



Influence of Leadership Style on the Effectiveness of Teachers in Public Post Primary Schools in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

These present study aimed at determining the relationship between leadership style and the effectiveness of Teachers in Public Post Primary School in Cross River State, Nigeria. A sample of 160 teachers was randomly drawn for the study. A four point likert-type questionnaire was used to gather data which was analyzed with Pearson Product-moment Correlation Analysis at 0.05 significance level and 138 degree of freedom. The results show that leadership style employ in these schools is more uncaring and autocratic than democratic. It was also revealed that teacher's participation in decision making and effective communication, which were herein considered as the cornerstone of effective leadership, were grossly unavailable. This however, led to the ineffectiveness of the teacher's significant contributions to the growth of educational system in the state. Vital recommendations were examined.

Keywords: Leadership, Effectiveness, Communication, Management, Organisation, Performance, Employees, Commitment.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of this Study

Leadership is a factor in the managerial function of directing that gives direction and purpose to communication, decision making and motivation for organizational performance. Some behavioral theories give the impression that leadership is synonymous with management. But this assumption however is untrue, as management is a broader concept which concerns not only people, but also material and financial resources. Management integrates and utilizes these with people to attain organizational goals. Leadership is a narrower activity and a managerial tool for exerting influence on people in organization or group, [Inyang \(2004\)](#). Leadership may be defined as the art of process of influencing people so that they strive willingly and enthusiastically to the attainment of organizational pre-set goals. Leadership has however been defined differently by various scholars. One of such definitions is that of [Cole \(2002\)](#) who defined leadership "as a dynamic process at work in a group whereby one individual over a particular period of time and in a particular organizational context, influences the other group members to commit themselves freely to the achievement of group task or goals".

The above definitions of leadership encompass several vital ingredients of leadership. Firstly, leadership is a dynamic process, influenced by the changing requirements of the tasks, the group itself and the individual members. Implying that there is no "one best way" of leading people and leaders therefore need to be able to exercise a range of behaviors to fit different situations that they may encounter ([Cole, 2002](#)). Secondly, leadership is principally required to influence and motivate people to the extent that they are willing and posed to commit themselves freely to achieve organizational goals. Thirdly, leadership is not restricted to one person, but may be shared between members. Lastly, leadership is exercised in, and influenced by, the particular set of circumstances which form the organizational context, be it an educational institution or otherwise.

Academic institutions all over the world are established to fulfilled the educational needs of the people. Unfortunately, in Nigeria and Cross River State in particular there has been a steady decline in educational output across board underscoring the very essence for which these institutions were established. The poor leadership disposition and styles of school administrators and principals of public post primary schools in Cross River State and indeed Nigeria, have been identified as a co-factor in the declining fortunes of education at that level, [Denga \(2000\)](#). Leadership at this educational level in Nigeria

has been noted to manifest autocratic and non-participative inclinations, resulting in a demonstrated lack of motivation, effective communication and interpersonal relationship, as well as the absence of participation and commitment of teachers' to decision outcomes.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Functions of Leadership

The specific and broad functions of leadership comprise of the following functions, leadership is necessary in order to co-ordinate and influence desired behavior necessary for organizational goal attainment (Gündemir *et al.*, 2014). Also, leadership as posited by Moronfolu and Adewunmi (2017) can provides motivation and inspiration for the group as well as responsible for taking decisions which can be sometimes very challenging in turbulent and dynamic work environment. In addition, Agi *et al.* (2016) further contend that the function of leadership cannot be overstated as it maintains interpersonal relationship within the group and serves as a link between organizational hierarchy through effective communication. Understanding leadership broadly, it strives to ensure employee job satisfaction, personal goal attainment and peaceful resolution of conflict within the group, as leadership seeks to train and develop group members in order to enhance their present and future capacities.

2.2. Styles of Leadership

As noted earlier, there is no “one best way” to leading people. Effective leadership therefore entails certain variations in leadership styles in difference situation in the work environment. Leadership style as used here means the way in which functions of leadership are conducted. To this end, it is important to note that leadership styles are basically classified under two extreme and broad headings: viz, authoritarian (or autocratic) and democratic. Laissez – faire is however sometimes included as a leadership style. There could be many other dimensions of leadership styles within these broad headings (Saleem *et al.*, 2015). They may include the following: dictatorial, charismatic, participative and bureaucratic styles. In autocratic leadership the leader centrally exerts maximum power in decision making and does not consult subordinates' opinions in so doing (Asrar-Ul-Haq and Kuchinke, 2016). Whereas, the democratic leaders on the other hand, consult subordinates on proposes actions and decisions, hence collective or participative decision making mechanism is practiced under democratic leadership (Holten and Brenner, 2015). The laissez-fair style of leadership is typically identified with the minimum use of the power vested in leadership. Rather, subordinates are accorded a high sense of independence and freedom in discharging their responsibilities such that the subordinates largely determine their own goals and the strategies for achieving them (Inyang, 2004).

2.3. Theoretical Framework

A number of theories have been postulated by various scholars and schools of thought in an attempt to identifying the characteristics, influences and tendencies that make effective leaders and explains why different leaders manifest or adopt difference behaviors and leadership styles. Some of these theories include the following:

- **The Trait Theory:** according to Armandi *et al.* (2003) this leadership theory focus on the trait theory which attempt to identify and isolate the traits or properties of leaders, such as the leaders' intellectual, physical, emotional and social characteristics. These are then evaluated to determine if there existed any universal traits in effective leaders that would distinguish them from less effective leaders. In essence, the trait approach attempts to attribute individual (leaders') behavior or style to identify physical or physiological characteristics, Abba (1990).
- **The Behavioural Theory:** Contrary to the trait theory, the behavioral theory postulates that leaders can best be characterized by behavioral patterns rather than by individual trait such as intellectual or physical properties (Zaccaro and Horn, 2003). This theory stresses that while traits of a leader cannot be easily observed, behavior can much more easily be observed (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2017). In the nutshell, where the trait theory attempts to explain leadership based on what leadership are, behavioral approach attempts to explain it based on what leaders do.
- **Situational Theory:** Amanchukwu *et al.* (2015) posits that this theory seeks to collectively evaluate the various factors and forces existing within the internal work environment which influences the behavior, decisions and effectiveness of the leader. The situational approach considers leadership from a dynamic posture to fit into the very unstable and ever changing work environment and variables (Lussier and Achua, 2015) hence the leader manifests certain and various characteristics and leadership styles to achieve tasks under various circumstances.

It is however imperative to emphatically stress that the extent to which leadership of educational institution can achieve the aforementioned functions for which it exists, largely depends on how effectively and successfully leadership is able to evolve functional behaviors and the quality of influence it is able to exert on their teachers.

3. Objective of this Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which the prevailing leadership style influences the effectiveness of teachers' in public post primary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. However, in specific approaches, the following are objectives of this study:

- To determine the extent to which teacher's participation in decision making enhances their effectiveness.
- To determine the extent to which effective communication between leadership and teachers enhances teachers' effectiveness.
- To examine the communication link between leadership and teachers in enhancing significant teachers' effectiveness

3.1. Research Questions

- Does teacher's participation in decision making have any significant relationship with their effectiveness?
- Does effective communication between leadership and teacher's have any significant relationship with teachers' effectiveness?
- What are the communication link between leadership and teachers' in enhancing significant teachers' effectiveness?

3.2. Research Hypotheses

The null hypothesis formulated to guide and directs the study include the following:

- There is no significant relationship between teachers' participation indecision making and their effectiveness.
- There is no significant relationship between effective leadership teacher communication and teachers' effectiveness.
- There is no significant relationship between the prevailing leadership style and teachers' effectiveness.

4. Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was survey design. This was chosen to allow inferences to be made from samples and generalizations drawn from the population that would have been too expensive to study wholly. Although the area of this study was meant to be Cross River state. However, the study was limited to teachers in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State. This was so because of time and financial constraints. Calabar South Local Government Area is one of the eighteen (18) Local Government Area that constitutes Cross River State. There are four (4) public post primary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area, which engages four hundred and seventy-two (472) teachers as population for the study. Fourty (40) teachers from each of the four schools were randomly sampled from the population, making a sample size of the one hundred and sixty (160).

4.1. Model Specification

A four point likert-type questionnaires were utilized in collecting data. Section A sought respondent's demographic details, whereas, Section B contained 20 items meant to determine the influence of prevailing leadership style on the effectiveness of teachers in public post primary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The questionnaire was validated based on relevant professional reviews and recommendations from colleagues. The questionnaire required the following relative responses: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D).

4.2. Data Collection/Analysis

The researchers went to each of the four (4) schools studied to administer the questionnaires to the one hundred and sixty (160) respondents. In the end, 140 (87.5%) questionnaires were returned whereas 20 (12.5%) were not returned. Data was analyzed and the null hypothesis tested with Pearson product-moment correlation analysis/coefficient.

Given by:

$$r = \frac{N\sum XY - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{N\sum x^2 - (\sum X)^2} \sqrt{N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2}}$$

- **Decision Rule**

The obtained r must be greater or higher than the critical r to be considered significant. In other words, if the calculated value is less than the critical table value, we do not reject the null hypothesis and if otherwise, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative. The level of significance is 0.05 and degree of freedom (df) of 138 (N-2).

5. Presentation of Results

Hypothesis I: There is no significant relationship between leadership style and teachers' effectiveness.

Table-1. Computation of Responses on the Relationship between Leadership Style and Teachers Effectiveness

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	Y
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Leadership style	5920	20008970		
		4322405	0.77	
Teachers' effectiveness	3008	607728		

Source: Field Survey (Questionnaire, 2018)

The Table 1 indicates a calculated r – value of 0.77 which is less than the critical value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance with 138 degree of freedom. Thus in accordance with decision rule, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant relationship between the participation of teachers' in decision making and their effectiveness.

Table-2. Computation of Responses on the Relationship between Teachers' Participation in Decision Making and their Effectiveness

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	R
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Teachers' participation in decision making	6714	2108208		
			4722313	0.15
Teachers' effectiveness	3508	617788		

Source: Field Survey (Questionnaire, 2018)

The Table 2 shows a calculated r – value of 0.15 which is below the critical value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance, with 138 degree of freedom. Thus the null hypothesis, in line with decision rule is therefore not rejected.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant relationship between effective leadership – teacher communication and teachers' effectiveness.

Table-3. Computation of Response on Effective Communication Between Leadership and and Teachers' Effectiveness

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	R
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Effective communication	5707	1824404		
			3475601	0.84
Teachers' effectiveness	3218	599788		

Source: Field Survey (Questionnaire, 2018)

The Tables 3 indicate a calculated r – value of 0.84 which is less than the critical value of 1.98 with 138 degree of freedom. We therefore do not reject the null hypothesis.

5.1. Discussion of Major Findings

The sum of empirical findings emanating from our study indicate that teaching staff in post primary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area of Nigeria, do not adequately participate in the decision making process of their various schools. These findings aptly agree with the work of Nwachukwu (1992) and Denga (2000) who through their studies established that most organizations in Nigeria do not involve employees in decision making mechanism. Findings also reveal that upward and downward communication flow which should galvanize organizational effectiveness, is not practiced in these schools. The leadership style adopted in running these schools has closely been observed to be undemocratic or rather autocratically inclined. Such leadership postures do not encourage participation of teachers in decision making and also hinders effective communication.

6. Conclusion/Summary

It is pertinent to stress again that there is no single best way to leading people, hence leadership requires certain variations in leadership postures from different situation in the workplace. This accordingly implies that the leader need to adopt a humanistic approach to leadership that would facilitate or enhance dynamism under changing environment, as well as effective communication and participative leadership orientation. When employee (teachers) are allow to participate in decision making process they would naturally be more committed to the outcomes of such decisions. Again, when there is effective communication between leadership and teachers, information would freely be sent and feedback received. This facilitates co-operation and effectiveness and also eliminates chances of relying on rumor and grapevine sources for information. Thus, the following recommendations were examined: that teachers in post primary schools and indeed all institutions, should be involved in decision making process, in order to boost their effectiveness and commitment to decision outcomes. Secondly, effective communication between leadership and teachers should be cultivated to enhance teachers' effectiveness, as well as eliminating chances of depending on rumor and grapevine sources for information which may be distorted and unreliable as supported by Inyang (2004). And finally, leadership should adopt a humanistic and democratic posture which allows dynamism, participation and effective communication in managing the affairs of teachers and other stakeholders.

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