



# **Transformational Leadership Style and Institutional Effectiveness: A Critical Review of the Rivers State House of Assembly, 1999 - 2007**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined transformational leadership style and institutional effectiveness in the Rivers State House of Assembly, 1999-2007. It adopted the cross-sectional survey approach and interviews; thereby making it a triangulation. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire and structured interviews. The population of the study was 150 while the sample size was one hundred and nine (109) respondents. The study focused mainly on staff who worked with the Rivers State House of Assembly within the two legislative periods (1999 - 2003 and 2003 - 2007), members of the Press Corps, Civil Society organizations and former legislators. The hypothesis was tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Statistics with test carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that transformational leadership style correlated significantly with institutional effectiveness of the Rivers State House of Assembly. Also, the results of the interview corroborated the empirical finding and identified some significant achievements by the leadership. It is therefore contended that future leaders should consciously try to embed the transformational leadership style so as to meet its goals and constitutional responsibilities of delivering democratic dividends to the key constituencies (private and corporate citizens) and serve as the change agent needed for the transformation of the State.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership Style, Leader-Member-Exchange Theory, Institutional Effectiveness

## **INTRODUCTION**

The quality of leadership is without doubt the single most important factor that separates successful organizations (private or public) and indeed economies from the laggards. Leadership ineffectiveness in Nigeria's public sector is said to have contributed significantly to the country's poor economic performance (Okonjo-Iweala, 2012; Ejimabo, 2013&Ogbeidi, 2012). Since the performance of any organization is mostly a function of the quality of leadership (Sudha, Shahnawaz, & Farhat, 2016; Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012), it is imperative that we examine leadership closely with a view to finding how we can institutionalize 'leadership excellence' in Nigeria and thus improve performance.

According to Inyang and Akaegbu (2014), the public service of any nation is an institution of governance and administration established essentially to deliver public goods and services to the people in the most efficient and effective manner. Expectedly, the starting point for the delivery of public goods and services in any democratic setting is the legislative arm of government because government policies and developmental goals are set into motion starting with the legislators who make laws for good, efficient

and effective governance and set the ground rules for service delivery to the public. When legislators fail the leadership test, the inevitable outcome is inefficient and ineffective management of different public institutions and agencies and this could ultimately lead to service failure or the delivery of poor quality public goods and services, underperformance of government agencies and ultimately underdevelopment of the economy with the attendant effects such as high rate of unemployment, wide spread poverty and insecurity.

Mark and Asheazi (2016) are of the view that Nigerians are gradually sliding into poverty and many studies and opinions have attributed the issues of underdevelopment and stagnancy in economic growth beleaguering Nigeria to public sector inefficiency (Adanri & Thakkar, 2016), lack of institutional capacity (Adegbite, 2015), systemic government failures, fraud and ghost workers (Onyinyechi & Okafor, 2016), challenges of good governance (Oluwa, 2012) and pervasive administrative corruption (Enofe, Afiangbe & Agha, 2017; Ogbeyidi, 2012). Other factors include insecurity and cultural disorientation (Alozieuwu, 2012), religious and cultural diversity (Gilbert & Allen, 2014; Erhagbe, 2012), struggle for supremacy and absence of patriotism (Ogoloma, 2012), and reliance on resource wealth (Luong & Weinthal, 2006). Interestingly, central to all the above factors is the quality of leadership (Okonjo-Iweala, 2012; Sanusi, 2012; Ibijola & Opeyemi, 2013) and Iheduru (2016) buttressed this by stating that Nigeria is plagued by leadership failure. Okonjo-Iweala (2012) further stated that the poor economic situation in Nigeria can be credited to weak public institutions bedevilled by entrenched corruption and Ejimabo (2013) corroborates this assertion; affirming that public service has deteriorated due to the resultant effects of corruption and a lack of quality leadership. Quite clearly, the legislative arm of government has a key role to play in addressing most of these challenges.

Leadership is practiced in all facets of the society - family, communities, schools and colleges, factories and farms, business enterprises, dispensaries and hospitals, civil and military organizations, public life; in short in every walk of life. Also, many people are elected to shoulder the role and responsibilities of leadership through the democratic process. These leaders are expected to promote unity, harmony, stability, happiness, prosperity and perhaps more importantly to deliver democratic dividends to the citizens. The challenges of coping with today's uncertain business environment have put many organizations (private and public) on their toes to struggle for survival in the heat of competition. The driver of such strategic move towards surviving the competition is the leadership provided by top managers and administrators who are expected to influence subordinates to boost their performance thereby improving organizational performance and outcomes. The importance of leadership in organizations and especially on human beings who are apparently the biggest asset of any organization cannot be overstated. They are usually the main drivers of organizations and they give meaning, determine goals and ensure that they are achieved (Shafie, Baghersalimi & Barghi, 2013). It is very paramount to provide workers with direction and psychological satisfaction to get the best from them and this can only come from leaders. Since leadership is a key factor for improving the performance of many if not all organizations, the success or failure of an organization depends on the quality of leadership at all levels. Writers like Paracha, Qamar, Mirza, Hassan and Waqus (2012) are in support of this line of thinking. They contend that leaders play an essential role in the accomplishment of goals and that they boost employee's performance.

Adanri and Thakkar (2016) and Wart (2003) are of the opinion that there is a scarcity of literature on leadership in the public sector and Tummers and Knies (2013) have suggested that there is need for well-designed leadership studies within the public administration domain. Although many studies have commented on the effects of bad leadership in Nigeria, it is however striking that there is limited empirical work on appropriate leadership styles within the public sector in Nigeria. This is even more striking considering the position of Sudha, Shahnawaz and Farhat (2016) that leadership style is the most essential factor that determines leadership effectiveness. Akindele and Afolabi (2013) posit that the essence of leadership effectiveness lies in the fact that the success of any human or organizational endeavour is anchored on the quality of leadership guiding that endeavour. Consequently, this study is an attempt to fill the gap in the literature on leadership in public administration by exploring the possibility

of identifying and adopting leadership styles that are more efficacious for improving institutional efficiency and effectiveness using the Rivers State House of Assembly as a case study.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

The leader-member exchange theory (LMX) which is an action oriented, interaction-based and dualistic theory of leadership will serve as the theoretical framework for this study. The model was developed in the late 1970s by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) and it has confronted some well-known conventional assumptions about leadership behaviour. It is a relationship-based approach to leadership that focuses on how the two-opposing sides of the relationship; that is the leaders and followers and how leaders influence the behaviour of organizational members. The theory contends that a leader might be compassionate and understanding towards a team member yet indifferent and stern towards another employee. Each of these pairs of associations or dyads should be weighed up in terms of whether the group member is favoured or not by the leader. The leader's first intuition of a group member's proficiency has influence on whether the individual fits into the in-group or the out-group. In-group members have comparable ideals and mind-set with the leader but out-group members do not have much shared values with the leader and maybe somewhat disconnected from him or her. Further, in-group members can turn out to be a part of a horizontal implementation team while out-group members are unlikely to pull-off good collaboration (DuBrin, 1997).

Leader member exchange theory contrasts with behavioural leadership theories that centre on assumptions of what leaders do. The theory is anchored on the postulation that leaders sway individual's in their group through the superiority of the interaction they build or develop with them. One of the earliest discoveries of the leader-member exchange theory is that leaders build associations of anecdotal nature with their subordinates and a wide preponderance of research are in agreement on this matter (Liden & Graen, 1980). Strong and excellent association/affiliation is exemplified by confidence, specialized reverence, and trustworthiness. It is the relationship between leaders and subordinates that determines the quality of expected result. Close relationship is distinguished by the investment and transfer of cherished assets to subordinates. In such interactions, leaders make available support mechanisms, provide improvement and development opportunities, guidance and other benefits to subordinates. The availability of these benefits kindles the impulse to respond to the leader on the part of subordinates and groups, by entrenching behaviours such as devotion and advanced level commitment. In other words, feelings of obligation and high levels of commitment and support to the leader often manifest as the link between high quality leader-member exchange, pro-manager and sometimes pro-organizational behaviours.

Furthermore, the degree to which employees believe that their leaders' promises are to be fulfilled is a link between leader-member exchange and employee results that is rooted in their level of commitment. Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson and Wayne (2008) noted that psychological contract violation is a mediator of the relationship between leader-member exchange and commitment outcomes, trust and turnover intentions. Many scholars are also of the view that, leader-member exchange theory is a good mediator of leadership behaviours such as transformational or ethical leadership and outcomes such as commitment and effectiveness (Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang & Chen 2005). This is the reason why the way in which leaders act toward members is a pointer to how helpful, dependable, and devoted the leader is toward members and nourishes the interaction quality either positively or negatively. It is therefore little wonder that teams in a high-quality exchange relationship see their leaders as transformational, change agents, principled, genuine, less offensive and supportive (Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman & Christensen, 2011).

Leaning on the forgoing discourse, the use of LMX theory as the theoretical framework for this study is highly justified. This is premised on the fact that every leader depends on the collective effort of subordinates for the achievement of organizational goals and the extent to which the leader is able to gain their cooperation is anchored on the type of leader-member relationship alignment at play which also predisposes the adoption of a given leadership style. Again, the import of the leader-member exchange

relationship is accentuated in a legislative institution where the effectiveness of the Speaker (who is the leader) and indeed the Leadership of the House in the delivery of services is dependent on their relationship with other legislators, staff of the assembly and other stakeholders. Further, although there are many leadership styles ranging from autocratic to democratic with many variants such as transactional, transformational and servitude in between, the focus in this study is on transformational leadership style to underscore the expected transformative nature of a political institution such as the Rivers State House of Assembly.

### **The Concept of Transformational Leadership Style**

This study focuses on transformational leadership style. An early reference of the concept of transformational leadership was by Downton (1973). However, the construct did not become popular until it was adopted by writers with classical persuasion who saw it as a variant of charismatic leadership in which the leader is visualized as an unusual creature that disciples depend on for direction. Thus, transformational leadership could be said to be an outgrowth of charismatic leadership. Charisma is a Greek word, which means gift of grace. Specifically, Yammarino (1994) believes that the individual characteristics of charismatic leaders include a high degree of self-confidence, strong moral convictions, and the ability to influence others. However, transformational leadership is a broader concept than charismatic leadership. It refers to the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes and assumptions of organization members and building commitment for the organization's mission, objectives and strategies. While exploring management excellence for economic transformation, the leader of UAE explained transformational leaders thus: A great leader creates more great leaders and does not reduce the institution to a single person (Al Maktoum, 2013). Equally, expressing a mission, challenging the objectives, and motivating others are important attributes of transformational leaders. Bass and Avolio (1994) believe that transformational leadership is entrenched when the leader promotes his or her employees' interests, by creating awareness and the acceptance for the mission at hand and thus motivating employees to see beyond just their own interests to seeing the group's interests.

Thus, transformational leadership is the process of creating conscious influence on individuals or groups to create and institutionalize a culture of continuous change in the organization as a whole. Through words and actions, the transformational leader exercise influence on followers and are thus able to impact on the whole organization. This type of leadership is realized when leaders increase the employees' interests by informing them about the company or group's objectives and missions, and then encouraging them to think beyond their individual interests (Cetin, Karabay&Mehmet,2012; Saleem, 2015). Using mechanisms such as rewards, communication, and organizational policies, a transformational leader creates a dynamic empowerment culture with active and innovative features. This culture causes transformational leadership to be more successful by working in dynamic settings which makes this style of leadership ideal for change and crisis management.

The early theory of transformational leadership was developed by Burns (1978). A more detailed description of leadership theory viewed transformational leaders to have the ability to make their followers more aware of the importance and values of task outcomes, activate their higher order needs, and stimulate followers to act for the sake of the organization. Transformational leadership involves motivating the followers to perform beyond the minimum level of requirements for the organization by putting high level goals and developing appropriate work environment (Rafferty &Griffin, 2004). Transformational leaders are seen by their colleagues and employees as more satisfying and effective than transactional leaders since the later generally disregards focusing on developing the long-term potential of followers and meeting their needs (Lievens, Van Geit &Coetsier, 1997).

Additionally, transformational leadership goes beyond transactional leadership in promoting others to become leaders and helping followers to achieve higher levels of organizational functioning. The factors that manifest transformational leadership traits are charisma and idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004; Pillai, Schriesheim & Williams1999; Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003). The first component, charisma is seen as romanticized influence and described as follower's dependence in and expressively identifying

with a leader. Charisma can also be seen as the extent to which subordinates recognize and relate with their supervisors and managers. Secondly, inspirational motivation, means that followers are provided with signs and arousing requests for paying attention on goal attainment and are committed towards possible opportunities and better ways of doing things. Thirdly, intellectual or scholarly stimulation refers to the ability of followers to be allowed to ask questions about the way of carrying out tasks so as to move away from the past and to get involved in decision making. The last factor, individualized consideration, means that subordinates receive personal attention from the leader and assignments are delegated to them to provide learning opportunities (Bass, 1990; Pillai *et al.*, 1999).

Flowing from the above, subordinates tend to reciprocate by supporting the leader's agenda and performing beyond expectations. Hence, transformational leaders can develop high quality leader-member exchange relationships with followers, through which they influence the followers' performance (Wang, *et al.*, 2005). Because transformational leaders inspire followers with attractive vision, express optimism and high expectations for excellence and performance on the part of followers they are able to move followers beyond their normal level of performance to a higher threshold.

Further, the application of transformational leadership style improves performance precisely because these leaders attempt to develop knowledge and employees' potentials. A transformational leader provides opportunity and confidence to subordinates to carry out duties in accordance with their mind-sets to achieve organizational goals. Thus, transformational leaders encourage subordinates to embed organizational vision and goals as their driving force. Also, by treating subordinates individually they stimulate them to act critically and to solve problems in new ways thereby encouraging and motivating them to deliver effective performance. In conclusion, transformational leaders are visionary, team builders, entrepreneurial and exemplified by passion for excellence and integrity. It is therefore safe to contend that there is an asymmetry between transformational and authentic leaders (George & Sims, 2007).

### **Institutional (Organizational) Effectiveness**

Institutional and organizational effectiveness are used interchangeably in this study. Organizational effectiveness is understandably a subject that is of interest to management scholars and administrators and yet not properly defined or understood. This may be due to the fact that the concept is broad and multi-dimensional (Amah, 2014). The subject has been variously defined. For example, it has been visualized as a qualification attached to an organization resulting from the comparison from the actual state of the entity against its ideal state (Veldsman, 1982). It is further contended that an organization can either be effective or ineffective and that effective organizations are built around quality individuals who work effectively in groups (Lawler, 1972). Interestingly, a major research project that was funded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) called the 'Excellence Study' that was led by James Grunig made significant progress towards improving our understand by answering the question: what is organizational effectiveness?

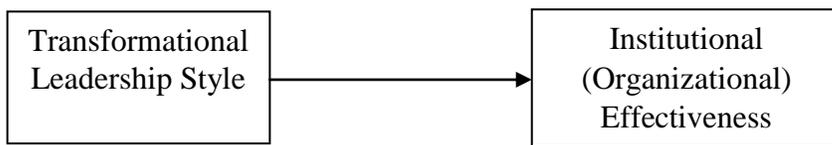
The Excellence study, categorized organizational effectiveness into two broad perspectives – goal attainment and strategic constituency satisfaction perspectives (Grunig & Grunig, 2008). Essentially, effective organizations are said to set clear goals that are measurable so that they know when they have achieved them, when they have missed the target and when corrective actions have to be taken. It is further contended that an effective organization is one that is most efficient at what it seeks to do and most effective it can be in accomplishing its goals and mission (Grunig & Grunig, 2008). Thus, whereas effective organizations are seen to have clear goals and values which they focus on and develop strategies to achieve, ineffective organizations have changing, inconsistent and unclear values and goals.

The strategic constituency satisfaction perspective is closely related to, and is indeed an outgrowth of stakeholder mapping or analysis. This perspective focuses on satisfying the strategic stakeholders and or constituencies - the primary reason why the organization is in business. Very often, the continued survival of the organization is contingent on the extent to which the strategic constituencies are satisfied. Although the Excellence Study originated in the public relations domain, an interesting and important conclusion is

that the findings are universal or generic and apply to all cultures (national or organizational), organizational size and industry (Grunig, Grunig & Vervic, 1998). In particular, not only are the two measures of effectiveness useful for the study of leadership styles in general, they are perhaps better suited for the study of leadership styles in a legislative institution. First, the legislature is a political institution and legislators come to power with a legislative agenda that encapsulate the goals they have to accomplish. Further, the goals flow from the needs of the strategic constituencies – the citizens – that elected them to office in the first place. Therefore, a legislature that does not deliver on its goals or that cannot satisfy its key constituencies may not be re-elected at the end of the legislative cycle. Seen in this light, goal attainment and strategic constituency satisfactions must be the main preoccupation of the leadership of any good legislature and thus interesting measures of institutional effectiveness.

From the foregoing, we hereby hypothesized thus:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and effectiveness in service delivery of the Rivers State House of Assembly.



***Fig.1 Operational Framework for the hypothesized relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Institutional Effectiveness***

***Source: Authors’ Desk Research, 2020***

**Overview and Leadership of the Rivers State House of Assembly**

Rivers State was formally in Eastern Nigeria and is a creation of the military administration of General Yakubu Gowon in May, 1967. However, the first Rivers State House of Assembly was not convoked until October 1979 under the leadership of Hon. (Chief) R. R. Briggs while the Second Assembly led by Hon. (Chief) R. R. Briggs commenced legislative work in October 1983 but was terminated abruptly on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1983 following a military coup by General Muhammadu Buhari. The Third Assembly only started in 1992 but was also abruptly terminated in 1993. But despite its short lifespan, it was very unstable and had four Speakers namely: Rt. Hon. Ongolo Talford, Rt. Hon. Tuesday Kemeagbeye, Rt. Hon. Enegesi Clardius and Rt. Hon. Stephen Ezekwen. This study focuses on the Fourth and Fifth Assemblies (1999-2003 and 2003-2007) that followed the return to democratic rule in 1999 with Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi as the Speaker. Interestingly, the House of Assembly has not suffered any break in operation since the inauguration of The Fourth Assembly in May, 1999.

The House of Assembly has two categories of operatives - the political class and bureaucracy. The political class led by the Speaker is made up of elected representatives (legislators) from various constituencies in the state. Legislators are responsible for making new laws and changing existing ones. They also propose bills, pass budgets, exercise responsibility for appropriation and undertake oversight functions in the State. The legislators are the closest people to the electorate and to perform effectively, governments require a bond of trust between them and citizens. Leadership of the Rivers State House of Assembly rests with the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and other Principal Officers as provided for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules of the House. The bureaucracy is made up of career Civil Servants and headed by the Clerk of the House. It has two components; the permanent staff and the legislative aides to the Legislators. The Clerk is assisted by the Deputy Clerk, Heads of Departments and Units and other staff. The Assembly has about two hundred staff and the Rivers State House of Assembly Service Commission is charged with responsibility for the recruitment, discipline and welfare of legislative staff.

**Gap in Existing Literature**

Leadership is a fertile field of enquiry and a large body of empirical evidence has demonstrated that leadership behaviours influence employee and organizational performance; that strong leaders outperform weak leaders, and that transformational leaders generate higher performance than transactional leaders (Burns 1978; Bass, 1990; Howell and Avolio 1993). Research in organizational behaviour has further identified transformational leadership as the most suitable for modern-day organizations (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Kotter, 1988; Meyer & Botha, 2000). Interestingly, most Nigerian writers and commentators acknowledge that leadership is critical for organizational performance. They also subscribe to poor quality leadership as the source of the country’s poor economic performance. However, most of the commentaries are not backed by solid empirical work on leadership in general and on the leadership styles behind the ineffectiveness in the delivery of public services and the poor institutional performance for which there is much rhetoric. Perhaps more worrisome is the fact that the leadership styles of the political actors (particularly the legislators) who are major drivers of public sector performance is hardly put under the microscope. This study is an attempt to make a small contribution in that direction.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey method augmented with oral interviews; which means that a triangulation approach was used. This study covered employees of the Rivers State House of Assembly who have been in service between the years 1999-2007 (the period under review), former legislators, members of the Press Corps and Civil Society Organizations. The population was 150 respondents from which a sample size of one hundred and nine (109) was drawn using the Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination. The respondents were selected purposively and Spearman’s rank correlation was used for hypothesis testing with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Also, the study adopted a structured in-depth interviews. An inbuilt phone audio recorder was used to document the interview proceedings. In total, ten (10) persons were interviewed as follows: Five (5) Senior Staff of the Rivers State House of Assembly; Two (2) Former Legislators; Two (2) Members of the Press Corps and One (1) person from a Civil Society Organization

**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

**Bivariate Analysis**

Data analysis was carried out using the Spearman’s rank correlation at a 95% confidence interval. Specifically, the test covered  $H_{01}$  that was bivariate and declared in the null form. The level of significance 0.05 is adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in ( $p > 0.05$ ) or rejecting the null hypothesis in ( $p < 0.05$ ).

***H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and effectiveness in service delivery of the Rivers State House of Assembly.***

**Table 1: Correlation for transformational leadership and institutional effectiveness**

			Transformational Leadership	Effectiveness
Spearman's rho	Transformational Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.665**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	81	81
	Effectiveness	Correlation Coefficient	.665**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	81	81

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data 2020, (SPSS output version 23.0)

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and institutional effectiveness. In particular, the correlation coefficient 0.665 represents a very high correlation between the variables and it is statistically significant at  $p < 0.000 < 0.05$ . Therefore, based on empirical findings, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and institutional effectiveness in the Rivers State House of Assembly, 1999-2007.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

As part of the study, oral interviews were conducted to generate qualitative data to augment and substantiate the quantitative findings from the survey. The interview questions were designed to: 1) deepen understanding of the predominant leadership style; 2) gain understanding of the extent to which the Rivers State House of Assembly was effective in the delivery of service and the management of resources; 3) underline the relationship between the legislature (and also the legislators) and the major constituency (the citizens) and the Executive; and 4) highlight the key achievements of the leadership of the Rivers State House of Assembly during the period under review. Two former legislators - Honourable Kitchner who represented Akuku-Toru Constituency 1 and Honourable Glory Chukwu who represented Obio-Akpor Constituency 1 in the Assembly participated in the oral interviews and their views made the findings more robust and interestingly they also agreed for their names to be mentioned in this study.

Most of the interviewees were of the view that the Leadership of the House of Assembly managed the affairs and resources responsibly and that they delivered democratic dividends to the people of Rivers State. In particular, Honourable Kitchner stated thus: **“The House was committed to the needs of the people of Rivers State. All the laws we passed were designed to improve the lives of Rivers people. In fact, Constituency Projects started in Rivers State and this enabled us to execute projects that touched people in their communities.”**

On the question about decision making, most of the respondents were of the view that the House leadership delegated work to other legislators and staff of the Rivers State House of Assembly. One interviewee captured it thus:

***“We were generally allowed to carry on with our work and to make decisions in appropriate cases.”***

The legislators were in agreement on this point and noted that the leadership worked amicably with other legislators. In particular, they observed that the House was united and inclusive and that legislators were consulted on most issues and that they were motivated and helped to do their work better through human capital development initiatives such training programmes, seminars and the services of consultants. They further noted that when they had disagreements, that these were resolved in informal sessions. These are indicative of the leadership style but when probed pointedly about the leadership style, Honourable Kitchner was of the view that the style hovered between democratic and transformational. However, Honourable Chukwu on his part noted that many leadership styles were used at different times but that the transformational style was very pronounced.

The question about the relationship with the Executive is very revealing. Honourable Chukwu observed thus:

***“The leadership of the House was almost like part of the Executive Branch. The House Leadership collaborated closely and worked harmoniously with the Executive and the House got the resources and support it needed to do its work.”***

Most of the interviewees were in agreement on this point and they contended that the good relationship with the Executive Branch made it possible for the House to record a lot of achievements during the period 1999 - 2007. In particular, the following achievements and accomplishments were noted by a cross section of interviewees:

- i) The House leadership worked closely with the Executive Branch and was able to institutionalize a functional and stable Assembly contrary to the instability and legislative rascality that characterized the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly that preceded the return to democracy which lasted about one year but had four Speakers.

- ii) The leadership tackled the deficiency in legislative manpower which was the outcome of long military rule by putting in place human capital development programmes and initiatives (training, conferences, etc.) for legislators and staff as well as equipping offices with computers.
- iii) To motivate workers and keep them committed, housing loans and official cars were procured for senior staff.
- iv) The House leadership initiated, completed and moved the Rivers State House of Assembly to a befitting permanent House of Assembly Complex.

In conclusion, the consensus was that the House was united, worked harmoniously with the Executive, recorded many notable achievements and effectively delivered democratic dividends to the people of Rivers State. Further, the finding from the qualitative data strongly corroborates the statistical results above. Drawing from the interviewees in general and from the former legislators in particular, the leadership style of the Rivers State House of Assembly oscillated between transformational, transactional, democratic and even autocratic styles, but the former (transformational) was adjudged to be predominant. This position was further supported by the catalogue of transformational initiatives recorded during the period. Drawing from the quantitative and qualitative tests, it is safe to conclude that the leadership style was transformational and that it met the key measures of effectiveness – goal attainment and strategic constituency satisfaction.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings reveal that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and institutional effectiveness. This relationship was tested using the Spearman's rank order correlation at a confidence interval of 95% and a significance level of 0.05. The findings from the test revealed the hypothetical statement to be false and as such based on the evidence of significant effects, the null hypothesis was rejected. It is therefore safe to say that the results from the analysis identified transformational leadership style as having a strong bearing on institutional effectiveness. Further, the findings of this study are in agreement with the position of other empirical studies which contend that the quality of leadership is probably the single most important factor that separates successful organizations (private or public) and indeed economies from laggards. In particular, it has been demonstrated that the performance of any organization is mostly a function of the quality of leadership (Sudha, Shahnawaz, & Farhat, 2016; Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012) and poor quality of leadership in Nigeria's public sector is said to have contributed significantly to the country's poor economic performance (Okonjo-Iweala, 2012; Ejimabo, 2013; Ogbeide, 2012).

Under transformational leadership, employees may receive individualized attention from the leader. As a result, they tend to reciprocate by supporting the leader's agenda and performing beyond expectations. Hence, transformational leaders can develop high quality leader-member exchange relationships with followers, through which they influence their followers' performance (Wang *et al.*, 2005). Followers will be motivated to meet performance expectations and fulfil their end of the contract in order to be rewarded accordingly (Bass, 1985). A strong empirical support for the relationship between leaders' contingent reward and employee performance has also been found (Podsakoff, Bommer, Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 2006). Also, transformational leaders inspire followers with attractive vision, express optimism and high expectations for excellence and performance on the part of followers. It should be able to move followers beyond their normal level of performance (Bass, 1985).

A positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance has been found in both lab (Howell & Frost, 1989) and field settings (Bass, 1985). Raja and Palanichamy (2015) examined the effect of leadership styles on employee performance in public vs. private sector enterprises in India. From 43 middle-level managers and 15 subordinates, the study provided strong evidence, at the 5% level of significance, that there is a linear positive relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee performance. It is worth pointing out that although the LMX relationship may start as transactional, it can become transformational at its more advance stage; hence the positive

influence on employee performance. However, that study found that laissez-faire leadership had a negative relationship with the employee performance/outcomes.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Our study discovered a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership style and institutional effectiveness. The study further identified remarkable achievements that are transformational in nature. Thus, leaders who are driven by the desire to achieve better performance should try and adopt the transformational leadership style. The confirmation that transformational leadership style was predominant during the two legislative periods under investigation is a major contribution to knowledge of this study. Further, the research instruments used in this study are novel and can be modified and adapted for future studies within the legislative arena.

Based on the discussion and conclusion above, it is recommended that:

Future leaders of the Rivers State House of Assembly should build on the achievements made during the period 1999 – 2007. Further, given the fact that transformational leadership style is strongly correlated with effective service delivery and good performance, leaders of the Rivers State House of Assembly and indeed leaders of other legislative Houses in Nigeria should consciously try to move towards the transformational leadership style continuum.

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