

PERCEPTIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS ON THE APPLICATION OF PRINCIPALS' TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE PRACTICES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTH CENTRAL GEOGRAPHICAL ZONE, NIGERIA

BY

Omuya Ohunene Florence Ph.D: Department of Educational Foundations,
Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State; E-mail: florence.omuya@fulokoja.edu.ng

Aremu Abdulganiyu Sulyman: Department of Educational Foundations,
Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State; E-mail: aremu.suleiman@fulokoja.edu.ng

&

Yusuf Saleh: Department of Art and Social Science Education,
Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State; E-mail: yusuf.saleh@fulokoja.edu.ng

Abstract

This study examines the perception of stakeholders on the application of Principals' Transformational Leadership Styles Practices in Secondary Schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. The objective of the study was to examine perception of stakeholders on the application of Principals' Transformational Leadership Style Practices in Secondary Schools in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. The research question and the null hypothesis is in line with the objective. Relevant literatures were reviewed. The study used a descriptive survey, the population of the study covered a total population of 92,089 which comprises 3,167 principals, 61,825 teachers, 1,665 Ministry of Education officials and 25,432 PTA officials. The total sample size was one thousand four hundred and twenty-six 1,426 which consist of 345 principals, 382 teachers, 321 MOE officials and 378 PTA officials. Self-structured questionnaire was used to elicit responses from participants. It was pilot tested in two secondary schools outside the sampled schools with reliability coefficient of 0.72 using split half test. Perceptions of respondents were analyzed using frequency counts for research question answered and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for hypothesis analyzed to express the result of the findings. The findings show that principals that practice transformational leadership style creates a good and friendly atmosphere for teachers to perform effectively. The study concludes that transformational leadership style was found to be most common in most school's secondary schools in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. The study recommends that principals needs to shift to transformative approach of leadership so as to improve students' performance and staff commitment.

Keywords: Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Leadership Style Application, Stakeholder

Introduction

Leadership is seen as ability to influence people behaviours individually or in groups towards achievement of desired objectives. It is therefore not surprising that stakeholders are mounting pressure on effective leadership among principals of secondary schools. It seems that many principals have not considered their styles of leadership in the administration of schools. As such leadership style occupies an important position in school's administration in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. Overtime, researchers have proposed many different styles of leadership as there is no particular style of leadership that can be considered universal. Okumbe,

(2008) indicates that leadership style refers to a particular behaviour applied by the leader to motivate his or her subordinates to achieve the objectives of the organization. Principals leadership in schools' organization is important because he or she is responsible for providing direction, support to members of staff, students and parents. More so, parents, teachers and officials of ministry of education viewed principal's choice of leadership style as having a direct effect in school administration and classroom practice. Schools success through school's capacity involves leadership decisions that include parents, teachers, ministry officials and students in the process of problem-solving. The schools in which parents, teachers collaborate in problem solving aid students conduct (King and Newman, 2001). This paper looks into transformational leadership style, transformational leadership is leading by motivation. It provides extra ordinary motivation by appealing to follower's ideas, moral values and inspiring them to think about problems in way (Fabian, 2014). Transformational leadership style is a process that changes the organization by transforming followers to leaders and agents of change.

The relationship between leaders and followers in transformational leadership style involves goal, personality and its effects. For instance, transformational leadership style involves the building of relationship with followers based on personal, emotional and inspirational exchange with the goal of developing followers to their fullest potentials (Callow, 2009). Bass (2010) states that transformational leadership style is about leaders' involvement in coming up with strategic and clear vision, communicating the vision effectively to the subordinates. Transformational leadership attributes are associated with nurturing and caring. Leadership is concerned with achieving organizational goals, therefore, Islam (2013) suggests that transformational leadership is characterized with the positive and cooperative attitude, helping the subordinate to achieve the organizational desired outcomes. However, transformational leadership is also an interaction process between leaders and followers to achieve their goals. Archividili (2001) describes a transformational leader as providing intellectual stimulation to employees by encouraging them to rely upon new approaches to solving old problems, to explore new ways of achieving the organization mission and goals, to employ reasoning, rationality, evidence rather than unsupported opinions and to utilize intuition. Compare with other leadership styles transformational leaders can teach, educate and train employees better (Islam, 2013). Bolden (2003) states that transformational leaders expand a follower's self-interest, increase the confidence of followers, elevate follower's expectations, heighten the value of the leaders intended outcomes for the followers, encourage behavioral change and motivate them to a higher level of achievement.

However, for transformational leadership style, the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty and respect towards the leaders, and are motivated to do more than was original expect to do (Katz and Kahn, 2008). Principals who adopt this style motivate the staff by making them aware of the importance of task outcome, inducing them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the school. He encourages staff to think critically and seek new ways of approach their jobs through various seminars and training that can result in intellectual stimulation.

Statement of the Problem

For many years, in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigerians who have a stake in Education expect schools to be effective and successful in a bid to achieve the educational goals. To effectively run the administration of secondary schools, the principal is central in setting the tone of the school; the principal is to employ leadership style which will ensure smooth running

of the administration. However, the principal exhibits leadership style that reduces involvement of teachers in decision which often results in conflict of interest among teachers and principals. The Educational system in North Central Geographical Zone is riddled with serious problems linked to poor leadership behavior by the principal which leads to: Conflict between principals and teachers, teachers truancy without apparent reason, poor attendance of teachers, mismanagement of school funds, fight between teachers and students, taking decisions without consulting other management staff, late coming of staff and lack of dedication, laziness and poor attitude towards teaching, absence of staff motivation, inadequate supervision, limited professional development opportunities, absence of leadership prestige by principal, and poor management of discipline which affects the schools overall performance.

Cases of indiscipline relating to breach of school rules and regulations, cases like lateness to school, absenteeism and wearing non-uniform dresses and every other misbehavior has become rampant in our secondary schools with reference to the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. In a school where they set aside the rules and regulations and do what they like and undo what they are expected to do is just like a state where laws, orderliness and authorities are broken down and Abbasialiya (2010) suggested that principals leadership style should be such that can address the issues of discipline among students.

Objective of the Study

The following objective guided the study:

1. Examine perceptions of stakeholders on principal's application of transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria.

Research Question

This question was sought to guide the study:

1. How do stakeholders perceive principals' application of transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

This null hypothesis was formulated for the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference among the perceptions of principals, teachers, officials of Ministry of Education and PTA officials on principals' application of transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria.

Methodology

A survey research involves gathering of data about a target population from a sample and generalizing the findings obtained from the analysis of sample to the entire population. The researchers survey the views of secondary schools' principals, teachers, PTA executive officials and ministry of education officials on the application of principals' transformational leadership style in secondary schools in North Central Geographical Zone. The group of respondents that were involved in this study comprised the principals, teachers, PTA executive officials and ministry of education officials in North Central Geographical Zone.

The population of this study comprised the entire secondary school principals, teachers, PTA officials in all secondary schools and Ministry officials in North Central Geographical Zone

Nigeria which comprises 3,167 principals, 61,825 teachers, 1,665 Ministry of Education officials and 25,432 PTA officials making a total of 92,089. The groups were chosen because of their level of maturity and experience.

Table 1: Breakdown of the Population Distribution

State	Principals	Teachers	MOE Officials	PTA Officers	Executive
Kogi	420	7,200	200	3,360	
Nasarawa	420	7,100	245	3,360	
Benue	430	7,800	230	3,440	
Niger	419	8,954	310	3,352	
Kwara	500	10,200	230	4,000	
Plateau	520	11,000	200	4,160	
FCT Abuja	470	9,600	250	3,760	
TOTAL 7	3,167	61,825	1,665	25,432	

Source: Planning Research and Statistics (2017) State Ministry of Education North-Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria

A sample is that portion drawn from the population that is studied. It is what the researcher selects for the purpose of data collection and analysis, for the purpose of this research a Research Advisors (2006) at 0.95 confidence level was used to determine the sample size of the state, principals, teachers, MOE and PTA ExcOs officials. The total sample size was one thousand four hundred and twenty-six (1,426). That consisted of 345 principals, 382 teachers, 321 MOE officials and 378 PTA Officials. However, the percentage of the population was used together with the total sample size obtained through the research advisor. Thus is in line with Adetoro (2009) which state that the percentage of a population can be used to get the total sample desired, therefore the percentage of each population of the respondents according to each state were derived through the total population of each respondents divided by the total population multiplied by 100 and is divided by 100 and multiplied by the total sample size from research advisor. Invariably the percentage used to get sample size differs as the total population of each respondent differs.

The instrument used for this research was structured questionnaire that was designed by the researchers. The use of a questionnaire is an instrument for measuring attitudes. Questionnaire has administrative and psychological advantages of accessing a large /number of individuals at minimum cost and it has the possibility of confidentially which encourages objective responses. The questionnaire focuses on perceptions of stakeholders on the application of principals' transformational Leadership style practices in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. The construct validity and criterion validity was used. This is in line with Achara (2001) who asserted that content validity is usually determined by expert. So the validity of this instrument was determined by the expert in Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and the statistician. A pilot study was conducted in two schools, Community Secondary School, Okaito in Kogi State and Government Secondary school, Jebun in Nassarawa State. One hundred questionnaires were administered to principals, teachers, MOE officials, PTA Executive officials and reliability coefficient obtained was 0.72 the reliability of a questionnaire is the degree to which it is consistent or reliable. The split-half test method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument on respondents who were not

part of the actual sample of the study with the help of two research assistants. The structured questionnaire used 5 Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Copies of the instrument were completed and returned on the spot. Data collection took about 2 weeks and all the respondents correctly completed the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.72. This was high enough for the instrument to be considered reliable. According to Cronbach (1970), instrument is reliable when it reliability scores is above 0.5. Therefore, any instrument with reliability score below 0.5 may not be appropriate for study. Hence, the choice of instrument for this study was reliable.

Percentages and frequencies distribution were used to analyses opinions from the principals, teachers, MOE officials and PTA Excos officials were used to determine the independence observation or opinion of respondents. In order to test the null hypothesis inferential statistics Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed using deviation formula at 0.05 significant level.

Results

In this section, the perceptions of respondents were sought on perceptions of stakeholders on principals’ application of transformational leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria.

Table 2 shows the perceptions of the respondents on perceptions of stakeholders on principals’ application of transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. In the table the perceptions were presented in frequencies and percentages.

Table 2: Perceptions of Respondents on Perceptions of Stakeholders on Principals’ application of Transformational Leadership style practices in Secondary School in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria

S/N	Items statement	Category of Respondents	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
			F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
1	The Principal motivates his teachers and students to high level of performance on extra-curricular activities.	Principals	302	87.5	41.2		39	11.3
		Teachers	335	87.7	51.3		42	11.0
		MOE	279	86.9	41.2		38	11.8
		PTA	365	96.6	30.8		10	2.6
2	The principal acts as a role model to other members in the school to copy.	Principals	332	96.2	00		13	3.8
		Teachers	366	95.8	10.3		15	3.9
		MOE	309	96.3	0	0	12	3.7
		PTA	331	87.6	5	1.3	42	11.1
3	The principal demonstrates concern for the needs and feelings of the staff through welfare contribution.	Principals	336	97.4	1	0.3	8	2.3
		Teachers	370	96.9	2	0.5	10	2.6
		MOE	312	97.2	1	0.3	8	2.5
		PTA	362	95.8	1	0.3	15	4.0
4	The principal uses motivation as a tool to increase teachers and students performance.	Principals	327	94.8	12	3.5	6	1.7
		Teachers	346	90.6	14	3.7	22	5.8
		MOE	305	95.0	11	3.4	5	1.6
		PTA	366	96.8	2	0.5	10	2.6

5	The principal encourages teachers and students to be innovative and creative in the school.	Principals	334	96.8	7	2.0	4	1.2
		Teachers	366	95.8	8	2.1	8	2.1
		MOE	311	96.9	7	2.2	3	0.9
		PTA	342	90.5	14	3.7	22	5.8
6	The principal creates a good working condition and favorable climate for teachers to perform effectively.	Principals	332	96.2	6	1.7	7	2.0
		Teachers	364	95.3	8	2.1	10	2.6
		MOE	310	96.9	5	1.6	6	1.9
		PTA	362	95.8	8	2.1	8	2.1
7	The principal has a vision of what they want to achieve in the school.	Principals	336	97.4	3	0.9	6	1.7
		Teachers	369	96.6	3	0.8	10	2.6
		MOE	313	97.5	3	0.9	5	1.6
		PTA	360	95.2	8	2.1	10	2.6
8	The principal sets a standard for every staff members to follow in the school.	Principals	336	97.4	3	0.9	6	1.7
		Teachers	369	96.6	7	1.8	6	1.6
		MOE	314	97.8	5	1.6	2	0.6
		PTA	365	96.6	7	1.9	6	1.6
9	The principal provides emotional support to teachers during difficult times.	Principals	337	97.7	2	0.6	6	1.7
		Teachers	370	96.9	2	0.5	10	2.6
		MOE	313	97.5	2	0.6	6	1.9
		PTA	366	96.8	2	0.5	10	2.6
10	Principal promotes teachers and students welfare.	Principals	323	93.5	9	2.6	13	3.8
		Teachers	355	92.9	10	2.6	17	4.5
		MOE	301	93.8	8	2.5	12	3.7
		PTA	351	92.9	10	2.6	17	4.5

In response to items 1 to 10 which sought the stakeholder's perceptions of principals' application of transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria, responses of all respondents were collected, analyzed and discussed. Response to item 1 reveals that 302 (87.5%) of principals agreed that principal motivates his teachers and students to high level of performance on extra-curricular activities in the school, 39 (11.3%) disagreed, 4 (1.2%) of the principals were undecided. While 335 (87.7%) teachers agreed, 42 (11.0%) disagreed, and insignificant number of respondents 5 (1.3%) were undecided. Among the ministry of education officials, 279 (86.9%) agreed, 38 (11.8%) disagreed while 4 (1.2%) were undecided. Also, 365 (96.6%) of PTA agreed while, 10 (2.6%) disagreed and 3 (0.8%) were undecided. In all, the respondents showed a greater magnitude of their response that principal motivates his teachers and students to high level of performance on extra-curricular activities in the schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. The result shows that, they are affirmative. In response to item 2, it was revealed that 332 (96.2%) of principals agreed that principal acts as a role model to other members in the school to copy, 13 -- (3.8%) disagreed, and none of the principals responded to undecided. While 366 (95.8%) teachers agreed, 15 (3.9%) disagreed, and insignificant number of respondents 1 (0.3%) was undecided. Among the ministry of education officials, 309 (96.3%) agreed 12 (3.7%) disagreed while there was no response towards undecided. Also, 331 (87.6%) of PTA agreed while, 42 (11.1%) disagreed and 5 (1.3%) were undecided. In all, the respondents showed a greater magnitude of their response that principals act as a role model to other members in the school to

copy in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. The result shows that they are affirmative.

Going by the respondent’s perceptions on items 3, 4, 5 where no respondent had less than 75% in respect of disagreement, it is evident that there was a positive perception from the respondents toward principals’ transformational leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. It is believed that principals use motivation as a tool to increase teachers and students’ performance, principals encourages .teachers and students to be innovative and creative in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. In response to item 6, it was revealed that principals create a good working condition and favorable climate for teachers to perform effectively in the school, the result shows 332 (96.2%) of principals agreed, 7 (2.0%) disagreed and 6 (1.7%) were undecided with the statement. Among teachers, 364 (95.3%) of teachers agreed, 10 (2.6) disagreed and 8 (2.1%) were undecided. 310 (96.9%) of MOE agreed, 5 (1.6) were undecided and 6 (1.9%) disagreed with the statement. 362 (95.8%) of PTA agreed, 8 (2.1%) were undecided and 8 (2.1%) disagreed that principals creates a good working condition and favorable climate for teachers to perform effectively in the schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. In response to item 7 it reveals that 336 (97.4%) pf principals agreed that, principals have a vision of what they want to achieve in the school, 6 (1.7%) disagreed, 3 (0.9%) of the principals were undecided. While, 369 (96.6%) teachers agreed, 10 (2.6%) disagreed, and insignificant number of respondents 3 (0.8%) were undecided. Among the ministry of education officials, 313 (97.5%) agreed, 5 (1.6%) disagreed while 3 (0.9%) were undecided. Also, 360 (95.2%) of PTA agreed while, 10 (2.6%) disagreed and 8 (2.1%) were undecided. In all, the respondents showed a greater magnitude of their response that principals have a vision of what they want to achieve in the school in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. The result shows that, they are affirmative.

Going by the respondents’ perceptions on items 8, 9, 10 where no respondents’ had less than 75% in respect of disagreement, it is evident that there was a positive perception from the respondents toward principals’ transformational leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. It is believed that principals set a standard for every staff member to follow in the school, principals provide emotional support to teachers during difficult times, principals encourage teachers, promotes teachers and student’s welfare in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Perceptions of Stakeholders on Principals’ application of Transformational Leadership style practices in Secondary Schools in North Central Geographical Zone

Source	Sum of Square	DF	Mean square	F-ratio	F-critical	P-value
Among groups	8.691	3	2.897	2.092	3.690	.608
Within groups	1116.501	1422	.785			
Total	1125.192	1425				

In table 4, the computed probability was .608 and this was higher than the P value 0.05 set for this study. In other words, the calculated F ratio value of 2.092 was less than the critical value of 3.690 while the calculated P value of .608 is greater than the 0.05 level of significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. It could be concluded that there was no significant difference

among the perceptions of principals, teachers, Ministry of Education Officials and PTA officials on principal's transformational leadership style practices in secondary schools in North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria.

Discussion of the Finding

In response to items 1 to 10 which sought the stakeholders' perceptions on principals' application of transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria., responses of all respondents were collected, analyzed and discussed. Going by the respondent's perceptions where no respondent had less than 75% in respect of disagreement, it is evident that there was a positive perception from the respondents toward principals' transformational Leadership style practices in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. It is believed that Principal uses motivation as a tool to increase teachers and student's performance, principal encourage teachers and students to be innovative and creative in secondary schools in the North Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. This was because the computed probability of .608 was obtained which was higher than 0.05 level of significance set for the study. This is in contrast with the work of Obiwuru, Okwo, Akpa, and Nwakere (2011) that found transformational leadership had positive but insignificant effect on performance while the work of Obonyo, Adino and Nyerere (2017) agreed with the finding of the present that Transformational leadership of principals is predominately practiced in public schools in Siyasa, Kisumu Kijado countries with p.value of 0.535 which is higher than the p. value of 0.05 level of significance, this implies that transformational leadership style is effective.

Transformational leadership is believed to be able to effectively respond to the tremendous challenges facing organization in the turbulence of the modern world (Kirkoride 2006). This is supported by Vera and Crossman (2004) in Godon and Yukl (2004) who argue that transformational leadership is more effective in turbulence environment, time of poor organizational performance, or decline organizational stages because transformational leader behaviors includes inspiring and motivating followers. The transformational leadership style has been of great interest to researchers not only in the principal administration of secondary school also in different sectors such as military, physiology, sociology and political science.

Conclusion

The application of principals' transformational leadership style practices was found common in most secondary schools which motivate their teachers and students to high level of performance in all activities due to the welfare incentives in place. Principals create good working conditions and favorable climate for teachers to perform effectively.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the principals needs to shift to transformative approach of leadership for effectiveness so as to improve students' performance through adequate counseling, staff performance through motivation, inspiring the staff for in-service training programs.

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