



Principals' leadership styles as nexus to job performance of teachers in senior secondary schools in Edo state, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study assessed principals' administrative style for job performance of teachers in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Three research questions guided the study. A survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 400 teachers. 240 teachers were used as sample representing 60% of the population. A proportionate sampling technique was adopted. Two experts validated the instrument. Cronbach Alpha was used for the reliability of the instrument and this yielded 0.70. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were employed to answer all the research questions. Two null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. A questionnaire titled Principals' Leadership Style Questionnaire (PLSQ) was administered on the respondents by the researchers and two research assistants. The results showed the respondents agreed that autocratic and laissez-faire principals' leadership style influenced teachers' job performance to a low extent, while democratic principals' leadership style influenced teachers' job performance to a high extent. Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that efforts should be made by government to organise workshops and symposia on a regular basis to ensure that principals understand the individual behaviours of their teachers to ensure job performance.

Keywords: Autocratic Leadership Style; Democratic Leadership Style; Laissez-Faire Leadership Style; Job Performance

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1. Introduction

Providing quality education requires efforts from multiple stakeholders, groups, including teachers, and administrators. The roles principals play in secondary schools include providing good leadership to enhance better job performance of teachers and the academic achievement of students. How well the principal is in performing these roles is a matter of concern to educationists and other stakeholders. The school principal is an administrator who runs an organization for established purposes, but who occasionally recognizes the needs of his teachers for the modification of his mandate, and to bring about the necessary changes in his organization to make it effective.

The school comprises of people with different background, their own needs, their own dispositions, their own desires, and aspirations. If what the organization (school) expects is one thing, and what teachers want to do is something else, then there is bound to be conflict. Conflict can be reduced if the needs, dispositions, desires and aspirations of people can be harmonized, and the satisfaction of people perhaps increased, then the duty of the school principal is to mediate between these two dimensions. When a principal is able to harmonize these roles, there is the tendency to have good job performance among teachers.

Motowidlo et al. (1997) defined job performance as the overall expected value from employees' behaviours carried out over the course of a set period of time. Bullock (2013) maintained that performance is a property of behaviour, or what people *do* at work. He further stated that an employee's behaviour has expected value to the organization – that is, an employee's behaviours may be distinguished in the extent to which they help or hinder the organization, and the outcomes of unique behaviours are rarely measured as their value is *expected*. Job performance is a work related activities expected of an employee and how well those activities are well executed. This will in turn result in satisfactory interpersonal relations, financial reward, fringe benefits, training and promotion, decision making and free channel of communication. Job Performance according to Hose (2017) is the way employees perform their work. He further stated that an employee's performance is determined during job performance reviews, with an employer taking into account factors such as leadership skills, time management, organizational skills and productivity to analyse each employee on an individual basis. He concluded that job performance reviews are often done yearly and can determine raise eligibility, whether an employee is right for promotion or even if an employee should be fired. In order to increase job performance in an organization, Annie (2017) identified ability to learn, consciousness, interpersonal skills, adaptability, and integrity as 5 qualities that lead to high job performance in an organization. In the same vein Nag (2016) identified personality clashes, stress, heavy work load, inadequate resources, poor leadership from top management, lack of role clarity, lack of clarity about accountability, lack of transparency, clash of values, gossip, poor selection or pairing of team members, out-dated technology, bullying or harassment, perceived discrimination, poor performance management, and depleting health conditions are major reasons for low job performance.

Many employees feel dissatisfied with their jobs at one point or another. Some employees leave their jobs for better opportunities, while others choose to stay. Employees with low job satisfaction may negatively affect a company because they typically lack motivation, perform poorly and possess negative attitudes. This is why Johnson (2017) stressed that underpaid, limited career growth advancement, lack of interest and poor

management are major causes of job dissatisfaction. Yukl (2003) maintained that when teachers are satisfied with their job, it goes a long way influencing their morale, motivation and general willingness to maximize their teaching potentials with utmost commitment. He further stated that employees that are committed are less likely to leave the organization to explore other opportunities. The teachers who will voluntarily cooperate with their principal, colleagues and other staff may lead to the attainment of the school's goals and objectives. On the other hand, teachers who are dissatisfied with their jobs may result in lack of commitment thereby making the goals and objectives of the school far from being achieved. When the needs of teachers are not met, there may be dissatisfaction. This position was maintained by Clark (2005) who posited that when some of the needs of workers are not met, they may result in low job attitude and consequently poor performance, which may be a product of frustration on the part of the workers. Clark continued, where there is a prolonged frustration, there are always negative actions such as lateness to work, poor quality of work, quarrels with colleagues, dispute with management, and may eventually lead to the individual leaving the organization. In support of this position, Eduwen (2010) maintained that an aggrieved worker is an unhappy worker and unhappy worker cannot do effective work. He becomes depressed; his morale is low and as a result, his effectiveness drops.

Principals, old and young, experienced and inexperienced, male and female, married and single need to be motivated to find fulfilment and challenges in their work so as to enhance their job performance. Experienced principals as used in this study are those who have spent 10 years and above as principals while inexperienced principals are those who have spent less than 10 years as principals. When working conditions are made more attractive and salaries paid regularly, teachers may find fulfilment and challenges in their work. The type of administrative style a principal adopts in managing the affairs of his teachers may have influence on their job performance

Administrative style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. Toby (2000) posited that it seems reasonable to assume that such traits as being trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent provide the key to good leadership behaviour. The principal has arrays of leadership styles he/she may adopt during the course of leading out in the discharge of teachers' responsibilities. It is worthy of note that regardless of how the leader comes to his office, the effective leader is that leader who can meet the criteria of success. Such criteria should include the ability to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization while maintaining a cohesive work group where the employees are satisfied because their needs are met. These include autocratic, democratic, laissez -faire, transformational and pseudo-democratic leadership styles. The autocratic leadership style is a type of a leader who uses autocratic style dictates all policies and procedures in the organization with little or no group participation. Such leader is task-oriented; hence impose task and methods of work on subordinates who have to carry out directives without questions. Cherry (2017) stressed that autocratic leadership, also known as authoritarian leadership, is a *leadership style* characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members. Autocratic leaders typically make choices based on their ideas and judgments and rarely accept advice from followers. Autocratic leadership involves absolute, authoritarian control over a group.

The democratic leadership style is also known as participative style as it encourages full participation of subordinates in the affairs of organisation. This style is characterised by policy making using consultation, delegation of authority, self-expression, initiatives, and multidimensional communication. Cherry (2017) maintained that democratic leadership, also known as participative leadership or shared leadership, is a type of leadership style in which members of the group take a more participative role in the decision-making process. This type of leadership can apply to any organization, from private businesses to schools to government. Everyone is given the opportunity to participate, ideas are exchanged freely, and discussion is encouraged.

The laissez-faire leadership style is characterised by complete freedom of the group and its members to do what they wish. The leader who adopts this style is care free and merely supplies materials to subordinates to work with and does not supervise them. According to Cherry (2017), laissez-faire leadership, also known as delegative leadership, is a type of *leadership style* in which leaders are hands-off and allow group members to make the decisions

1.1. Statement of the problem

Providing quality education requires efforts from multiple stakeholder groups, including principals and teachers. In fostering these aims and objectives, the school principal has important roles to play. How effective the principal is in performing these roles has been a matter of concern to many educationists and other stake holders.

A visit to some of the secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area revealed that many of the teachers come late to work, reluctant to write lesson notes, quarrel with colleagues, unhappy with the school principals, tardiness, low morale, absenting from work, dodging responsibilities, lack zeal in record keeping, ingenuity in teacher- student relationship, among others. What could be responsible for these negative attitudes among teachers in the various schools visited? Could it be the leadership styles adopted by these principals in their various schools? This is why the researchers want to determine if the leadership styles adopted by principals could improve or mar the job performance of teachers.

1.2. Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the influence of principals' administrative style on teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

The specific objectives determined were:

- 1- The extent principals who adopt autocratic administrative style of leadership influence teachers' job performance.
- 2- The extent principals who adopt democratic administrative style of leadership influence teachers' job performance.
- 3- The extent principals who adopt laissez-faire administrative style of leadership influence teachers' job performance.

1.3. Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- 4- To what extent do principals who adopt autocratic administrative style of leadership influence teachers' job performance?
- 5- To what extent do principals who adopt democratic administrative style of leadership influence teachers' job performance?
- 6- To what extent do principals who adopt laissez-faire administrative style of leadership influence teachers' job performance?

1.4. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

- 7- There is no significance difference between male and female principal on the use of autocratic leadership style in influencing job performance of teachers.
- 8- There is no significance difference between experienced and inexperienced principal on the use of laissez-fair leadership style in influencing job performance of teachers.

2. Methodology

2.1. Design of the study

The descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. It was designed to describe the characteristics or behaviours of particular sample from a population in a systematic and accurate fashion. This design was found most appropriate for this study because the study sought information from the respondents relative to their attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and behaviour.

2.2. Population of the study

The population of this study comprised all the teachers in public senior secondary schools in Oredo L.G.A, Edo State. There are 13 public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area with a total population of 400 teachers as obtained from Post Primary Education Board (2017).

2.3. Sample and sampling procedure

The sample size of this study was two hundred and forty (240) public secondary school teachers representing 60% of the population. Proportionate sampling technique was used to obtain the sample.

2.4. Instrumentation

The instrument used to gather data for this study was a structured questionnaire titled Principals' Leadership Style Questionnaire (PLSQ). The instrument used for principals' leadership style question was adapted version of the Vannsimpco Leadership Survey (VLS) that was developed by Vann, Coleman, and Simpson (2014), and multifactor leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (2000).

The present instrument was made up of two sections A and B. Section A consisted of demographic data, such as name of school, gender, and teaching experience. Section B consisted of 24 items on principals' leadership styles that examined the influence of leadership style variables of autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. The instrument used for the study was a 4-Point Rating Scale of made up of four response options of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, and Very Low Extent.

2.5. Validity of the instrument

The instrument designed for the study was validated by three experts from University of Benin, Department of Vocational and Technical Education. Faculty of Education, University of Benin.

2.6. Reliability of the instrument

The reliability of the data collected was determined by using Cronbach Alpha method. This method was found more appropriate in that it took care of the internal consistency of the instrument. The instrument was administered on 20 secondary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State who were not part of the sample that was used for the study. The coefficient for autocratic was 0.71, democratic 0.65, and laissez-faire 0.74. The value of the reliability obtained for the entire variables was 0.70

2.7. Methods of data collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered on 240 secondary school teachers in Oredo Local Government Area Edo State. The researchers personally administered some of the questionnaire items to the respondents, while three research assistants were employed and briefed for two weeks who administered the others.

2.8. Method of data analysis

Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer all the research questions. All the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Questionnaire items related to the research questions which had four response categories. Real limit of values was used for decision in selecting the items that were appropriate in the extent of influence.

2.9. Decision rule

To determine the extent of influence of principals' leadership styles on job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Edo State, a decision rule was taken as Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, and Very Low Extent with real limits of number rating of 3.50-4.00, 2.50-3.49, 1.50-2.49 and 0.50-1.49 respectively. The level of influence of each questionnaire cluster related to the research questions was determined based on grand mean. The null hypothesis was upheld as the t-calculated value was less than the t-critical value of 0.05. However, when the t-calculated was greater than t-critical, the null hypothesis was rejected.

3. Data presentation and analysis

The data shown in Table 1 reveal that the mean responses and standard deviation of principal's autocratic leadership style. The value of the mean responses range from 1.18 to 3.71 reveal that the respondents agreed that principals' autocratic leadership style helped teachers in their job performance to a low extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.14 to 1.56 further reveal that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.30 conclusively show that the respondents agreed that principals' autocratic leadership style helped teachers in their job performance to low extent.

Table 1. Respondents' Mean Responses on Principal's Autocratic Leadership Style

S/N	Aspects of Autocratic Leadership Style	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Enhancing school administration	2.71	0.46	HE
2	The way autocratic leadership style improve teachers' performance	1.68	0.45	LE
3	Rewarding teachers for achieving organizational goal	1.93	0.14	LE
4	Setting deadlines for acheving school goal	3.71	1.02	VHE
5	allowing teachers to take part in decision - making	1.18	0.21	VLE
6	Holding mettings before correction issues	2.04	1.01	LE
7	Allowing teachers to make important decisions	1.56	1.56	LE
8	Making quick decisions during times of urgency	3.56	0.87	VHE
Grand Mean		2.3	0.71	LE

Source: Researchers' Field Study (2017)

Table 2. Respondents' Mean Responses on Principal's Democratic Leadership Style

S/N	Aspects of Democratic Leadership Style	Mean	S.D	Remark
9	Providing opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision - making	2.71	0.46	HE
10	Principals opens to other's ideas	2.67	0.34	HE
11	Principals highly concerned about developing staff ability to contribute to making important organizational decision	3.45	0.67	VHE
12	Comfortable working with groups to seek their inputs in making decisions	2.78	0.45	HE
13	Discussing issues with all the staff while considering which incentives and disincentives for the quality of work	3.68	1.13	VHE
14	Highly concerned about developing staff'sability to contribute to making important school's decision	3.6	1.1	VHE
Grand Mean		3.15	0.64	HE

Source: Researchers' Field Study (2017)

The data shown in Table 2 reveal that the mean responses and standard deviation of principal's democratic leadership style. The value of the mean responses range from 2.67 to 3.68 reveal that the respondents agreed that principals' democratic leadership style helped teachers in their job performance to a very high extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.34 to 1.13 further reveal that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 3.15 conclusively show that the respondents agreed that principals' democratic leadership style did help teachers in their job performance to a high extent.

Table 3. Respondents' Mean Responses on Principal's Laissez- Faire Leadership Style

S/N	Aspects of Laissez - Faire Leadership Style	Mean	S.D	Remark
15	Giving task with little or no direction/support	1.78	0.78	LE
16	Hiring skills necessary to make decisions	1.27	1.78	VLE
17	hiring competent and committed members of staff	1.21	1.56	VLE
18	Principals does not want to take decision	2.23	1.4	LE
19	Principal unpopular among teachers	2.35	1.25	LE
20	putting off today's decision till tomorrow	1.59	1.3	LE
21	Unreasonable about issues	1.76	0.12	LE
22	Principal documentation process burdensome	1.98	1.04	LE
23	Delaying decision making process	1.19	0.98	VLE
24	Principal hesitant to change	2	1.14	LE
Grand Mean		1.74	1.14	LE

Source: Researchers' Field Study (2017)

The data shown in Table 3 reveal that the mean responses and standard deviation of principals' laissez-faire leadership style. The value of the mean responses range from 1.19 to 2.35 reveal that the respondents agreed that principals' laissez-faire leadership style helped teachers in their job performance to a low extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.12 to 1.78 further reveal that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.30 conclusively show that the respondents agreed that principals' laissez-faire leadership style helped teachers in their job performance to a low extent.

3.1. Analysis of data related to hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

- 1- There is no significance difference between male and female principal in the use of autocratic leadership style in influencing job performance of teachers.
- 2- There is no significance difference between experienced and inexperienced principal in the use of laissez-fair leadership style in influencing job performance of teachers.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female autocratic principals in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government area in their levels of job performance.

Table 4. Summary of t-test of Male and Female Principal's leadership style

Leadership Style Variable	Sex	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P-value	Dec
Autocratic Principals	Male	158	29.47		4.99			
	Female	82	22.72		3.25	129	12.82	NS

NS: Not Significant

The result of Table 4 shows the summary of t-test of male and female autocratic principals' influence on job performance of teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. The table shows t-value of 129 as job performance variable. The corresponding p-value of the variable is 12.82. Since the value is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, the t-value is significant; hence there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female autocratic principals' influence on job performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between experienced and inexperienced laissez-faire principals in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government area in their levels of job performance.

Table 5. Summary of t-test of Experienced and Inexperienced Principal's leadership style

Leadership Style Variable	Teaching Experience	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P-value	Dec
Laissez - Faire Principals	Experienced	147	21.73		3.81			
	Inexperienced	93	23.54		2.45	107	9.12	NS

NS: Not Significant

The result of Table 5 shows the summary of t-test of experienced and inexperienced laissez-faire principals' influence on job performance of teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. The table shows t-value of 107 as job performance variable. The corresponding p-value of the variable is 9.12. Since the value is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, the t-value is significant; hence there is no significant difference between the mean response of experienced and inexperienced laissez-faire principals' influence on job performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

4. Discussions of results

The discussions of the results obtained in this study were organized according to research questions that guided the study and hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The findings in Table 1 showed that respondents agreed that autocratic principals' leadership style influenced teachers' job performance to a low extent. This is in consonance with Dawson (2002) who maintained that excessive use of authority will distort productivity in the long term. People either get bored and dissatisfied and leave or fall into a malaise of hum-drum repetitive tasks without creativity and innovation and in short become demotivated. This is however in

disagreement with Adair (2005) who opined that this leadership is useful when immediate and quick decision and performance is required. Adair believes that only one person has the full authority and power over the followers or workers. His decision would be viewed and taken as the golden rule and should never be questioned and cannot be interrupted by any one. Autocratic leaders make plans of each milestone and their followers are bounded to work or follow the rules. He added that the autocratic leader has full control of those around him and believes to have the complete authority to treat them as he wants. This is useful when immediate and quick decision and performance is required.

The findings in Table 2 showed that respondents agreed that democratic principals' leadership style influenced teachers' job performance to a high extent. This is in agreement with Kirega (2006) who stated that this style of leadership focuses on using the skills, experience, and ideas of others. This leadership style improves the performance of workers in both short term and long term and can be used for any type of work project.

The findings in Table 3 showed that respondents agreed that laissez-faire principals' leadership style influenced teachers' job performance to a low extent. This is in agreement with Katz, Maccoby, Gurin, and Floor (2005) who stated that employees are unproductive if their supervisors avoided exercising the leadership role and relinquished it to members of the work group. In the same vein Berrien (2006) stated that poorly adapted groups felt little pressure from their superiors and appeared to attribute their poor performance to lax discipline. Murnighan and Leung (2006) opined that employees who are led by uninvolved leaders were less productive in the quality and quantity of the problems they solved and lower in satisfaction in comparison to employees who are led by involved leaders.

The finding in table 4 showed that there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female autocratic principals' influence on job performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. This is in disagreement with Eboka (2016) findings of a study which revealed that leadership styles of principals and gender jointly influenced teacher morale and job performance.

The findings of Table 5 showed that there is no significant difference between the mean response of experienced and inexperienced laissez-faire principals' influence on job performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. Then finding is in consonance with the findings of Nakpodia (2009) who have found that there was no significant difference between styles of more experienced and less experienced principals. In the same vein Sawati, Anwar and Majoka (2013) revealed that there is no association between the leadership style of the principals and their experience.

5. Conclusion

It could be concluded that secondary school principals with autocratic leadership style influenced their teachers in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State to low extent. Principals with democratic leadership style influenced their teachers to high extent, while principals who adopted laissez-faire leadership style influenced their teachers to low extent. Moreover, sex, and teaching experience of principals made no significant difference in the job performance of their teachers.

6. Recommendations

From the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were made:

- 1- Deliberate efforts should be made by government to organise workshops and symposia on a regular basis to ensure that principals understand the individual behaviours of their teachers. This will go a long way improve professional commitment of principals in order to enhance teachers' productivity and effectiveness under them
- 2- Teachers should be treated respectfully, and should be involved in decision-making in order to reduce their anti- behaviour in work environment
- 3- There should be on-the-job training for principals from time to time to increase their level of understanding human behaviour in their various schools.

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