

Exploring Teachers Perception of Leadership Practices of Secondary School Principals in Girei Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study Exploring Teachers perception of leadership Practices of Secondary School Principals was conducted in Adamawa state in three selected Government Secondary Schools in Girei Local Government Area, A descriptive Survey design was employed for the study. The entire population of 50 respondents were used. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A total of 20-item structured questionnaire was validated and trial-tested and gave a reliability coefficient of 0.82, which is considered reliable Atanda (2006). The questionnaire was administered to both teachers and principal. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while all the hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 levels of significance. The finding revealed that in general teachers perceived their principals' leadership practices as more positive and there was significant difference between the mean responses of teachers and principal on the leadership styles of secondary school principals. Also, the findings revealed that principal use effective strategies to implement the vision and manage time effectively. Based on the findings, it was recommended that, principal need professional development throughout their careers. One way of achieving this would be for principals to form professional clusters in their area.

Keywords: Perception, Teachers, Leadership practices, Principals

I. INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature on school reform and restructuring reveals that the school principal is the key player in all successful school reform efforts. Two decades ago a nation at risk (National Commission on Education Excellent, 1983) specifically recommended strong Leadership as a means for school improvement. Effective schools research also recognised the importance of quality leadership by consistently identifying strong instructional leadership as instrumental in creating a positive school climate. Effective leadership becomes paramount to schools as they Answer the call for accountability and continuously improve the quality of students' educational Experiences. Therefore, it is vital for us as practitioners, teachers and researchers of educational Leadership to explore this sometimes murky notion of principal leadership.

The school being a formal organisation is therefore made of several human and material resources. The human resources are the principal, Teachers and non-academic staff. Effective planning and coordinating activities in the system is a responsibility of its leadership. This suggests the exercise of care in selection of leaders, because if a good leader emerges, the organisation ill thrive as expected, but when a bad leader is mistakenly installed to direct the activities, it will soon reflect on the organisational effectiveness.

The idea is that in selection of a leader the concern is based on "the type of leadership which correlates to the best level of productivity in organisations" (Ibukun 1997). Since productivity, in school is measured by the level of the student's leadership and the teachers to provide results oriented leadership.

The current state of educational system in Nigeria can absolutely be linked to the leadership practices at micro and macro level in the country. At the micro level which is the activities of a leader in (the school) system, the leadership practices of most principals are questionable, making it difficult for teachers to be effectively motivated towards improving their productivity. There is public outcry on the ineffectiveness and inefficiency in leadership practice of some secondary schools principal. Hence, this study intended to explore teacher's perception of leadership practices of secondary school principals in Girei local Government Area of Adamawa state.

To effectively address this outcry, some questions were designed as to what are the leadership styles of secondary school principals?, what are the perceived challenges, secondary school teachers faces while carrying out their duties and lastly, what are the perceptions of teachers to the leadership capacities of their principal. Also research hypotheses was also designed and tested at 0.05 levels of significance as there is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principals: on the leadership styles of secondary school

principal, on the perceived challenges teacher's face while carrying out their duties, and on the perception of teachers on leadership capacities of their principal.

Meindinyo, Ibara, and Tuatongha, (2017) in their study observed, that Teachers' level of job satisfaction is high, when teachers are Satisfied with their principal's leadership style, implicitly teachers' attitude to work is also affected characterized by various deviant behaviors.

Akinfolarin (2017) asserted that school administrators spend more time on meetings and other school activities yet, finds it difficult to complete tasks at the appropriate time. School leaders must be competent in ensuring regular supervision and time management for school effectiveness. Principals' supervision of instruction practices include: checking of teachers' lesson notes, scheme of work, students' notes, teachers' punctuality, teachers' regularity in class, classroom observation, and moderation of examination papers and marking schemes among others (Sule, Ameh & Egbai, 2015).

Onuma (2016) asserted that the principal has the primary functions of exhibiting effective instructional leadership practices for the improvement of diversified curriculum and quality of instructional programme for effective attainment of set school goals. So also Ahmed (2016) highlighted instructional leadership practices to include: framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervision and evaluation of instruction, coordination of the curriculum, monitoring of students progress, protection of instructional time, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, promotion of professional development and providing incentives for students.

Nnebedum and Akinfolarin (2017), instructional supervision is the actions taken to mentor and monitor subordinates or teachers and provide supportive and conducive atmosphere for improvement on the instructional process.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was based on the theory of learning organization as propounded by Peter Senge (1990). The theory is based on the concept that organizations in this era of globalization need to enable people to continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire. This implies that learning organizations nature new and expansive patterns of thinking where people are continuously learning to see the whole together. The theory asserts that involvement in decision making improves the understanding of the issues involved by those who must carry out the decisions. Further when people make decisions together, the social commitment to one another is greater and thus increases their commitment to the decision. As social institutions it is increasingly important that secondary schools deliver the expectations of the community in terms of quality grades. This can be achievable based on the management leadership practices of secondary school principals.

Leadership styles employed by leaders vary from one organization to another. It is also important to point out that no two leaders are alike in the way they administer their organizations. However, there are some common general classifications used to designate leadership styles. Before examining these leadership styles, it is important to define the term Leadership Styles.

Olagboye (2004) defined leadership style as the various patterns of behaviours which leaders adopt in the process of guiding the efforts of their subordinates toward the attainment of organizational goals.

Nwanchukwo (1981) observed that democratic, pseudo-democratic, coercive, laissez-faire, transactional and charismatic leadership are the leadership styles that can be exhibited by organizational leaders in their performances. The leadership styles are discussed as follows: -

Autocratic Leadership Style

This is a leadership style in which the leader is mostly production centered at the expense of human consideration. (Ojoawo, 1995). Atanda and Lameed (2006) pointed out that in autocratic leadership style, the leader's decisions are final and they are imposed on the members. That is, autocratic leadership styles are such in which what the leader says is final. The subordinates are not given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making.

Democratic Leadership Style

Ogunsanwo (1991) observed that democratic style of leadership lays emphasis on the organization being greater than any individual within it. Therefore rights of members are guaranteed under such leaders. The leader sees himself as "primus inter paries" (first among equal) and hence makes for participative decision-making. Also, every ones contribution within the organization is recognized.

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-faire leaders allow individuals within the group to make all choices (Fabunmi, 2000). This is an indication that in this type of leadership style, individual group members can do what they like because of the passive nature of the leader. Nwanchukwo (1981) argued that the Laissez-faire leadership style takes a passive stance towards the problems of the group or the organization. The leader is supposed to be very tolerant and the subordinates are free to do what they want and come and go when they want.

Transactional Leadership Style

In this form of leadership style, the leader is aware of both the organizational needs and expectations of the group, and he tries to integrate the two. Transactional leadership is thus a process through which the task and human dimensions of organization are reconciled and integrated (Nwanchukwo, 1981). Olaboya (2004) described it as one which is at once task-oriented and follower-oriented.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to explore teacher's perception of leadership practices of secondary school principals in Gerei Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The specific purposes are as follows:

- i) To determine the leadership styles of secondary school principals.
- ii) To determine the perceived challenges secondary school teachers faced in carrying out their duties.
- iii) To determine the perception of teachers to the leadership capacities of their principals.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed by the researcher to guide the study

- i) What are the leadership styles of secondary school principals?
- ii) What are the perceived challenges, secondary school teachers faces while carrying out their duties?
- iii) What are the perceptions of teachers to the leadership capacities of their principals?

Hypotheses

The following research hypothesis was tested in the course of the study at 0.05 level of significance.

- i) There is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principals on the leadership styles of secondary school principal
- ii) There is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principal on the perceived challenges teacher's faces while carrying out their duties.
- iii) There is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principals on the perception of teachers on leadership capacities of their principals.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in three selected public senior secondary schools in Gerei L.G.A. Adamawa state. The research design in this study is descriptive survey design. Gray (1981) asserted that descriptive design involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or to answer research questions concerning the current status of subject of study.

The population of study include all the teachers and principals of public and senior secondary schools in Gerei L.G.A. the entire populations of 50 teachers were used for the study. This comprises 47 teachers and three principals. Hence, no sampling technique was employed for selecting the subjects. The population is manageable. Simple random sampling was employed to select three schools from seven senior secondary schools. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. Five point Likart scale; of strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagreed and Strongly disagree was used. Any item with mean of 3.50 and above was considered agreed, while any mean below 3.50 was considered disagreed. T-test test statistic was employed to test the three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. If the calculated- t is less than the t- table value, the hypothesis is accepted, otherwise it was rejected.

The questions were validated by two lecturers in the school of Technology and Science Education of Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola. They were required to check the language clarity and suitability of questions. Their comments and suggestions were considered when producing the final version of the questionnaire. The instruments were trial tested at Government day secondary school Doubeli. Nine teachers and two principal were involved. The Doubeli secondary school was not among schools in the study area. Test re-test reliability technique was employed. There was an intervening period of two weeks between the first and the second test. The reliability coefficient realized was 0.82, hence, the instrument was found to be reliable (Atandam 2006).

IV. RESULTS

Research Questions 1: What are the leadership styles of school principals?

Table 2, Mean Responses of Public Secondary Schools Principal and Teachers on Leadership Styles

S/N	ITEM		SD	REMARK
	In your school you work together to develop and articulate a shared purpose and a clear education vision focused on learning.	4.62	0.68	Agree
	The principal takes collective responsibility for school	4.40	0.63	Agree


Practices and outcome.			
The principal emphasizes power through rather than power over people	4.22	0.59	Agree
The principal bases authority more on professional knowledge and competence than on position and rules.	4.40	0.63	Agree
The principal communicates his/her passion for learning by challenging ineffective practices and teachers	4.44	0.64	Agree
Regular staff meeting/briefs to discuss issues are been observed in the school.	4.38	0.62	Agree
The principal accepts conflict as normal and sue them.	4.06	0.56	Agree
The principal encourages use of teams to plan and implement school improvement.	4.48	0.65	Agree
In your school, you share information and make decision together.	4.38	0.62	Agree
The principal has created an atmosphere of trust and respect among staff, students and the school community	4.52	0.66	Agree

$\bar{x} \geq 3.50$ Grand mean = 4.39 0.63

From the table of item for research question 1 above, the respondents were in agreement “of the leadership styles of secondary school principals” the respondents agreed with the item raised on the questionnaire with respect to research question 1, this indicates that attempts are made to maintain the leadership styles of secondary school principals.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived challenges teachers faces while carrying out their duties?

Table 3 Mean response of public secondary school principal and teachers on the perceive challenges teachers faces while carrying out their duties.

S/N	ITEM		SD	REMARK
	The school avail resources required to discharge your duties	4.3	0.61	Agree
	Lack of familiarization of the available equipment for teaching	3.82	0.52	Agree
	Poor social welfare for staff	3.52	0.48	Agree
	The working environment is not conducive for teaching	3.4	0.47	Agree
	You feel demoralized while performing your responsibility	2.2	0.51	Disagree
	$\bar{x} \geq 3.50$ Grand mean = 4.39	0.63	Agree	

The above table reveal that the respondent to item 20, have disagreed the hypothetical statement under it. This is shown by the statistical mean of 2.2, which is below the mean level of agreement 3.0. The table has also shown that the respondent to item 16, 17, 18, 19 have agreed the hypothetical statement stated under the item at level of acceptance, which are 4.3, 5.82, 3.52, 3.4 respectively, which are above level of agreement.

From the foregoing analysis, one can say that there is need for educational bodies to look at the demoralized factor teachers faces while performing their responsibilities.

In conclusion, principal are not really concern at what the teachers faces while performing their duties.

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of teachers to the leadership capacities of their principals?

Table 4 Mean response teachers on the perception to the leadership capacities of their principals.

S/N	ITEM	\bar{x}	SD	REMARK
	Develop a vision of learning for our school that promotes the success of all students	4.09	1.53	Agree
	Use effective strategies to implement the vision	3.68	1.46	Agree
	Manage time effectively	3.59	1.46	Agree
	Involve both the students and staff in conducting school activities	3.71	1.59	Agree
	Bring together the resources of family members and the community to positively affect students learning	3.38	1.45	Disagree
$\bar{x} \geq 3.50$		Grand mean = 2.43	1.50	Agree

Table 4: Indicates that the mean responses of the teachers on the five item statement on the perception of teachers to the leadership capacities of their principals. The mean scores ranged from 3.38 to 4.09 respectively. All the five item statements were agreed because their mean scores were rated above the cut off mean of 3.00.

Ho₁. There is no significant difference between the mean response of Principal and Teachers on the leadership styles of school principals.

Table 5: T-test Analysis of mean response on the leadership styles of school principals

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	σ	DF	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Teachers	47	3.76	0.68	48	0.89	1.68	Accepted
Principal	3	3.40	0.55				

Table 5 shows that Tcal (0.89) was less than the table value Tcrit (1.68) hence the null hypotheses was accepted indicating that there is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principal on the characteristics of teachers engaged in school management.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean response of principal and teachers on the perceived challenges teacher's faces while carrying out their duties.

Table 6: T-test Analysis of mean response on the perceived challenges teachers faces while carrying out their duties.

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	σ	DF	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Teachers	47	3.80	0.66	48	0.64	1.68	Accepted
Principal	3	3.52	0.54				

Table 6 above, shows that Tcal (0.64) was less than the table value Tcrit (1.68) hence the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that there is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principal on the perceived challenges teachers faces while carrying out their duties.

Ho₃. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of principal and teachers on the perception of teachers on leadership capacities of their principal.

Table 7: T-test Analysis of Mean responses of teachers on the perception of leadership capacities of their principal

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	σ	DF	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Teachers	47	3.68	1.37	48	0.45	1.68	Accepted
Principal	3	3.75	1.11				

Table 7: shows that the null hypothesis was accepted because the Tcal (0.45) was less than the Tcrit (1.68). Therefore, the outcome of this analysis indicates that there is no significant difference between the responses of teachers and principal on the perception of teachers on leadership capacities of their principal.

Findings of the Study

The study made the following finding:

1. The findings reveals that their school, they work together to develop and articulate a shared purpose and a clear educational vision focused on learning.
2. The findings further showed that, the teachers feel demoralized while carrying out their responsibility.
3. Bring together the resources of family members and the community to positively affect students learning.
4. The study found that there is no significant difference between the mean response of Principal and Teachers on the characteristics of teachers engaged in school management.
5. The study also found that there is no significant difference between the mean response of principal and teachers on the perceived challenges teacher's faces while carrying out their duties.
6. The study found that there is no significant difference between the mean response of teachers and principal on the perception of teachers on leadership capacities of their principal.

Table 4: indicates that the mean response of teachers and principal on the perception of teachers on leadership capacities of their principal.

The null hypotheses three (H_{03}) was upheld because the T-cal value is less than T-crit value. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean response of Principal and teachers on teachers perceive leadership capacities of their principal. This result agrees with Alga (2006). The association tends to be moderate in size and are statistically significant net of influence of the teacher's personal, professional background and working condition.

V. CONCLUSION

From the findings of this study, the conclusion can be made that in general, teachers perceived their principal leadership practices more positive ($M = 4.39$) though some studies may argue the Girei Principal leadership practices or styles. Principal were perceived highest in respect, the right of others; develop a school vision, accepts conflicts as normal and use them as a stimulus for change, promote positive school culture and understanding of the policies, laws that affects schools, involve both the student and staffs in conducting school activities.

Principals were perceived least positive on some dimension of leadership specifically, (Teachers feel demoralized when performing their duties) these aspects is one in the least of leadership level that teachers considered to be the lowest among other dimension of leadership. As a result, teacher rated them least positive for this item.

Recommendations

Based on findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principal need professional development throughout their careers. One way of achieving this would be for principals to form professional clusters in their area.
2. Appointment of principals in schools should not be based on seniority or experience on the job alone, but also on capability as a change agent to influence others through collaborative problem solving with students, staff and community.

VI. REFERENCES

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