



PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AS CORRELATES OF TEACHERS' TASK PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

Mmor, Charity Okwuchukwu

&

Adinna Patricia Ifeyinwa

Department of Educational Foundation, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu
Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus

ABSTRACT

The study examined leadership styles as correlates of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra state. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population for this study comprised 6915 teachers in the 267 public secondary school in six education zones in Anambra State. The sample of this study consisted of 550 teachers in the 267 public secondary schools in the six Education Zones in the State. Stratified and simple random techniques were used to draw the sample. Two instruments titled: Principals' Leadership Style Questionnaire (PLSQ) and Teachers' Task Performance Questionnaire (TTPQ) were used for data collection. The reliability of the instruments was ascertained through trial testing using Cronbach Alpha method. The data collected were analyzed as follow; the research questions were answered using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using test of significance of Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. After analyzing the data the following findings were made : The study showed a weak positive and significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance .The study also showed a moderate negative and significant relationship between laisses-faire leadership style and teachers' task teachers' task performance. Based on the findings of the it was recommended among others that; Principals' should only be autocratic when decisions need to be made quickly without consulting with a large group of people.

Keywords; leadership styles, Teachers' job performance , Autocratic leadership style, laisses-faire leadership

INTRODUCTION

Education is a purposeful activity directed at achieving certain aims, such as transmitting knowledge or fostering skills and character traits. It is a process of socialization, enculturation and transmission worthwhile to those who are committed to it. Education is the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally, preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life (Yunus, 2019). It is also a process of developing knowledge ability in a learner in such a way that he uses the knowledge to improve himself and the society (Nzelu, 2021). No nation can prosper without the adequate education of its average citizenry.



In Nigeria, just as in other countries of the world, education is an instrument for effective national development, that is to say education is considered as a necessary tool for socio-economic and political development; therefore, it is given necessary attention. This is amplified in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013), which stated that education is an instrument par-excellence for effective national development. It further added that education is the most important instrument of change, and that every fundamental change in the intellectual and social frame of any society is usually preceded by educational revolution (FRN. 2013). The country's educational goals have been set out in the National Policy on Education in terms of their relevance to the needs of the individual and the society (FRN, 2013). Against this backdrop, the National Policy on Education set up aims and objectives, which were to facilitate educational development in the country.

As it concerns secondary school education, federal government of Nigeria emphasizes the need for students who has gone through secondary school to be gainfully employed and serve as Adinna Ans feeders to tertiary institution. They also outline the provision of opportunities for students in secondary school to: (i) acquire necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for development of self and the nation, (ii) promote love for and loyalty to the nation, (iii) promote harmonious co-existence among the people of Nigeria, (iv) prepare the learners for tertiary education, (v) prepare the learners for useful living within the society, (vi) enhance understanding and appreciation of interrelationships among nations, (vii) develop ability for enquiry, critical thinking, and rational judgment, (viii) build a foundation for technological and industrial development, (ix) develop into a self-disciplined individual who appreciates work and manages time properly, and (x) promote acceptance and respect for all persons as well promote positive environmental and health practices. Adinna and Onyekwulu (2021) stated that the goals cannot be achieved with out team of secondary education management board and secondary school principals carrying out their duties of instructional supervision effectively because these gigantic objectives are enshrined in the instructional process through effective task performance

Task performance is the observable behaviour that employees do in their jobs that are relevant to the goals of the organization (Campbell et al., 2020). The definition of task performance emphasizes the instrumentality of performance for organizational goals. It refers to those required outcomes and behaviours that directly serve the goals of the organization . Therefore, Teacher's task performance could be described as the duties performed by teachers at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals (Sushanta, 2021). Teachers are the most valuable assets of any school. A successful and highly productive school can be achieved by engaging teachers in improving teacher's task performance. All teachers are not equal in their performance, but if they are handled effectively, their morale can be boosted and they become more productive in discharging of their duties. This is because teachers perform differently under different leadership styles (Adeyemi, 2021).In the context of these study,teachers task performance is seen as specific actions and behaviours of teachers they carry out their professional responsibilities to support student learning.

Principal can therefore, encourage effective task performance of their teachers by identifying their needs and trying to satisfy or meet them. Thus, in achieving their needs, the school principal has important roles to play. These roles are development of personnel, facilitating leadership, responsible delegation, empowering team effectiveness, recognizing ultimate accountability, adequate communication and good rapport, facilitating instruction, and managing change. Also, among these roles is providing effective leadership in secondary



schools, thereby enhancing better task performance among teachers. (Crum and Sherman (2018) noted that the principal needed to provide high valuable insights into their styles of leadership that foster an environment which is supportive of high teachers' task performance.

Furthermore, Davies (2018) noted leadership style and quality of leadership affect teacher's task performance in the school system. Davis and Wilson (2019) researched on the effect of leadership style on the teachers' quality of life at work and found out that the more principals engage in behaviour that are personally, the more teachers saw that they had choices they could make in completing their work and the greater impact they would achieve through their efforts. These intrinsic rewards were found to be more beneficial for motivating teacher and reducing stress. Lumsden (2021) observed that high teachers' morale could have a positive effect on students' attitude to learning. Improving teachers' morale not only makes the education more palatable to teachers, it also makes the process a richer and more effective learning experience for students. Therefore, for an educational system to succeed in realizing its objectives, it is vital that the right style of leadership is practiced by principals in the school setting.

However, it is believed that when there are good education plans, good school programmes, adequate staff and facilities, what is more important is a good administrative leadership to coordinate all these for the progress and achievement of the school purposes (Shamaki, 2019). As such, leadership style occupies an important position in school management since the school principal is in a unique position as the resource person for the purpose of attaining organizational goals.

The key to any effective leadership is the ability to lead effectively, coordinate a complex situation and show concern for human and material resources available (Shamaki, 2019). Hence, some principals seem to find it difficult to effectively administer their schools (Gronn, 2020). Meanwhile, the relationship between principals leadership style and task performance of teachers has been debated by scholars and researchers. Common observation in the school system shows that the style of leadership of a principal could perhaps have serious impact on teachers' task performance.

The administrator of any organization is responsible for harnessing these resources for efficient and effective application in order to accomplish the organizational goals. In fostering and allocating these resources for the realization of educational objectives, the school principal as the administrator has important administrative roles to play. This is affirmed by Tahir and Obasi (2021) that the central role of any principal is the combination of the entire available human and material resources and programmes of education and carefully applies them systematically for the enhancement and achievement of educational aims and objectives. Among these roles include providing effective administrative leadership in the art and science of administering secondary schools, thereby boosts task performance among teachers which in turn, lead to students' academic performance.

Nwankwo (2022) referred to a principal as an administrator who is responsible for running a school and also responsible for policy decisions, and determining the direction of the school. The function of the principal, according to Nwankwo (2022, pg 16), is more than mere controlling the staff of the school, its finances and curriculum; it also includes the management of resources towards the achievement of educational goals. Okeke (2019), however, highlighted the major functions of the principal as; interpretation of policy, execution of instructional programmes and the selection, induction and retention of personnel. Cranston (2020) stated that the duties of the principal as a school administrator include: the demonstration of a variety of



management and leadership abilities and making complex decisions in conjunction with other staff in the school. The function of the school principal could be outlined as follows: (i) production and management of resources needed to support education and its programmes, (ii) supervision of instructional activities in the school system, (iii) obtaining and training personnel, (iv) providing leadership for curriculum, (v) maintain peaceful co-existence between the school, the community, and the external agencies, (vi) influencing staff behaviour, (vii) discerning and influencing the development of goals and policies, (viii) evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency or otherwise of the school, (ix) initiating work activities and defining the task to be done, (x) taking remedial action if the objectives are not being met, and (xi) supplying incentives to stimulate productivity.

In secondary education administration, leadership is of critical importance because of its far-reaching effects on task performance of teachers, the accomplishment of school programmes and objectives, and the attainment of educational goals. Therefore, leadership in secondary school organization has been seen as a motivator where by the principal motivates teachers to perform task towards ensuring students' academic achievement and the organizational growth and success. In the secondary school system, the success of any school in meeting its stated goals or objectives depend on its chief administrator otherwise known as the principal and his leadership style.

Leadership style encompasses how the principal relate to others within and outside the organization, how they view themselves and their positions and to a large extent whether or not they are successful as leaders. If a task needs to be accomplished, how does a particular leader set out to get it done? If an emergency arises, how does a leader handle it? If the organization needs the support of the community, how does a leader go about mobilizing it? All of these depend on leadership styles. Chrislip and Larson (2015) outlined three styles of leadership as follows: Autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. However, there are other leadership styles such as transactional, transformational, bureaucratic, charismatic, task-oriented, and people-oriented leadership styles.

In this study, Autocratic and laissez-Faire leadership style was examined in order to find out the extent of the relationship they respectively have with teacher's task performance.

Autocratic leadership style occurs when the power and decision-making reside with the leader that does not delegate authority or permit subordinates to participate in decision making. Autocratic leaders insist on doing it all themselves. They have all the power, make all the decisions, and do not often tell anyone else about what they are doing. Power is centralized only to the leader, and the workers under such leader have little or no freedom of policy making, and the leader only shows great concern for work more than his workers. Lunenburg and Omsteen (2020) pointed out that autocratic leaders are very directive and do not allow participation in decision making.

In laissez-Faire leadership style, there is a least intervention of the leader. Workers virtually, perform everything by themselves, and the leader usually maintains contact with outside persons to bring information and materials which the workers need. This leader tries to allow everyone in the organization work in their own way and pace without intervention. He believes that everybody knows what he or she is doing and should work without supervision. He has trust on the experience and performance of his subordinate and therefore allows them to work on their own. Laissez-faire style of leadership is most effective where workers are assumed to be experienced, matured, and highly motivated. Doran (2019) observed that in laissez-faire



leadership style, all authority or power is given to the employees and they determine, make decisions, and resolve any conflict on their own.

Could any of the leadership style affect the performance of teachers as well as the students' academic success? It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the relationship between principals' leadership style and task performance of teachers in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the principals' leadership styles as correlates of teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Examine the extent of relationship between principal's autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Determine the extent of relationship between principal's laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent of relationship between principal's autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the extent of relationship between principal's laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0 .05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between principal's autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principal's laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a Correlational design. Correlational research design is a type of design that tries to ascertain the relationship between two or more variables. Nwogu (2015) stated that a correlation design seeks to establish the magnitude and direction of relationship between variables.

This study was conducted in Anambra State, Nigeria. Anambra State is bounded on the North by Kogi State, on the East by Enugu State, on the West by Delta State, and on the South by Imo State. Anambra State is the home of different people from different religious background and culture..

The population for this study comprised 6915 teachers in the 267 public secondary school in six education zones in Anambra State .



The sample size is 550 respondents comprising 5500 teachers as respondents in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State. In drawing the sample for the study, stratified and simple random sampling techniques was adopted.

Two instruments titled: Principals' Leadership Style Questionnaire (PLSQ) and Teachers' Task Performance Questionnaire (TTPQ) were used for data collection. PLSQ and TTPQ were structured by the researcher based on insight gained from reviewed literature and information gathered from consultation with experts in the fields of education and research.

The reliability of the instruments was ascertained through trial testing by the researchers administered of the instruments to about 20 respondents which was 10 teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu, Enugu State. Cronbach Alpha was used for the study because the items were not scored right or wrong and every response attracts a score and it is a less conservative estimate of reliability than test-retest measures. The average reliability coefficient showed a value of 0.80 for transformational leadership and 0.88 for Teachers' Task performance Questionnaire.

The researcher employed six research assistants, and adopted direct delivery method to administer the questionnaires to the respondents. The research assistants was briefed by the researcher on the purpose of the study and how to administer the questionnaires. The essence of the research assistants is to facilitate in quick administration and retrieval. However, the researcher returned to school to collect from the respondent who were not disposed to fill the questionnaire on the spot. 550 copies of questionnaire were distributed by the researcher and her six briefed research assistants. While 501 copies of questionnaire were collected which represented about 91% return and 9% loss, which was a high return rate of the instrument.

The research questions was answered using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient while hypotheses was tested at .05 level of significance using test of significance of Pearson product moment correlation. In answering the research questions, the coefficient (r) and the size of the relationship was interpreted using the interpretation of correlation coefficient was based on Schober *et.al* (2018) as shown: .

- ±0.00 to 0.09 = Negligible Correlation
- ±0.10 to 0.39 = weak Correlation
- ±0.40 to 0.69 = Moderate relationship
- ±0.70 to 0.89 = Strong relationship
- ±0.90 to 1.00 = Very strong relationship

The null hypotheses was tested at .05 level of significance and the decision rule is if the *P*-value is less than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), REJECT the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative



PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Research Question 1: What is the extent of relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis on the extent of relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

		Correlations		
		Autocratic leadership style	Teachers' Task Performance	Remark
Autocratic leadership style	Pearson Correlation	1	0.33**	Weak positive correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	
	N	501	501	
Teachers' Task Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.33**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		
	N	501	501	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient from the Table 1 above showed a weak positive correlation between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, with 'r' =0.33** and N =501. This revealed a positive correlation coefficient value of 0 .33 which indicated that there was a weak correlation coefficient existing between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of relationship between Laissez-faire style and teachers' Task Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis on the extent of relationship between Laissez-faire style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

		Correlations		
		Laissez-faire style	Teachers' Task Performance	Remark
Laissez-faire style	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.59**	Moderate negative relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	
	N	501	501	
Teachers' Task Performance	Pearson Correlation	-0.59**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		
	N	501	501	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient from the Table 2 above showed a moderate negative relationship between laissez-faire style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, with 'r' = -0.59** and N =501. This revealed a negative correlation coefficient value of -0 .59 which indicated that there was a



moderate negative relationship existing between laissez-faire and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of Significance of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

		Correlations		
		Autocratic leadership style	Teachers' Task Performance	Decision
Autocratic leadership style	Pearson Correlation	1	0.33**	Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	
	N	501	501	
Teachers' Task Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.33**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		
	N	501	501	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result of the test of significance of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient from Table 4 above showed a significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State with $r = 0.33^{**}$ $n = 501$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. Since $p\text{-value} (0.000)$ is less than 0.05 , the study rejects the null hypothesis and do not reject the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 2: There is significant relationship between Laissez-faire style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of Significance of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on relationship between Laissez-faire style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

		Correlations		
		Laissez-faire style	Teachers' Task Performance	Decision
Laissez-faire style	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.59**	significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	
	N	501	501	
Teachers' Task Performance	Pearson Correlation	-0.59**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		
	N	501	501	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result of the test of significance of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient from Table 4 above showed a significant relationship between Laissez-faire style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State with $r = -0.59^{**}$ $n = 501$ and $p\text{-value}$



= 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the study rejects the null hypothesis and do not reject the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Laissez-faire style and teachers' task performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Summary of the Findings

The study findings are summarized as follows:

1. The study showed a weak positive correlation and significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State.
2. The study showed a moderate negative and significant relationship between laissez-faire and teachers' task relationship in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings were discussed under the following headings as shown below:

1. Principals' autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principals' laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Principals' autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State

Findings from the study showed a weak positive correlation and significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style and teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State. This findings are in agreement with Omeke and Onah (2022) whose results revealed that the principals adopted three leadership styles in their administration namely: autocratic, laissez-faire, and democratic. Teachers irrespective of gender agreed that only democratic leadership enhances their task performance. This findings is as a result of principal retaining the final decision-making authority in my school, does not consider suggestions made by the teachers, always tell the teachers what has to be done, does not accommodate any kind of excuse interfering with his directives, applies force in making teachers to carry out their duties, sanctions the teachers when they do not conform with directives, does not listen to teachers nor try to understand them, use methods of discipline that seems to be harsh to the teachers, expects compliance without questioning from teachers and acts without consulting the teachers.

Principals' laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State

The study showed a moderate negative and significant relationship between laissez-faire and teachers' task relationship in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State. This study is contrary to the findings of Anriani (2016) that studied the prediction of the Principals' laissez-faire leadership style and work motivation on teachers' task performance. This finding could be as a result principal allowing teachers' high degree of independence in their duties, receiving very little directives from principal on how to go about their duties, allowing teachers to make their decisions without interference, do not supervise teacher's activities, permits teachers to use their own judgement in solving problems, allows teachers to take their own initiatives, allow teachers to demonstrate high degree of innovativeness in decision making process of the school,



supports participation of teachers, recognizes teachers for good work done, does not participate in the course of events determined by the teachers.

Conclusion

The findings of the study showed a weak positive correlation and significant relationship between Autocratic leadership style, a moderate positive and significant relationship between democratic leadership style, a moderate negative and significant relationship between laissez-faire, a moderate positive relationship and significant relationship between transactional style, a strong positive relationship and significant relationship between transformational style and a teachers' task performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State. Based on the finding, it was concluded that in transformational leadership style, principals build strong relationships with their teachers by displaying individualized consideration.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the study findings:

1. Principals' should only be autocratic when decisions need to be made quickly without consulting with a large group of people.
2. Teachers' task performance must be supervised by principals to give regular feedback under laissez-faire because too many instructions or expectations for how a goal is to be reached is not given.

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