

MITIGATING AGAINST THE IMPACT OF FLOOD DISASTER USING SSSM MODULE AS A TOOL TO MANAGING UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Human existence has always been beseeched by one form of disaster or the other. It could occur often or sparingly. Whatever the timeline may be, it's never palatable nor welcomed. What behooves us as human is the ability to contain damages associated to its occurrences on the one hand while endeavouring to curtail or even forestall possible incidences. Try as we may, it is not possible to live in a disaster-free society. It is generally held that necessity is the mother of invention. In other words, man has developed ability and sensitivity to recreate ugly situation by adopting and adapting mechanism to alleviate whatever challenge life spring on him. Some notable disasters are war, flood, epidemic among others. Between 2012 and 2015, Nigeria has seen quite some measures of flood and flooding experiences. It is the intent of this paper to advocate for adaptation of one of the apparatus consequent upon the flood management experience. The Internally Displaced Camps – (IDP) as an outlet to address a perennial societal need of unemployment. This is using SSS model of Information Management Technique.

BACKGROUND

Flooding is an unusual surge of water beyond normal water channels level. The advanced English dictionary states that flood is the rising of body of water and its overflow in normally dry land. Another entry in the same dictionary gives it as the occurrence of incoming water (between a low tide and the flowing high tide). In Nigeria the last three years have seen two major unusual surges with enormous vast damages. Some of which cannot be quantified in monetary terms when the consideration of human lives involved are taken into consideration. Beyond that, there were scattered numbers of artifacts along the coastal line of Nigeria that were carried away by the flood of 2012/2013 and 2015. The water may have receded in the 2012/2013 and ebbed in the 2015 account but the colossal water is an issue of national concern. It has constituted a disaster requiring planning against possible recurrence. As it were, each of the previous occurrences was not normal. As much as they were humanly induced, giving adequate information and information management, the occurrences could have been subverted, controlled and better managed. By this, the Nigerian nation would have been able to save much lives, and curtailed the negative impact of the flood incidences.

THE CONCERN OF MANAGEMENT

It is the intent of this paper to raise soluble management information system theory/methodology to address the national problem generated as a result of the flood occurrences. This is against the background of the possible further occurrence in the coming years. To justify this using the subsystem methodology, it may be important to examine what constitutes management, who is a manager or what does he do and whether he qualify to manage national problem of this nature. That is if we also prove that the flooding constitutes a national problem requiring managerial technique and skill. Even with the use of information management tool.

We can take off on the high note of Nwachukwu (2009) who asserts that it is now obvious to everyone that of the factors that are necessary for economic take-off, none is to be stressed more than management. This is because the Nigerian industrial landscape is littered with debris of dead industries, and those struggling to death by harsh economic environment that prevail in the country. There is pronounced government indiscipline, corruption, financial recklessness, fragile social and productive base and lack of proper planning traceable to the absence of visionary leadership. It is pointless to emphasize at this juncture that leadership vision is informed by the lack of information (data) collection and management. Information constitutes a principal tool of management and management practitioner.

Nwachukwu (2009) is emphatic when he stated that no human endeavour that does not require proper management for its proper functioning. All types of organizations-government, and government establishments, business enterprises, profit and non-profit making organization require good management to work effectively. For him, management is both a function as well as a process. For Ejiofor, (2009), the progress or stagnation of any country is as a result of the decisions of its managers, who as individuals may be managing just a business but as a group managing the nation. He further presents the traditional perception of what is seen as a manager. This traditional outlook sees a manager in the light of a former colonial master bossing a group of Nigerian workers or a Nigerian elite occupying a white man's post. By this, the manager and managerial function is mirrored down to a top official who has a secretary, is often on tour appends signature to important document and possibly has a university degree.

Ejiofor (2009) submits that, this is an erroneous view. He said management should rather be described as the art of working, particularly through people, for the achievement of the broad goals of an organization. The manager has to map out his strategy trying to achieve these goals, using the right personnel and material. The exposition of Abba, Anazodo R.O. and Okoye J.C. (2004) marks a unique dimension to the study of management with a view to organizational behaviour. They make an entry in defining organization as an apparatus to exercise management skill. Thus, stating that an organization is a consciously coordinated social entity, with a relatively identifiable boundary, that functions on a relatively continuous basis to achieve a common goal or set of goals. This definition can safely be subjected or interpreted to mean a state, nation or an autonomous community within the committee of a state or local government. The basic highlights of an identifiable hegemonic structure striving to achieve a common objective require the basic tenets of managerial technique in order to forge ahead. They further elaborate that social entity by their definition is made up of individuals or group of people who interact with each other. These interactions are harmonized, balanced and premeditated upon balanced interaction. In other words, some set of persons may have been saddled with the task to plan, map and outline the interphasing symbiotic entity producing minimal friction. Man can hardly be said to be an automated being. In fact, to achieve the simplest of human rally require so much as planning, cajoling, urging and perhaps pushing even when benefits are glaring. Abba, U.Z., Anazod R.O. and Okoye J.C. (2004) actually pursued their discourse on this subject matter and offered developmental theory to the study of management as a discipline. Rising from the historical bedrock of Roman/Chinese practice of management ideals amongst her ancient civilization, to the African Empire state of Ghana, Mali and Songhai, they gave their disposition to modern study of management. Drawing inferences from the earlier works of Druckor (1989), Donnelly 1995 and Eayol (1949), they were able to streamline management as much more than a function rightly so as a field of study. They made effort in course of their work to discuss basic system concepts which must not be confused in solving organizational problem.

JUSTIFICATION FOR SOFTSYSTEM METHODOLOGY: THE NATIONAL FLOOD INCIDENCES

Umoh's (2013) entry on soft system reflect a scenario when objectives are hard to define, decision-taking is uncertain, measures of performance are at best quantitative and human behaviour is irrational. This was the scenario which we saw in the 2013 flood experience. Flood is normal phenomenon often seen during wet season in tropical Africa. However the magnitude was unprecedented at least in the last eighty years in the anal of our national history. Yes it was stated that water would be released from the dams in Cameroon for the purpose of routine maintenance. Taken seriously, the impact could have been reasonably reduced. However, there was a general attitude of nonchalance among citizens and government functionaries until it became too late.

Nigeria as a country did not have statistics. There were no accurate demographic data of the people in the coastal lines of upper and lower Benue River and associated tributaries were also barren of any information. Our metrological equipment/services were at best guess work. Thus, when the flood came there were no boat/other essential rescue services. Many houses went under water. Property and artifacts were lost in large droves including human lives. Some of the death casualties were reluctant to move because they were either ill-informed or un-formed about the magnitude of the pending danger.

In contrast with the 2015 incidence, responses to disaster are relatively quick and more effective. This is informed by the near occurrence of the previous flood. Thus, they were able

to evacuate displaced persons to camps and better cared for them unlike the former flood of 2015, resettlement camps for internally displaced persons were still ongoing even as the water was ebbing away. What this depicts is a rousing of National Emergency Agency action based on information just recently gathered. Pragmatic management technique was deployed to deal with emergent crisis situation. What all of these underscores is the importance of management information system.

The current flood management is drawing from the hindsight of recent events. Planning is a core value of management. You cannot plan without gathering data and drawing also from your data, strategic control can be exercised. Umoh (2004) was emphatic when he asserted that management information system is information used within an organization. The system is comprised of all the components that collect, manipulate and disseminate data or information. The nutshell of the activities involved include inputting data, processing of the data into information, storage of data and information, the production of outputs such as management reports.

From the foregoing, we can now deduce why there was a better system approach to the last flood incidence over the former. There were relatively new processed data and available information on the movement of excess body of water, resilience of people who are not willing to evacuate their ancestral central home even at the face of loss of life. The reluctance to merge with strange persons in confined settlement and of course the basic logistics requirement in setting up internally displaced camps. Some of the camps are existing property owned by either government and government agencies or faith based organizations. Additional facilities were then built in some cases to enhance a more decent living, while some were built in few other cases.

THE SUB SYSTEM MODULE ON THE FACE OF FLOOD PROBLEM

They may have been notices of the intent to open up the dams in Cameron yet it was not seen as constituting an enormous national disaster. The awareness at least of its magnitude was not initially comprehended. This can only possibly explain why the coastal states government appeared helpless, thus calling for aid which were trickling in from even indigent citizens. The issue of the flood may come leaving a large problem situation. Yes lives may have been seen to be secured, yet there is the attendant challenge of their survival after the water ebbs away. There were no statistical data of people who could not survive the after effect of the flood. Some lost breadwinners and government which could barely feed and maintain them while in camp is yet to give grants as promised which is ideal. Some could not handle the circumstances of been tenants in their ancestral homes because their houses collapsed in the flood and the resources to raise another was not in sight.

Before we may proceed to offer any recommendation in face of these tall challenges, this work would be guided by the observation of Umoh (2004) in dealing with system methodology. This is pertinent giving his earlier submission that subsystem methodology among other things are characterized by where measures of performance are out best quantitative and human behaviour is irrational. It is not a completely hopeless situation as he further stated that the essence of system approach in general terms is intended to use ideas to find a structure in apparently unstructured soft problems and hence lead to action to eliminate, alleviate or solve the problem.

RECOMMENDATION

Nigeria is located in tropical Africa. Thus, it is not ill wishing that flood would occur recurrently. More also, the rains will not cease neither would we wish away the necessities of dams and their routine maintenance. The federal government informed by recent incidences and the high possibility of further occurrences should budget and plan building settlement camps as a permanent feature of our national life in all the geopolitical zones of the country. These camps should be structured in such manner that variety of workshops could be built within the camps. This may prevent infrastructural waste and may quickly dilapidate quickly as it may not be often in use. These facilities can also serve as specialized skills centre for young graduates who are on a one year mandatory national service. The national youth service year should be restructured to absorb these graduates for training/retraining programme. The additional benefit is raising an entrepreneuring body of youths who must not come out looking for job that may not be found.

For the internally displaced persons, their period of confinement within the camps can be turned to productive ventures. It may even be a period to meaningfully engage some people who previously may not have had a trade while those who have trade could earn money even in the face of disaster.

Conclusively a soft problem scenario has afforded the Nigerian nation an opportunity to address a crucial national concern – the issue of high unemployment rate amongst her citizens. As it is often said, making good an ugly situation.

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