

## **Extent Educational Managers' Leadership Styles Contribute to Job Performance of Office Managers in Colleges of Education**

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**Abstract:** *The study was necessitated by the declining job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population consisted of 210 office managers in all public colleges of education in the area. A 20-items structured questionnaire with five-point rating scale was used. The instrument was validated by four experts. A pilot test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and data collected were analyzed using Cronbach alpha and obtained an overall coefficient value of 0.84. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that democratic leadership styles of educational managers contribute to job performance of the office managers to a great extent while transactional leadership styles contribute to a small extent. Gender did not significantly influence the respondents' mean ratings on the democratic leadership styles extent but significantly influenced their mean ratings on transactional leadership style extent. Based on the findings, it was concluded that democratic leadership style was adopted by educational managers. It was therefore recommended among others that educational managers should encourage office managers to work hard and challenge themselves with roles which utilize their full potential, talent and creativity.*

**Keywords:** Educational managers, leadership styles, job performance, office managers

### **Introduction**

The colleges of education are specially designed institutions where the curriculum experiences, transformative changes and the national values are expected to be learnt under the tutelage of teachers. A typical college of education is headed by a Provost who is assisted by a number of functionaries for its day-to-day administration. These functionaries are the Deputy Provost, the Registrar, Bursar, College Librarians, Directors of Academic Planning and Statistics, Deans of Schools, Heads of Departments and Heads of Units, who are

charged with the general responsibility for matters relating to the administration of the college. They individually or collectively plan, direct, control, supervise, discipline, and evaluate the staff and programmes of the college. Therefore, the above terms are group of administrators who carried out the administrative functions of an institution.

According to Lucey (2015), administration is carried out not only by people with administration in their job title, but also Heads of departments, Deans of schools, Supervisors and Foremen who carry out managerial functions at various levels in colleges of education. These officers in administrative positions often have office managers assigned to them to assist them and render secretarial functions. Educational managers are persons responsible for planning, organizing and overseeing the educational approaches and strategies as well as the development and resources of the curriculum for preschool, primary school, secondary school and tertiary institutions (Ezenwafor, 2011). Educational managers adopt different leadership styles in carrying out their daily functions, which contribute positively or negatively to the performance of the office managers.

An office manager is an executive assistant who possesses a mastery of office skills, demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility with or without supervision, exercises initiatives and judgment and makes decision within the scope of assigned authority (Ile & Oguejiofor, 2015). An office manager is a warm, tireless, helpful and understanding individual whose sole aim is to alleviate, solve, prevent or soften problems, workload and up-sets for an executive (Winter in Boladele, 2013). Ezenwafor (2011) noted that some of the functions of office managers in tertiary institutions cover production of different types of documents for the office, lecturers and students, proofreading the document for accuracy, disseminate, storing (traditionally or electronically) and retrieving stored documents when needed. These functions are also carried out by office managers in colleges of education by relating well with all and sundry within and outside the institutions.

Office managers are individuals that provide a variety of secretarial, administrative and office support for their supervisors or the educational managers in an institution (Puriry, 2017). Puriry further explained that office managers act in confidential capacity to the supervisors with the responsibilities given to them as been dictated and complex compared with the lower level secretarial tasks. Akanbi (2011) observed the workload and up-sets for an executive continuously as it affect the performance of office managers. Akanbi noted the tend to throw up the feelings of frustration, insecurity, hostility, job dissatisfaction and subsequently leading to low morale and poor performance (such as slow responses to duties, late submission of finished assignments and low productivity). The efforts of office managers towards goal attainment are normally coordinated by educational managers.

The person at the helm of affairs is usually the leader. Thus, for office managers to perform their duties effectively, there must be holistic interactions between them and the leader in an institution. Rost cited Kellerman (2014) defined leadership as a relationship process oriented to achieve some common goals. Rost further opined that leadership is an influential relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes. Owusu-Bempah (2014) noted that leadership is the capacity to create a compelling vision and translated vision into organizational realities. Therefore, effective coordination of educational managers depends to a great extent on the leadership styles they adopt.

Leadership style is viewed as the combination of traits, characteristics, skills and behaviours that leaders use when interacting with their subordinates (Jeremy, Melinde & Ciller, 2011). Ojokuku, Odetayo and Sajuyigbe (2012) postulated that leadership style refers to a kind of relationship whereby someone uses one way and method to make people work together for a common task. Therefore, educational managers are expected to adopt different leadership styles at different stages of the decision-making process. Thus, it follows that managerial activities and decisions should always depend on the situations at hand.

Educational managers' leadership styles may contribute positively or negatively on their office managers performance because, according to Akanbi (2011), when the leadership style of management contributes positively on office managers' attitude to work, they find their work very interesting and enjoyable leading to optimal satisfying opportunities for self-fulfillment. Odigbo (2016) noted that, at least, six leadership styles are generally observed in management with one or two being dominant in an individual manager. The styles include autocratic leadership style, democratic/participatory leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style, transactional leadership style, charismatic leadership style and transformational leadership.

This study will adopt the two leadership styles identified by Dosunmu and Olusanya (2011), namely; democratic and transactional leadership styles. Democratic leadership style involves use of consultative approach, encourages group participation in decision-making and maintains master-servant relationship with group members. Tannenbaum and Schmidt in Ojokuku, Odetayo and Sajuyigbe, (2012) described democratic leadership as one where decision making is decentralized and shared by subordinates. It is important to emphasize that while democratic leadership style may sound good in theory. Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah (2014) stated that leaders who exhibited democratic (participative) styles enhanced staff productivity. Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah further noted that there is recognition in literature on the significance that leadership of the polytechnic were either autocratic or democratic in their approach. Ojokuku, Odetayo and Sajuyigbe (2012) noted that the use of democratic leadership style makes office managers

and employees' work more interesting and challenging, guarantees security for future and pay. It also encourages participation in decision making, develops skills, knowledge and leads to increased job satisfaction and high productivity.

On the other hand, transactional leadership style involves an exchange process that results in follower compliance with leader request but not likely to generate enthusiasm and commitment to task objective. Ogbonna and Harris (2010) noted that this style of leadership implies close monitoring for deviances, mistakes, and errors and then taking corrective action as quickly as possible when they occur. Abdalla (2010) opined that there is a positive significant correlation between transactional leadership style as a contingent reward system and teachers' performance and commitment. However, Okeke cited in Odigbo (2013) reported that there is no one leadership style that can be applied in all situations. This is so because the personality of the leader and situational factors are important determinants of the style that could best enhance the performance of subordinates in institutions.

According to Fullan in Ceasar (2013), different leadership situations require different leadership styles. Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (2008) reported that no single leadership style works in every situation, thus, they viewed leadership in relation to specific situations and pointed out that different work situations elicit different leadership styles. Thus, job performance of office managers include executing defined duties, meeting deadlines, mastery of office skills, exercising judgments and making decisions within the set scope of authority (Machumu & Kaitila, 2014).

Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa and Nwankwere (2011) opined that some educational managers are extremely difficult and would usually carry the problems of the home front to the office as they lack strategic interventions of specific leadership styles to manage specific situations. A good educational manager will find himself or herself switching instinctively between leadership styles according to the people and work situations they deal with. In the same vein, a good leadership style can gain office managers commitment to work and elicit good behaviours towards increased productivity. Conversely, a bad leadership style constitutes unwholesome working environment and a poor relationship between the leader and the office manager resulting in poor performance and low productivity (Bhargava & Anbazhagan, 2013).

The subjects for this study are male and female office managers in colleges of education owned by state and federal government. These factors could influence their ratings on the extent educational managers leadership styles contribute to their job performance. Gender is a factor that could come to focus in the context of leadership and performance of organizations. Gender refers to the male and female office managers in colleges of education. Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah (2014) noted that male and female differ in their behaviour in many ways. Akanbi (2011) also revealed that men and women exhibit different leadership styles while Bhargava and Anbazhagan

(2013) revealed that managerial roles based on gender discrimination against women have affected employees' job performance negatively.

Considering that educational managers' leadership styles contribute positive or negative to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria, they adopted not the same in manners, personalities and leadership styles and they are not equally endowed. Therefore, it is essential to ascertain the extent educational managers' leadership styles contribute to job performance of office managers in the colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The contribution of educational managers' leadership styles on the job performance of employees generally and office managers in particular cannot be overlooked in any institutions whether big or small. This is so because the leadership styles of management exert tremendous influence on the job performance of employees. Ideally, various educational institutions need effective leaders or managers to stimulate optimum performance of all employees especially office managers.

The situation seem not to be so in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria as educational managers are not the same in manners, personalities and leadership styles and they are not equally endowed. While some are easily satisfied and cooperative, others do not appreciate that creating a conducive work environment immensely assist office managers to perform their duties creditably by avoiding errors and tension in the work place. The current issue in colleges of education in South-East Nigeria that motivate this study is that might observation showed that most of the educational managers are not leading to expectation. The implications are that when these problems occur, the office managers are sure to receive deadly bullets of words, provocative and slanderous bashings from their educational managers which makes the office managers seen not performing their duties as well required. The problem of this study was to ascertain the different leadership styles of educational managers that elicit feelings that contribute or hinder the job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent educational managers' leadership styles contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the extent:

1. Democratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.
2. Transactional leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does democratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?
2. To what extent does transactional leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Male and female office managers in colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the democratic leadership style extent.
2. Male and female office managers in colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the transactional leadership style extent.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 210 office managers in public owned colleges of education in the South-East, Nigeria. No sample size was used for the study. A 20-item structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was structured on a five-point rating scale with response categories as very great extent (VGE) – 5 points, great extent (GE) – 4 points, moderate extent (ME) – 3 points, small extent (SE) – 2 points and very small extent (VSE) -1 point. The questionnaire was validated by three experts- one in the field of business education and one expert in measurement and evaluation, from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and one from business education, Federal College of Education Technical Umunze. A pilot test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument by administering it to twenty office managers selected from Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku in south-south Nigeria which is outside the study area but share similar characteristics with the studied area. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach alpha method. This was done to ensure the internal

consistency of the questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency of the instrument which obtained reliability coefficients values of 0.89 and 0.79 for clusters B1 and B2 respectively with an overall coefficient of 0.84.

Copies of the questionnaire instrument were administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of three research assistants who were briefed on how to administer the instrument. On the spot completion method was used but those who could not meet up were revisited on agreement by the researcher or assistant for retrieval. In addition, the researcher or assistant used phone calls to remind the respondents of the appointments. The exercise lasted for one week. This procedure facilitated careful completion of the instrument and a high response rate. Out of the 243 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 210 copies (representing 96 percent) were retrieved with an attrition rate of eight copies (representing 4 percent) and used for data analysis.

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The mean value was used to answer the research questions while the standard deviation was used to determine the closeness of the respondents' mean ratings. The t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance, as it meant that there was significant difference. Conversely, where the calculated p-value was greater than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), it meant that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was not rejected.

## Result

### Research Question 1

To what extent does democratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?

**Table 1:**

**Mean ratings of respondents on extent democratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. N = 202**

| S/N | Aspects of democratic style of leadership of educational managers to job performance of office managers | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | Remarks      |
|-----|---|-----------|------|--------------|
| 1.  | Motivating office managers to put in their best   | 4.00      | 0.45 | Great Extent |
| 2.  | Assisting office managers to solve their work-related problems  | 4.30      | 0.46 | Great Extent |
| 3.  | Giving office managers liberty to use their initiatives in accomplishing tasks                          | 4.30      | 0.78 | Great Extent |
| 4.  | Allowing office managers to discuss matters freely  | 3.80      | 0.40 | Great Extent |
| 5.  | Consulting office managers before taking decisions affecting them                                       | 4.10      | 0.54 | Great Extent |
| 6.  | Taking into consideration the concerns, needs and interests of office managers                          | 4.20      | 0.40 | Great Extent |

|  |             |      |                     |
|--|-------------|------|---------------------|
| 7. Allowing employees to discuss what needs to be done and how it should be done     | 4.30        | 0.64 | Great Extent        |
| 8. Does not improve the analytical abilities of office managers                      | 4.20        | 0.87 | Great Extent        |
| 9. Discussing upcoming plans and projects with office managers                       | 3.80        | 0.75 | Great Extent        |
| 10. Inculcating in office managers the skills to manage other staff for good results | 4.10        | 0.54 | Great Extent        |
| <b>Cluster Mean</b>  | <b>4.11</b> |      | <b>Great Extent</b> |

Table 1 shows that all the items have mean ratings ranging from 3.80 to 4.30 to a great extent with a cluster mean score of 4.11. This indicate that democratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to a great extent to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. The standard deviation of 0.40 to 0.87 showed that respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings.

### Research Question 2

To what extent does transactional leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria?

**Table 2:**

**Mean ratings of respondents on extent transactional leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. N = 202**

| S/N Aspects of transactional style of leadership of educational managers to job performance of office managers | $\bar{X}$   | SD   | Remarks             |
|--|-------------|------|---------------------|
| 11. Strictly supervising office managers' activities   | 2.00        | 0.63 | Small Extent        |
| 12. keeping track of all office managers' activities' mistakes   | 1.90        | 0.54 | Small Extent        |
| 13. Emphasizing maintenance of rules and standards in the organization   | 2.00        | 0.45 | Small Extent        |
| 14. Punishing office managers' activities where outputs do not meet predetermined standards                    | 2.20        | 0.60 | Small Extent        |
| 15. Using rewards and other incentives to enhance efficiency and productivity in office managers               | 2.70        | 0.64 | Small Extent        |
| 16. Seeking compromise between stressing organizational goals and individual needs                             | 2.40        | 0.66 | Small Extent        |
| 17. Acknowledging office managers' for their efforts and compliance to instruction                             | 2.10        | 0.54 | Small Extent        |
| 18. Over-emphasizing on completion of tasks  | 2.20        | 0.60 | Small Extent        |
| 19. Paying little attention to office managers' welfare and feelings   | 2.50        | 0.50 | Small Extent        |
| 20. Increasing office managers' salaries and fringe benefits   | 2.30        | 0.46 | Small Extent        |
| <b>Cluster Mean</b>  | <b>2.23</b> |      | <b>Small Extent</b> |

Table 2 shows that all the items have mean ratings ranging from 1.90 to 2.70 to a small extent with a cluster mean score of 2.23. This indicate that transactional leadership style of educational managers contribute to a great

extent to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. The standard deviation of 0.45 to 0.66 showed that respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings.

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis 1

Male and female office managers in colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the democratic leadership style extent.

**Table 3**  
**Summary of t-test on the mean ratings of male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria on the democratic leadership style extent.**

| N=202                 |     |           |      |          |     |       |       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----|-----------|------|----------|-----|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Gender of Respondents | N   | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | $\alpha$ | Df  | t-cal | p-val | Remark          |
| Male                  | 20  | 4.11      | 0.15 | 0.05     | 200 | 0.63  | 0.35  | Not Significant |
| Female                | 182 | 4.10      | 0.10 |          |     |       |       |                 |

Source: Field Study, 2021.

Table 3 indicates that the calculated t-value is 0.63 at 200 degree of freedom and 0.35 p-value. Since the p-value of 0.63 is greater than the alpha value (0.05), it means that male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the democratic leadership extent. The null hypothesis was, therefore accepted.

#### Hypothesis 2

Male and female office managers in colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the transactional leadership style extent.

**Table 4:**  
**Summary of t-test on the mean ratings of male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria on the transactional leadership style extent.**

| N=202                 |     |           |      |          |     |       |       |             |
|-----------------------|-----|-----------|------|----------|-----|-------|-------|-------------|
| Gender of Respondents | N   | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | $\alpha$ | Df  | t-cal | p-val | Remark      |
| Male                  | 20  | 2.08      | 0.11 | 0.05     | 200 | 3.77  | 0.00  | Significant |
| Female                | 182 | 2.16      | 0.14 |          |     |       |       |             |

Source: Field Study, 2021.

Table 4 indicates that the calculated t-value is 3.77 at 200 degree of freedom and 0.00 p-value. Since the p-value of 0.00 is greater than the alpha value (0.05), it means that male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria differ significantly in their mean ratings on the

transactional leadership style extent. The null hypothesis was, therefore not accepted.

## **Discussion of Findings**

Findings of the study revealed that democratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East Nigeria to a great extent. This finding is in line with Tannenbaum and Schmidt in Ojokuku, Odetayo and Sajuyigbe, (2012) who described democratic leadership as one where decision making is decentralized and shared by subordinates. It is important to emphasize that while democratic leadership style may sound good in theory. The findings of Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah (2014) agreed that leaders who exhibited democratic (participative) styles enhanced staff productivity.

The test of the first hypothesis revealed that the mean ratings of male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria do not differ significantly on the democratic leadership style extent. This was in disagreement with Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah (2014) who found out that there is recognition in literature on the significance that leadership of the polytechnic was autocratic in their approach.

Findings of the study revealed that transactional leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria to a small extent. This finding is in line with Ogbonna and Harris (2010) who noted that this style of leadership implies close monitoring for deviances, mistakes, and errors and then taking corrective action as quickly as possible when they occur.

The test of the seventh hypothesis revealed that the mean ratings of male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria differ significantly on the transactional leadership style extent. This was in agreement with Abdalla (2010) who found out that there is a positive significant correlation between transactional leadership style as a contingent reward system and teachers' performance and commitment.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that democratic leadership style was adopted by educational managers which contributes positively to the job performance of office managers in their colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. It was also concluded that the educational managers' leadership styles enhance job performance of office managers in colleges of education. Hence, educational managers in colleges of education in South-East Nigeria should focus on employee engagement through commitment and discretionary effort and on employee enablement, with optimized roles and

a supportive environment leading to educational success, students' satisfaction and job performance of office managers so as to enhance the overall institutional performance.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational managers should adopt a democratic leadership style rather than transactional leadership styles to enhance office managers' motivation consistently and efficiently; which will in turn generate higher quality performance on the office managers' part and boost educational performance.
2. The educational institutions should select the style best suited to the organizational goals and office managers' needs and desires. This will ensure higher office managers' job performance, act as ethical role models and be accepted as such.

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## Computation of reliability co-efficient (r) using Cronbach's alpha by SPSS

### Cluster 1:

#### Reliability

#### Scale: Autocratic Style of Leadership

Case Processing Summary

|       |                       | N  | %     |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid                 | 20 | 100.0 |
|       | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0  | .0    |
|       | Total                 | 20 | 100.0 |

Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .890             | 10         |

#### Reliability

### Cluster 2:

#### Scale: Transactional Style of Leadership

Case Processing Summary

|       |                       | N  | %     |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid                 | 20 | 100.0 |
|       | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0  | .0    |

|       |    |       |
|-------|----|-------|
| Total | 20 | 100.0 |
|-------|----|-------|

**Reliability Statistics**

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .794             | 10         |

**Reliability**  
**Scale: OVERALL RELIABILITY**

**Case Processing Summary**

|       |                       | N  | %     |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid                 | 20 | 100.0 |
|       | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0  | .0    |
|       | Total                 | 20 | 100.0 |

**Reliability Statistics**

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .845             | 20         |