

TESTING MCGREGOR'S THEORIES X AND Y IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS' TEACHERS

By
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Abstract

The study examined the application of McGregor's Theories X and Y in the management of teachers in Nigerian public post-primary schools. The general complaint by teachers in various states of Nigeria is that many school administrators are insensitive to the needs of teachers. The population of the study was all the public post-primary schools in the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. A random sample of two political zones participated in the study. From each zone, 25 school administrators and 250 teachers were randomly selected and invited to participate in the study. A total of 50 school administrators and 500 teachers participated in the study. The data was collected with a questionnaire titled McGregor's Motivation Theory Inventory (MMTI) and was augmented by oral interview. The validity of the questionnaire was made by the experts in educational Administration and planning. Split-Half method was used for the test of reliability. The correlation coefficient was corrected by the use of Spearman-Brown Formula. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was .72 and the final Spearman-Brown Formula yielded 0.84. The Statistics used was Z-test and common percentage. The major finding was that only Theory X was highly applied in the management of post-primary schools. It was recommended that seminars, workshops and conferences should be organized for the administrators to create the awareness of the importance of Y Theory of application.

Keyword: Bureaucracy, Colonial, McGregor's theories X and Y

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Introduction

Consciously or unconsciously, managers make assumptions about the human nature in their organizations. McGregor, (1906-1965), made assumption about human nature and human motivation. His assumptions were summarized in his Theories X and Y given in his book titled "*The Human Side of the Enterprise*" in 1960. He claimed that a leader's choice of leadership style will depend on how the leader views his subordinates' behavior in the organization. Theory X which is the classical or traditional view holds that the average human being inherently dislikes work; is innately lazy, irresponsible, self-centered and security oriented. Consequently, he is indifferent to the needs of the organization. Theory Y, which is progressive view, makes the opposite assumptions that people do not inherently dislike work and are not inherently lazy. People according to the author have learnt to dislike work, be lazy and irresponsible because of the nature of their work and supervision. Such people can develop intrinsic interest in their work, commit themselves to organizational goals and are capable of working productively with minimum external controls. This theory when applied would instill the sense of maturity and responsibility on the worker. The worker is expected to see this as a means of career advancement. To a greater extent, the worker will have the feeling of belonging and secured.

In Nigeria public schools, there is high rate of bureaucracy (Ifedili, 1993) and it is usually assumed that professional principles are incompatible with bureaucratic ethos since school is a professional organization. According to Kaufman (1981), popular press, reporters, columnist and editors have poured out series of complaints and exposes on the subject of bureaucracy. Anti-bureaucratic sentiments seem to have taken hold like an epidemic. Many people, according to Ifedili (1993), are apparently convinced that Nigeria's educational bureaucracy is whirling out of control and there is need to put it in order so that the goals of education can be achieved. The bureaucracy in Nigerian public schools is a consequence of colonial bureaucracy that introduced European oriented education. This type of education was basically meant to maintain law and order without regard for culture and temperament of individuals. Organizationally, the present structure has concentrated such executive power and authority on the administrators that it is greatly resented by the professionals and technical specialists in the service. Most of these administrators seem to believe that their subordinates are lazy, uncommitted to the attainment of government objectives, lack initiatives and cannot produce without detailed supervision.

It is a general notion in Nigeria that government work is nobody's work and therefore does not deserve commitment. The apathy to work among some Nigerians can be traced to the colonial era when indigenous civil servants had

very limited growth potentials. As was observed by Nwosu, a seasoned civil servant in 1977, that Nigerian workers during the colonial era worked to meet above all, the requirements of the colonial masters. They never obtained the reward which was commensurate with the work well done. Today, despite the fact that the policies and objectives are now being formulated by Nigerians for Nigerian needs, the colonial attitude persists. Adeyinka (1992) stated that infiltration of western education made the educational system to adopt managerial philosophy of McGregor's Theory X.

Many teachers in post primary schools see teaching as a stepping stone. This is because the remuneration is too poor; job security is lacking; teachers are not often respected; they are always in shadow while the spotlight is always on the administrators. According to Aghenta, (2001), many employed graduates are poorly remunerated, motivated and unceremoniously removed from teaching before they can establish themselves as experienced teachers. Teacher's progress is often retarded in a situation where a senior teacher who is highly competent and experienced but cannot bribe those in authority is stagnated while an inexperienced and incompetent teacher who can bribe is made a school administrator. Levitt (1974) pointed out that the process by which a manager is selected is a critical element in managerial success. This determines talents, competences, attitudes, styles, personality which were appropriate for the task and problems of new situation the worker would enter.

The school administrators see authority as personal, permanent and pervasive. There is a feeling that professionals see administrators as being insensitive to the needs, personal growth and personal job satisfaction of their subordinates. The present educational management condones favoritism and nepotism. In the general recruitment and promotion, it is a general observation that it is based on who one knows and not what one knows. The attitude of some workers is that the best way to deal with the government was by avoidance and non-commitment. Corruption in public schools has become so alarming (Ifedili, 1993) that one wonders if Nigerians can achieve the much articulated educational goals in Nigeria's National Policy on Education. This corruption is reechoed in the whole system since there appears to be no public aversion to it. With this state of things in public schools, one wonders if McGregor's Theory X Theory Y would hold.

Statement of the Problem

It seems to be a difficult task to apply McGregor theories X and Y to the management of teachers in post-primary schools. This is in no doubt because of the cultural climate of the school system. The attitudes and behaviors of the

administrators to some extent may not allow the administrators to adopt characteristics of Theory Y. This is because where the appointment to the post of administrator is not by merit; the administrator has to contend with the subordinate teachers who are more experienced and more competent. There is a feeling that some of these administrators who are afraid of being challenged, resort to oppressing, intimidating and blackmailing those sub-ordinates who are more competent and senior to them. Many teachers are complaining of being marginalized. Some have accused some administrators of corruption, nepotism and favoritism. They have accused them of incompetence and in-expertise. Some are complaining of being made redundant so that they can be removed from the system. Teachers seem not to put in their best because of dissatisfaction with the system. Some are still there in system because of no alternative job opportunities as observed by Ifedili (2006). With this state of affair, is McGregor's Theory Y going to be applicable?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be beneficial to all educational stakeholders. School organization requires special administrative skill because unlike other organizations, it is highly sensitive and complex. There is a growing separation of administration from teachers and students. The government will benefit from having less teacher turn over which has created shortage in teaching personnel. The government will also benefit from having efficient and effective teachers who will raise the standard of education which has become a major concern both nationally and internationally. The teachers will be happy to work under leaders who will motivate them and see their jobs as means of career advancement. The students will benefit by having concerned teachers who will impart the much desired knowledge. The school administrators will know that using the wrong theory in their administration can bring resistance and poor productivity irrespective of the culture of silence among the aggrieved teachers.

Both the teachers and the school administrators will work as a team and not the present attitude of many teachers who see the employer and their school administrators as "they" not "we" that run the school.

Methodology

The study is ex post facto. The design deals with the collection of two sets of data from a group of subjects with an attempt to determine the subsequent relationship between those sets of data. School administrators in Nigeria share similar characteristics. The population of the study was all the public post-primary schools in six geo-political zones in Nigeria. A random sample of two political zones participated in the study. From each zone, 25 school administrators and 250

teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. A total of fifty school administrators (thirty-one males and 19 females); and five hundred teachers (256 males and 244 females) participated in the study.

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Is McGregor's Theory X applicable in the management of teachers in post-primary schools in Nigeria?
2. Is McGregor's Theory Y applicable in the management of post-primary teachers in Nigeria?
3. Do the years of experience of school administrators affect the application of McGregor's Theories in the management of post-primary teachers in Nigeria?
4. Does the school administrator's age affect the application of McGregor's Theories in the management of post-primary school teachers in Nigeria?
5. Does the sex of the school administrator affect the application of McGregor's Theories in the management of post-primary school teachers in Nigeria?
6. Does professional qualification of the school administrator affect the application of McGregor's Theories in the management of teachers in post-primary schools in Nigeria?
7. What other factors can make McGregor's Theory Y not applicable?

Based on the above, the following null hypotheses were raised:

HO1 There will be no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about the application of McGregor's Theories X and Y.

HO2 There will be no significant difference in the application of McGregor's Theories X and Y as perceived by teachers based on sex.

HO3 There will be no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers and school administrators in the application of McGregor's Theories X and Y based on the age of the school administrator.

Data was collected using a questionnaire titled "McGregor Motivation Theory Inventory (MMTI)" which was designed by the researcher and augmented by interviews. The questionnaire comprised of two parts. Part 1 was demographic while Part 2 was made up of fifteen questions reflecting the assumptions of McGregor's Theories X and Y. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Administration. A Split-Half Method was used to test for the

reliability of the instrument. The correlation coefficient was corrected by the use of Spearman Brown Formula. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was .72 and final Spearman Brown Formula yielded 0.84. The statistics used were Z-test and percentage. The scoring was based on 0 – 1.0 as high application of Theory X; 1.01 – 2.0 Average application of Theory X while 2.01 -3.0 Average application of Theory Y; and 3.01 – 4.0 High Application of Theory Y.

Results

HO1: The first null hypothesis that there will be no significant difference in the application of Theories X and Y as perceived by the teachers and the school administrators was tested from the data collected from the questionnaire. The result is as shown in Table 1.

Table – 1
Test of Significant Difference in the Application of McGregor’s Theory X Theory Y as Perceived by School Administrators and Teachers

Statistics	School administrators	Teachers	Calculated z-value	Table value
NUMBER	50	500		
MEAN	2.1	1.43	10.9	1.96
SD	.15	.21		

From Table 1, the calculated Z-value at 0.05-confidence level was 10.9 while the table value was 1.96. The null hypothesis that there will be no difference in the application of McGregor’s Theories X and Y as perceived by teachers and school administrators is therefore rejected. Fifty-two percent of the school administrators as opposed to 30% of the teachers agreed that there was an application of Theory X but the application was average. Thirty-six percent of the school administrators as opposed to 62% of the teachers agreed that there was high application of Theory X. Only ten percent of the school administrators agreed that Theory Y was minimally applied. When those who indicated that the theory X was highly applied were further interviewed, 76% of school administrators as opposed to 13% of teachers opined that many teachers were irresponsible and therefore needed to be directed. Twenty-four percent of administrators as opposed to 87% of teachers opined that although many teachers are responsible but the way the administrators are appointed makes it difficult for highly experienced and qualified teachers to obey the young administrators who bribed their way to their present positions. The complained that the rule of the law is not followed since inexperienced and less qualified people were made administrators while the highly experienced and highly qualified are ignored. According to them, the manner of appointments and promotions will not augur well for the smooth running of the school. The young appointed administrators

resort to blackmailing anyone who challenges them. According to them “they don’t know and refuse to learn from those who know”. They stressed the importance of appointing school administrators by qualification and seniority.

HO2: The second null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about application of McGregor’s Theories X and Y was tested with the data collected through the questionnaire. The result is shown in Table 2.

Table – 2
Test of Significant Difference in the Perceptions of Male and Female Teachers about the Application of McGregor’s Theory X Theory Y

Statistics	Male teachers	Female teachers	Calculated z-value	Table value
NUMBER	263	237		
MEAN	1.53	1.50	1.88	1.96
SD	.19	.16		

As shown in Table 2, the calculated Z-value at 0.05-confidence level is 1.88 while the table value is 1.96. The null hypothesis that there will be no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about the application of McGregor’s Theories X and Y is therefore accepted. Fifty-three percent of male teachers as opposed to 48% of female teachers agreed that Theory X was highly applied. However, 47% of male teachers as opposed to 52% of female teachers agreed that Theory X was averagely applied.

HO3: The third null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant difference in the perception of teachers and administrators in the application of McGregor’s Theories X and Y based on age of the administrator was analyzed from the data collected from the questionnaire as in Table 3.

Table – 3
Summary Table for Simple ANOVA
Test of Significant Difference in the Application of McGregor/s Theories as Perceived by Teachers based on Age

Source of variation	DF	SS	MS	Calculated f- value	Table value
Between groups	2	6.84	3.42	24.4	3.02
Within groups	497	69.42	.14		
Total	499		XXX		

From Table 3, the calculated F-Value at .05 confidence level is 24.4 while the Table Value is 3.02. The null hypothesis that there will be no significant difference in the perception of teachers and administrators in the application of McGregor's Theories Y and X based on the age of the administrator is therefore rejected.

Seventy percent of school administrators as opposed to 68% of the teachers agreed that age affected the application of McGregor Theories X and Y. However, 30% of school administrators as opposed to 32% of teachers agreed that age did not affect the application of McGregor's Theories. The Simple Analysis of Variance has shown a significant difference in their responses.

Table – 4
Research Questions

QUESTIONS	ADMINISTRATORS		TEACHERS
1. Is McGregor's Theory X applicable in the management of teachers in post primary schools?	Yes	77%	94%
	No	23%	06%
2. Is McGregor's Theory Y applicable in the management of post-primary teachers?	Yes	10%	00%
	No	90%	100%
3. Do the years of experience of school administrators affect the application of McGregor's Theory?	Yes	66%	87%
	No	34%	13%
4. Does the school administrator's age affect the application of McGregor's Theory?	Yes	70%	68%
	No	30%	32%
5. Does the sex of the administrator affect the application of McGregor's Theory?	Yes	64%	63%
	No	36%	37%
6. Does the professional qualification of school administrators affect the application of McGregor's Theory?	Yes	56%	52%
	No	44%	48%
7. What other factors can make McGregor's Theory Y not to be applicable?	High bureaucratic nature of school system culture of silence among the teachers, high Rate of corruption in the system, not following the proper guideline for appointments and promotion, irregular payments of salary rtv.		

Discussion of Findings

In preparing the questionnaire for this study, it was assumed that school administrators in Nigeria share some characteristics. The essence of schooling is the same and the problems of interaction between the school administrators and teachers occur in similar conditions. There is therefore no reason to expect that the responses of school administrators and teachers who participated in the study will differ to an extent that will invalidate this study. From the analysis of data, it can be said that McGregor's Theory X is applied in the management of post-primary secondary schools in Nigeria. Only 10% of school the administrators that participated in the study agreed that McGregor's Theory Y was minimally applied. There are some peculiar factors like culture of the people, attitude of the people etc. which McGregor did not consider. This to a greater extent affected the application of Theory Y. The culture of silence among the teachers, the colonial attitude of the school administrators and the non-compliance of stated rules and regulations guiding the appointments and promotions have affected the non-application of Theory Y. From the teachers' responses, the present situation will not augur well for smooth running of the school. Teachers' retention is threatened communication flows often only downwards. Eighty percent of the school administrators treat teachers with personal consideration. Sixty-eight percent of the teachers agreed that they did not see their jobs as a mean for career advancement because of unhealthy practices in the system. According to the data collected, appointments and promotions were not based on seniority and competence. From the analysis of data collected, it is so obvious that there is a need for better management of Nigeria post-primary schools so as to achieve the set out goals and objectives.

Conclusion

The results of the study have shown that McGregor's Theory Y which is progressive view, is barely applied in the management of post-primary schools of Nigeria while theory X which is the traditional view, is often applied. The negative effects of this high application of theory X will not augur well for the smooth management of the schools. This is because school administration requires special administrative skills since it is highly sensitive and complex. The professional principles are incompatible with bureaucratic ethos. There is a need to manage schools well so that school administration does not become an object of ridicule.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to improve in the management of school bearing in mind the importance of the application of McGregor's Theory Y:

- Seminars, conferences and workshops should be organized for all the school administrators in order to create awareness on the importance of McGregor's Theory Y.
- Appointments and promotions of school administrators should be strictly based on competence and seniority.
- The hierarchy in the management of post-primary schools should be flattened so that teachers can be encouraged to make their useful contributions.
- Seminars, conferences and workshops should be organized for the teachers to reinforce their importance in the system and the need for their positive contributions in the system. The culture of silence and the non-commitment and avoidance in dealing with the government should be condemned.
- The school administrators through government's supervision should create an atmosphere in their various schools where teachers see their jobs as means for career advancement. This will cut down on the rate of teacher turnover.
- There should be public aversion to corruption which has eaten deep in the system.

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