Principals’ Leadership Style And Motivation Strategies As Determinants Of Teachers’ Performance In Public Secondary Schools In Abia State, Nigeria

Ijenwa, Stanley Iroabuchí¹ & Kaegon, L.E.S. Ph.D²

Department of Educational Management
Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT
This study investigated principals’ leadership style and motivation strategies as determinants of teachers’ performance in public secondary schools in Abia State. The correlation research design was adopted for the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The populations of the study comprised all 198 vice-principals in public secondary schools in Abia State. The stratified sampling technique was used in selecting 132 vice-principals as the sample size which represents 66.67% of the population. Two self-structured questionnaire titled: “Principals’ Leadership Styles and Motivation Strategies Questionnaire” (PLMSMQ) and Teachers’ Performance Questionnaire (TPQ)” was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in the field Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation, University of Port Harcourt. The internal consistency index was computed and established using Cronbach Alpha statistic to give a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions, while z-ratio was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that there was significant relationship between principals’ leadership styles as well as motivation strategies on teachers’ performance in public secondary schools in Abia State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the Ministry of Education through the Education board should organize leadership mentoring programmes especially for beginning teachers to promote teachers performance in these schools.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, Principal, teacher, performance, secondary school.

INTRODUCTION
Education has been globally referred to as the noblest industry of the human society. It is the most potent tool for economic progress, social mobilization, political survival and national development of any country. Education industry is therefore a huge venture. This underscores the reason, why 26% of annual revenue of any nation was recommended by The United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to be allocated to the education sector especially the developing countries of which Nigeria is one among them. The Federal Government of Nigeria after the takeover of schools from the missionaries took it as her onus to manage the three tiers of the education system. Each of the tiers of government has clearly outlined fiscal roles at the various level of education within their jurisdiction as defined by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education. One of these levels of education is secondary education. Secondary education in Nigeria is the level of education expected to prepare children for smooth entry into higher institutions and into work place for those whose terminal point of education will be secondary level. It is aimed at developing a child better than the primary level, because it is obvious that primary education is insufficient for children to acquire literacy, numeracy, and communication skills (Ige, 2011). Also, apart from serving as the link between primary and tertiary education, it provides opportunity for a child to acquire additional knowledge, skills, and traits beyond the primary level. In the light of the
Above, secondary education prepares students for useful living within the society and higher education. Secondary education is therefore critical to the education of a child. Ipso facto its effective administration leadership is imperative.

Teachers’ performance could be described in various ways. According to Robert and Tim (1998) it is the act of accomplishing or executing a given tasks. On the other hand Obilade (1999) defined teachers’ performance as the duties performed by a teacher at a particular period in the school system to ensure that educational goals of the school are achieved. In their views, Akinyemi (1993) and Okeniyi (1995) defined it as the ability of teachers to combine relevant inputs for the enhancement of teaching and learning processes. However, Meindl (1995) argued that teachers’ performance is determined by the level of participation in the day to day running of the school.

Supporting this argument, Adepoju (1996) asserted that variables of teachers’ performance such as effective teaching, lesson note preparation, effective use of scheme of work, effective supervision, monitoring of students work and disciplinary ability are virtues which teachers should uphold effectively in the school system. In this regard, teachers’ performance could be measured through annual report of his/her activities in terms of performance in teaching, lesson preparation, and lesson presentation, mastery of subject matter, competence, teachers commitment to job and extra-curricular activities.

Other areas of assessment include effective leadership, supervision of students work; motivation, class control and discipline of the students are the virtues that teachers should uphold effectively in general secondary schools. As such, Ibukun, (1997) argued that the main task of the principal is to create a conducive atmosphere for the teachers to be able to achieve desired changes in students. He noted that teachers perform effectively under different leadership styles. Due to this, the principal was expected to encourage effective performance of their teachers by identifying their needs and trying to satisfying or meeting them. Supporting this argument Ijaiya (2000) remarked that teachers in Nigeria express a desire for more participation in decision-making.

Leadership is critical to effective school administration. The leadership practices in the schools help bring about promoting healthy relationship among the school management and staff and performance, effective teachers delivery which in turns impacts on the overall performance of the students. According to Ali (2014), it is the leadership and style of leadership adopted by an organization that creates the appropriate climate for innovation in organizations. This is to note that school administrators with a strong influence on staff innovation processes in the school has substantial leadership competence; Leadership in innovative projects is often seen as an important administrative function, based on human capabilities like; zest, focus and strategic vision, drive, innovativeness and distinction.

Therefore, it is imperative for secondary schools administrators or principals to learn and understand the importance of the styles of leadership that would enhance positive performance in the administration of schools. In other words, leadership style occupies an important position in school administration as the principal who controls schools resources used them to effect positive achievement of educational goals (Adeyemi, 2004). Leadership styles that can be adopted by principals and head of departments are: democratic leadership style, autocratic leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style, strategic leadership style, transformational leadership, cross-cultural leadership, team leadership, affiliative, coaching, pace setting, visionary, directive, supportive, participative, and facilitative leadership (Gill, 2015, & Johnson, 2017). For the sake of this paper, the researcher will focus on autocratic, democratic or participatory and laissez-faire leadership styles.

Autocratic leadership style is also known as authoritative leadership style. Administrators that adopt this leadership style exhibit consistent behavioural patterns of acting alone and making unilateral decision. An autocratic leader is a leader who tries to exert powerful authority using reward and coercion to influence his/her subordinates; focusing all attention on the production instead of making human needs the centre of attention (Bogler, 2001). In this type of leadership, all decision-making process are leader-centric, since the leader do not welcome suggestions or initiatives from subordinates. However, this style of leadership is successful in providing strong motivation for the leader as it permits the leader to make
decision quickly to tackle exigencies and keeps each decision confidential until he/she wants to share the
decision (De Cremer, 2006).
Some of the advantages of autocratic leadership style are that activities are usually performed quickly
and less time is spent on taking such decision; stress is reduced due to increased control and there can be
a more productive group, while the leader is watching. Nonetheless, autocratic leadership style has some
disadvantage that can hinder increased job performance. When subordinates are not party to decisions
reached they act indifferent to it implementation. It kills innovativeness, creativity and team work among
subordinates which many dislike as they end up being ordered around becoming solely depended on the
leader (De Cremer, 2006).
Democratic or participative leadership style is one that motivate “humanness”, “teamwork” and
participation” of workers (Peteman, 2000). Democratic or participative leadership is used by leaders to
involve employees in the managerial task giving guidance and support. It is also one of the most
convenient styles that allow employees to present their ideas or opinions freely in the organization they
are working for the attainment of organizational goals and objectives (Peteman, 2000). Democratic
leadership, which is participatory in nature, encourages employee participation in decision making and as
such enable members to feel engaged in the organizational processes and thus are highly motivated and
creative (Goleman, 2007).
Ijenwa (2016) observed that participatory management (leadership) in schools promotes a feeling of
honesty, fairness and obligation to work amongst workers. This eventually leads to increased
productivity. Ijenwa stated further that proactive view of participatory management (leadership) in
schools is based on the perception that increased teacher participation is essential to the improvement of
collaborative efforts amongst teachers and principals, leading to enhanced job satisfaction, effectiveness
and efficiency.
Laissez-faire leadership style is adopted when the leader hands over his/her control responsibility to
workers and can be considered as a resource person with passive participation. The laissez faire
leadership style gives complete freedom to subordinates to make decisions regarding any issue in the
organization and to solve any problems they encounter on their own with very little guidance from their
leader. However, working on different activities and making various decisions on different issues or
topics alone without a leader, leads to low productivity and low job satisfaction (Kocker, 2009).
Workers under laissez-faire type of leadership are less productive than those under autocratic or
democratic leadership. This is so, because this type of leadership has total trust on subordinates and as
such does not focus on the management needs of his/her subordinates. Consequently, complete
delegation creates performance problems since the leader does not follow up on subordinates when they
are working (Nsubuga, 2008). Furthermore, no direction is offered to employees where there is laissez-
faire leadership in the organization. Decision making processes are left to the subordinates. This type of
leadership can be successful where members of the group are highly trained in their own areas of
proficiency (Nsubuga, 2008).
Therefore, the concern of this paper is to determine the relationship between autocratic leadership style,
democratic or participatory leadership style and laissez-faire leadership style and teachers’ performance
in secondary schools in Abia State.
**Statement of the Problem**
Leadership is core to the success of every organization. Leadership is supposed to plan, direct, coordinate
the activities of employees in an organization for the attainment of its goals and objectives. It is normal
that when organizations fail in actualizing its objectives it is being attributed to poor or bad leadership. It
is for this reason that different forms of leadership are formulated for administrators to adopt which they
feel will be most appropriate for the success of the organization.
However, experience had shown that many administrators adopt leadership styles that are not employee’s
friendly but that are self-centered for reasons best known to them. This in many situations had killed the
spirit to work among employees and as a result affect their level of job performance. In recent times,
administrators are seen to be more interested in the work being done and not the condition under which
these employees do the work, showing indifferent to their needs and welfare which to a large extent end up demotivating them to work.

It has also been observed that different work situation determine the type of leadership style that is being adopted by administrators to achieve their predetermined objectives not minding if it is okay with the employees or not as long as school objectives are attained. This notwithstanding, it is obvious that the level of teachers’ performance varies from school to school and under different administrators applying different styles of leadership as may be suitable to them. Hence, it becomes imperative for this research to investigate the relationship between principal’s leadership styles and teacher’s performance in public secondary schools in Abia State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study
The aim of this study was to investigate principals’ leadership styles and motivation strategies as determinants of teachers’ performance in public secondary schools in Abia State. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to:
1. identify the relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.
2. ascertain the relationship between Principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.

Research Questions
The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:
1. What is the relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State?
2. What is the relationship between Principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State?

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:
1. There is no significant relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.
2. There is no significant relationship between Principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.

METHODOLOGY
This study adopted the correlation research design. The population of this study was 197 vice-principals from the public secondary schools in Abia State. The stratified sampling technique was used in selecting 132 vice-principals as the sample size which represents 66.67% of the population. Two self-structured questionnaire titled: Principals’ Leadership Styles and Motivation Strategies Questionnaire” (PLSMSQ) and Teachers’ Performance Questionnaire (TPQ) was drawn in line with the four point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used for rating the questionnaire. The instrument was validated by experts in the field of Education Management and Measurement and Evaluation, University of Port Harcourt. The internal consistency index was computed and established using Cronbach Alpha statistic which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used to answer the research questions while z-ratio was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Research Question One:** What is the relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State?

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.

**Table 1: correlation result on the respondent’s ratings on the relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>z-ratio</th>
<th>z-crit.</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Alpha Level</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s Leadership Style</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>0.543</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.0105</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>Statistically significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result in table 1, showed that there was a significant positive relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State with a value of $r=0.54$. It also showed that the z-crit. value of 1.96 was less than the computed calculated z-value of 7.75. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative accepted. That is, there is a significant relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.

**Research Question Two:** What is the relationship between Principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State?

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between Principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.

**Table 2: correlation result on the respondent’s ratings on the relationship between Principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>z-ratio</th>
<th>z-crit.</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Alpha Level</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s Motivation Strategy</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>13.42</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.0224</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>Statistically significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result in table 2, showed that there was a significant positive relationship between principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State with the value of $r=0.94$. It also showed that the z-crit. value of 1.96 was less than the computed calculated z-value of 13.42. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative accepted. That is, there is a significant relationship between principals’ motivational strategy and teachers’ performance in secondary schools in Abia State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

1. The findings of the study show that the autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles have ways of improving the performance of the teachers, this, considering the position that the Laissez-faire style as described by Hackman and Johnson (2009) is the most effective style, especially where followers are mature and highly motivated to take up responsibilities. Laissez-faire leadership style allows complete freedom to group decision without the leader’s participation. Thus, subordinates are free to do what they like. The role of the leader is just to supply materials. The leader does not interfere with or participate in the course of events determined by the group. This type of leadership style was observed in some of the public secondary schools, and the performance is evidenced in the schools. Although autocratic leadership refers to a system that gives full empowerment to the leader with minimal participation from the followers, since this style of leadership usually only involves one person deciding, it permits quick decision-making. Although the autocratic style is relatively unpopular, in certain circumstances it can be an effective strategy, especially when the leader is short on time and when followers are not productive.
2. The findings of the study show that teachers’ performance in secondary schools is significantly influenced by the principals’ motivational strategies. The finding reveals that motivation is vital in ensuring teachers improved performance. This position was supported by the assertions made by UNESCO (2006) that teachers performance is being negatively affected by lack of participate in decision making which is an important motivational package required by teachers at all levels of education. And where teachers are not involved in governance and other motivational packages, it will result to teachers behaving as if they are strangers within the school environment (Ndu & Anogbov, 2007). When teachers are frequently motivated, a high degree of staff morale is always enhanced (Mba, 2004). In other words, consultation, teamwork and other motivation packages are the common key characteristics of successful schools. House and Mitchell (as reported in Oyetunyi, 2006) suggest that a leader can behave in different ways in different situations based on the reward packages at his disposal. Principals who motivate their teachers are the most satisfied and functional in the most orderly and positive manner. Giving that when teachers are adequately motivated, the realization of school goals will be easy, apathy and opposition within the school will be minimized (Udo & Akpa, 2007). All of these contribute to the professional performance of the teachers and achievement of educational goals and objectives.

CONCLUSIONS
Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that motivation has a strong positive relationship on teachers performance while leadership styles of the principal has a moderate positive relationship on teachers performance in public secondary schools in Abia State.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations were made:
i. The Ministry of Education through the Education board should organize regular workshops, seminars and conferences to train principals and teachers on leadership courses that would improve their leadership skills for effective school administration.

ii. New principals in these secondary schools should be exposed to leadership mentoring that will enable them acquire the right leadership skills needed for the administration of the school.

iii. Principals should be supported by the government financially and materially to be able to motivate the teachers under their headship for enhanced performance.

REFERENCES
Adepooj, T. L. (1996). *The factors militating against effective planning and implementation of educational policies in Nigeria*. A paper presented at the WAEC monthly seminar, WAEC National Secretariat Yaba, Lagos, Feb. 28


