on Table 3. Table 3 shows that 47.83 each of interviewees believed the broad goal of COCIN is to bring salvation to mankind and holistic evangelization, and 4.35% building people to pursue COCIN's vision is the broad goal of the church. This result shows a clear understanding and unity of the top leadership of COCIN on the broad goal of the organization. This is fundamental for goal attainment in COCIN. Nwachuku (1988) says organizations are purposive, so any organization that does not have a reason to exist will have nothing to attain. The clear knowledge of the goal of the church is also critical as the Organizational Goals⁸⁴notes (2012) buttress that goals are very beneficial because they serve as guidelines to channel employee effort in the organization.

Table 4: Distribution of interviewees according to importance of COCIN's goal attainment

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Very important	12	85.71
B	Important	2	14.29
C	Not so important	0	0.00
	Total	14	100

Source: Interview 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to importance of COCIN's goal attainment is presented on Table 4.

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Table 4 shows that 85.71% of interviewees believed it is very important for COCIN to attain its goal while 14.29% say it is important. Again, this result shows complete harmony on the importance placed by the top leadership of COCIN on attaining her goal. It means they would formulate relevant policies to release every resource to acquire, develop and sustain the required human and material needed for goal attainment, which is their key role (Management in Organizations, 2012).

Table 5: Distribution of interviewees according to persons responsible for accomplishing COCIN's goal

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Leaders	3	27.27
B	Everyone	4	36.36
C	Leaders & Church workers	4	36.36
	Total	11	100

Source: Interview 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to persons responsible for accomplishing COCIN's goal is presented on Table 5.

Table 5 shows 36.36% each said leaders and church workers or everyone was responsible for accomplishing the goal of COCIN, while 27.27% said it was the responsibility of the leaders to accomplish the goal of the church. Although each member of COCIN and all its workers are responsible for accomplishing the goal, it is evident from the results that leadership spearheads the communal effort. The definition of leadership proffered by Winston and Patterson (2006) confirms this.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to ways leaders can inspire work.

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Effective Supervision/Training	50	40.98
B	Good interpersonal relationship	16	13.11
	Motivation	56	45.90
	Total	122	100

Source: Questionnaire Response 2012.

The distribution of respondents according to ways leaders can inspire work is presented on Table 6.

Table 6 shows that 45.90% suggested if their leaders motivate them it would inspire them to work very well, 40.98% said it was effective supervision/ training that would inspire them to work very well while 13.11% said it was good interpersonal relationship with their leaders. This result shows that if workers are well motivated, effectively supervised and trained, they would likely be inspired to work very well. Good interpersonal relationship between leaders and subordinates is also important. However, Morah (2008) cited Hersey and Blanchard's (1988) situational theory which postulates that directing or supervisory leadership is for incompetent, unwilling or insecure workers. Good interpersonal relationship and motivation spur respect and willing followership of subordinates (Haggai, 1989).

Table 7: Distribution of interviewees according to role in getting subordinates pursue COCIN's goal.

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Being exemplary	5	21.74
B	Teaching	10	43.48
C	Motivating subordinates	3	13.04
D	Communication	5	21.74
	Total	23	100

Source: Interview 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to role in getting subordinates pursue COCIN's goal is presented on Table 7.

Table 7 shows that 43% of interviewees said that teaching would help those under them to understand and pursue the goal of the church, 21.74% each said it was either by being exemplary or through communication, while 13.04% said it was through motivating subordinates that they would get to understand and pursue the goal of the church. This result shows the importance of teaching, effective communication backed by an exemplary life to create understanding and pursuance of organizational goals. Motivating subordinates spurs them to imbibe what is desired by the leader. D'Souza (1994) confirms what COCIN top leaders said when he asserted that one of the leader's primary responsibilities is to get the organization's goals accomplished and that teaching (to clarify roles), maintaining channels of communication and motivating people are some of the leader's main contributions.

Table 8: Distribution of interviewees according to style of leadership that gets results from subordinates

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Situational leadership style	2	15.38

B	Participative/ democratic style	10	76.92
C	Consultative leadership style	1	7.69
	Total	13	100

Source: Interview 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to style of leadership that gets results from subordinates is presented on Table 8.

Table 8 shows that 76.92% of interviewees said that participative/democratic leadership style would help to get results from their subordinates, 15.38% said it was situational style while 7.69% said it was consultative style that would help get results. This result agrees with Cole (2004) and Morah (2008) behavioural theories of participative and situational leadership would enhance workers performance and best accomplish organizational goals and objectives. Leaders and workers expectations on style can vary but it is the leadership responsibility to reconcile these expectations as stated in the Management Study Guide (2012). D'Souza (1994) buttressed this by saying that leaders must frequently examine their styles and be open to feedback to know how such styles contribute to or distract from the team's effectiveness.

Table 9: Distribution of interviewees according to leadership style

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Participative/democratic style	10	41.67
B	Situational style	3	12.50
C	Autocratic style	11	45.83
	Total	24	100

Source: Questionnaire Response 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to leadership style is presented on table 9a and Pie Chart 9. Table 9 shows 45.83% respondents described their leadership styles as autocratic, 41.67% say they apply participative/democratic style of leadership, while 12.50 apply situational leadership style. This result shows that the majority style of leadership that is applied by top leaders of the church is autocratic which does not enhance goal attainment. If leaders apply the participative style they chose as the one to accomplish results on Table 8 that would be better. Zen Scrivener (2009) puts integrity at the top of its list of leadership skills and says it is the integration of outward actions and inner values. So if the leaders actually believe that participative style (as in table 8) is the style that gets results from employees then they should imbibe it and discard the autocratic style as seen on this table.

Table 10: Distribution of respondents according to ways COCIN can improve performance

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentages %
A	Square pegs in squares (Putting	25	24.75

	people in the right place		
B	Proper recruitment	23	22.77
C	Staff motivation	53	52.48
	Total	101	100

Source: Questionnaire Response 2012.

The distribution of respondents according to ways COCIN can improve performance is presented on Table 10.

Table 10 shows that 52% of respondents said that staff motivation would improve workers' performance in COCIN, 24.75% say it was putting people in the right places that will improve their performance while 22.77% said it was proper recruitment that will improve workers' performance. These suggestions for improved performance are all potent. Various theories of motivation like those of McGregor (1960), Carrot and Stick Approach (1960), McClelland (1978), Herzberg (1978) and many others as discussed by Omale (2006) confirm this. On the issue of placing people in the right places and recruitment, Nwachuku (1988) acknowledges that it is one of the major problems confronting management in any organization. There should therefore be proper Manpower Planning in every organization, COCIN inclusive.

Table 11: Distribution of respondents according to ways COCIN can achieve her goal and objectives.

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentages %
A	Staff Empowerment	31	31.96
B	Effective leadership	32	32.99
C	Committed workforce	34	35.05
	Total	97	100

Source: Questionnaire Response 2012.

The distribution of respondents according to ways to help COCIN achieve her goals and objectives is presented on Table 11.

Table 11 shows that 35.05% of respondents suggested that a committed workforce would help COCIN achieve her goals and objectives, 32.99% suggested effective leadership, while 31.96% suggested staff empowerment. This result adds to factors that would enhance goal attainment in COCIN. Getting a committed workforce starts from proper manpower planning with particular attention to recruitment. On staff empowerment, Nwachuku (1988) said employee training and development are at the heart of employee utilization, productivity, commitment, motivation and growth.

Table 12: Distribution of interviewees according to challenges faced in other leaders and workers pursuing COCIN's goal

	Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage %
A	Pursuit of personal interest/indifference	11	39.29
B	Generation gap/insubordination	6	21.43

C	Lack of commitment/	8	28.57
D	Mismanagement	3	10.71
	Total	28	100

Source: Interview 2012.

The distribution of interviewees according to challenges faced in other leaders and workers pursuing COCIN's goal is presented on Table 12.

Table 12 shows that 39.29% of interviewees saw the pursuit of personal interest and indifference as the challenge they face in getting leaders and workers pursue the goal of the Church, 28.57% saw lack of commitment as their challenge, 21.43% saw generation gap and insubordination as their challenge while 10.71% see mismanagement as the challenge. This result is quiet instructive. What steps should be taken to address these challenges? One of the essential leadership skills listed by the Instigator Blog (2001) is that they should be brave and honest in tackling every person and situation. Zen Scrivener (2009) also adds that assertiveness is also an essential leadership skill. So the leadership of COCIN needs to be honest, brave and assertive in addressing these challenges. Issues of motivation, manpower planning and leadership development as postulated by Morah (2008) and Nwachuku (1988) should also be addressed by leadership to enhance goal attainment in COCIN.

5. Conclusion

This study set out to determine the relationship between leadership and organizational goal attainment with particular reference to COCIN. The role COCIN top leadership plays and is expected to play in the attainment of goal organization was clearly brought out by their responses at the interviews conducted and by middle leadership and staff responses to questionnaires. It was found that levels of leadership in COCIN are meant to foster division of labour, easier goal attainment and two-way communication. The leadership believes in the goal of evangelism to bring salvation to mankind. Teaching, being exemplary, communication, motivation, effective supervision and good interpersonal relationship are ways leaders employ to ginger effective performance and goal attainment. The leadership was found to believe participative leadership gets results from subordinates even though most of them apply autocratic style. It was clear from the view point of both top and middle leadership that if they embark on proper manpower planning where the right people are recruited, empowered and motivated with effective leadership, a committed workforce would result, challenges overcome and goal attainment enhanced. Therefore, at the end of the study, it was found that effective leadership has a direct bearing on performance of the workforce and eventual goal attainment of COCIN.

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