ABSTRACT

This article was designed to evaluate motivational influences on project team performance. The specific objectives were to examine the various theories of motivation, motivation strategies and to establish the correlation between motivation and the project team performance measured by the extent to which a project is completed within the context of such project constraint factors such as cost, time, technology etc. The desk and descriptive research designs were used and data collected from existing documents and materials such as journals, periodicals, textbooks, magazine and internet. The data were analysed qualitatively and descriptively. It was discovered that the public sector projects including road project sampled for this work were doing well as a result of inadequate motivation of the project members aside from other factors, such as poor funding or delays in the release of funds. Consequent upon this, it was recommended that, a comprehensive motivation package should be worked out and set aside for project team members as well as evolution of well-defined structure of incentives based on the peculiar attributes of team members and the projects task or activities that must be accomplished, among others. It was therefore concluded that although motivation exerts significant influences on project team performance, it should always be blended with other management functions critical to enhanced project team performance.

Keywords: Motivation, Need Structure, Project Team Performance, Public Sector Project

1. INTRODUCTION

Every project, private or public revolves around the commitment of material, financial and human resources to achieve a certain goal or for the production of goods and services within a specified period of time. Of all the inputs required, human resources occupy a central position as such, they are drafted to form the team designed for the implementation of a predetermined project. As individuals and as group members, project team members have their various desires, needs and wants in which they seek to achieve first, before the collective objectives of the projects of the organization that executes the project. These individuals, as members of the project teams as well as members of the organization need to be motivated to exhibit their maximum corporative behaviours and willingness to work using their motivations, creativity, innovation and laid down principles to complete the project within the specified time period and standard specifications.
Motivation, in this perspective, focuses on all management efforts, consciously or unconsciously, directed at ensuring that members of the organisation as well as members of the project team show maximum commitment to motivations, responsibilities and effective discharge of job functions, leading to effective and efficient attainment of project objectives as well as the earliest finish time.

In this sense, motivation is a catalyst to project completion and enhanced project performance. However, while Maslow (1943, 1953, 1970A and 197B) had devoted his time to the hierarchy of needs and Vroom on expectancy theory of motivation among other management scholars have researched into the area of motivation, very little or no efforts have been made to establish the link between motivation and project team performance. While the imperative of project team, especially in fixed location projects such as road and bridge construction project can be overemphasized, most researchers are silent on this important element. This article therefore is an attempt to establish the link between motivational influences and project team performance, through exploration and description of the various project executed in Nigeria.

It should be noted that when project team members are not properly motivated, they tend to display deviant behaviour such as pilfering of materials set aside for the execution of the project, delays, absenteeism and outright insubordination to the project team leader. With these deviant elements or behaviours, the project could be delayed in terms of completion times, it could be completed below quality, or in a worst case situation, the project could be abandoned. Through proper motivation, these problems could be addressed and the project executed to its logical end within the specified time frame.

In this article, the various approaches to motivation of project team members, as well as the analysis of the influences of the motivational factors on project performance are examined. Specifically, this article seeks to explore and describe motivational approaches available to project managers, and to examine the challenges on to effective motivation of project team members as well as the options of proper motivation and improved project performance in our economy.

The introduction constitutes the first section of the article. The second section is devoted to conceptual and theoretical views. The third section is concerned with methodological issues focusing on the research design, types and sources of data, variable identification as well as methods of data analysis. In section four, statistical details are presented and analysed while section five presents the discussion, recommendation and conclusion.

2. NATURE AND CONCEPT OF PROJECTS

A project is a finite endeavor (having specific start and completion dates) undertaken to create a unique product or service which brings about beneficial change or added value. This finite characteristic of projects stands in contrast to processes, or operations, which are permanent or semi-permanent functional work to repetitively produce the same product or service (Dinsmore, et al, 2005). It is also defined as, a sequence of unique, complex and connected activities having one goal or purpose and that must be completed by a specific time within budget and according to specification (Ucdavis, 2013). It is perhaps pertinent to point out here that myriads of definitions have been espoused on the subject and that this paper is not intended for a review of these varying concepts. However, every project has, within the definitional context, certain commonalities in character. Every project has a scope, budget and schedule. Moreover, project activities are time bound constrained by need for quality and performance. Other characteristics of a project include uniqueness in terms of its products and service.

According to Rao (1999:11) the basic characteristics of a project includes the following:
Risk Assessment of Multi-Order Dependencies between Critical Information and Communication Infrastructures
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Risk Management in a Pandemic Crisis at a Global Non Profit Health Care Organization
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