

PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP APPROACHES AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES IN OYO METROPOLIS PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS, OYO STATE

AWODIJI, Omotayo Adewale (Ph.D)¹

Department of Educational Management & Counselling, Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Kwara State

Corresponding Author: tayojss@gmail.com

ETEJERE, Patricia A. O. (Ph.D)²

Department of Educational Management, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

ALAO, Busayo Oluwabukola³

Department of Educational Management, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

Abstract

The place of leadership cannot be jettisoned in the attainment of secondary school effectiveness. This study examined principals' leadership approaches as predictors of students' learning outcomes in Oyo metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State. The descriptive survey research design of correlational type was employed. The population for this study comprised all public senior secondary school teachers in Oyo metropolis. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 250 teachers from 10 randomly selected public secondary schools in the study area. A researcher designed a questionnaire titled "Principals' Leadership Approach Questionnaire" (PLAQ) and "Students' Learning Outcomes Proforma" (SLOP) were used as instruments for the study. Descriptive statistics of mean was used in answering research questions while inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that: transformational leadership was ranked 1st (\bar{x} = 39.45) as the most used leadership approach by secondary school principals; students' learning outcomes level (41.73) was low in the selected secondary schools. It was revealed a positive non-significant association between the principals' leadership approaches and students' learning outcomes in Oyo metropolis public secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the principals should change their leadership approach in order to improve the Oyo metropolis public secondary schools in public examinations; and that educational planners in the Ministry of Education should sponsor and organise conferences, seminars, and workshops on a framework for leadership development for principals in all public secondary schools in Oyo metropolis.

Keywords: *Principals, Leadership, Approach and Learning outcomes*

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in the development of a country because it is the source of growth of any country. This may be the reason why UNESCO in 2001 declared education as a vehicle for and an indicator of development and this could be the reason why parents are more concerned with students' academic achievement. The primary responsibility of the principal is to facilitate effective teaching and learning with the overall mission of enhancing students' academic achievement. Principals supervise all educational activities of the school with the aim of attaining students' academic achievement. Teachers are the key to the overall achievement of learning outcomes. Their roles are very significant in the process of curriculum implementation which

could be influenced by the leadership approaches adopted by the principals. All teachers deserve motivation, intellectual development, and skills that equip them for work.

Leadership is a dynamic process in the school setting whereby the principal as the head influence others (teachers, non-teaching staff and students) to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of school goals (Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, 2013). It involves all dispositions directed towards influencing people to perform their duties effectively. Leadership can be seen as a projected action from an individual (the leader) towards others (followers) for the purpose of realizing the group objectives. Educational leadership can be seen as the relationship between an individual and the school members, built around some common interest with the arrow-head (principal) behaving in a manner directed or determined by him/her (Igwe, Ndidiamaka, & Chidi, 2017). The National Policy on Education set up certain aims and objectives which were to facilitate educational development in the country. In fostering these aims and objectives, the school principal has important roles to play. Among these roles include providing effective leadership in secondary schools, thereby enhancing better job performance among teachers (Nwokocha, 2014). As such, leadership approaches occupy an important position in school management in Nigeria. The administrators provide the formal leadership and their behaviour determines the extent to which both teachers and students view the school as a desirable place for teaching and learning.

Principals' leadership involves the application of managerial skills towards achieving educational goals in secondary schools (Kashagate, 2013). Today, the demand for students' academic achievement in schools is rapidly taking centre stage more than ever before. It is in the school that educational objectives are achieved. To attain these objectives, school principals are expected to exhibit certain leadership behaviour. The present state of students' academic performance in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) has been a source of worry to the public and stakeholders in the education sector in Nigeria, especially in Oyo state. Many factors have been accrued to the low level of students' academic performance in external examinations which include students' attitude, family background, teachers' variables, environmental factors and funding. Many studies have been conducted on students' academic performance in relation to other variables such as staff development, administrators' leadership skills, human relation strategies, teachers' personal factors (Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, 2013; Ali, 2013; Kashagate, 2013; Garba, Soaib & Ramli, 2014; Obama, Eunic, & Orodho, 2016; Igwe, Ndidiamaka, & Chidi, 2017). Scholars such as Akerele, (2007); Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, (2013); Igwe, Ndidiamaka, & Chidi, (2017) have worked on approaches to leadership using democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, Situational. This study considered principals' leadership approaches (transformational, transitional and transactional) as predictors of students' learning outcomes in Oyo metropolis public secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine principals' leadership approaches as predictors of students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State. Specifically, the study:

- i. determined the most leadership approaches used by principals as perceived by teachers in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State;
- ii. investigated the level of secondary school students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State;

- iii. examined how principals' transformational leadership approaches influences students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions (RQs) were raised:

- i. What is the most leadership approach used by the principals as perceived by the teachers in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State?
- ii. What is the level of secondary school students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study:

H0: There is no significant association between principals' leadership approaches and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

H0₁—There is no significant association between the principals' transformational leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

H0₂—There is no significant association between the principals' transactional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

H0₃— There is no significant association between principals' transitional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design of the correlation type. This enabled the researchers to gather information from the respondents on principal's leadership approaches and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools Oyo State. Descriptive research gave the researchers the opportunity to use quantitative data in order to and investigate characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. The population for this study comprised all 630 secondary school teachers in Oyo metropolis, Oyo State. There were 18 public secondary schools in Oyo metropolis, Oyo State. Out of these, 10 public secondary schools were randomly selected for the study. This was carried out by the dip-hand method whereby the names of the schools were written out in a ballot. A neutral person was requested to pick out a ballot at a time during which the content of the container was shaken to avoid bias. Thus, the selected schools formed the basis for the selection of the respondents for the study. From each of the 10 schools, 25 teachers were selected as respondents for the study using a convenience sampling technique (Ogunbameru & Ogunbameru, 2010; Etikan & Bala, 2017). In all, 245 teachers participated in the study. The instrument used for the data collection was as researcher-designed questionnaire and a proforma. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A was based on the demographic data of the respondents and Section B was based on the 4-point Likert rating of the opinions of the teachers on the subject matter of the research. The opinion rating was on 4 Likert scale format of 4 = Often; 3 = Sometimes; 2 = Occasionally; and, 1 = Never. The questionnaire was tagged: Principal's Leadership Approaches Questionnaire (PLPQ) with 36 items. (Let us know the number if items please) The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Management and Educational Evaluation for face, construct and content validity. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to measure the reliability

whereby the instrument was administered on the respondents who are outside the sampled population and found reliable at a coefficient of 0.65. A secondary data instrument titled “Students’ Learning Outcomes Proforma” was used to collect WASSCE result between the period of 2014 and 2016.

The questionnaire was administered on the respondents by the researchers and two research assistants who were teachers that are not part of the survey sample. The completed copies were collected on the spot to reduce losses and opinion modifications. The responses of the respondents were quantified and analyzed using appropriate statistics. For the data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions raised. The hypotheses formulated were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) with the aid of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the most leadership approach most used by the principals as perceived by the teachers in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State?

Table 1: Leadership Approaches most used by Principals in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools

Leadership Approach	N	Mean	SD	Rank
Transformational Leadership	245	39.45	6.85	1 st
Transactional Leadership	245	31.10	5.82	3 rd
Transitional Leadership	245	39.15	7.22	2 nd
Mean Average	245	36.57	6.63	

Table 1 shows the leadership approaches practised among the principals and perceived by the teachers in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State. Transformational leadership was ranked 1st (X= 39.45) as the most used leadership approach by public secondary school principals. Transitional leadership and transactional leadership were ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively. This indicated that transformational leadership was most used among the principals in the sample schools.

Research Question 2: What is the level of students’ learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools Oyo State?

Table 2: Level of Students’ Learning Outcomes in Oyo Metropolis Public Secondary Schools Oyo State

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Students’ learning outcomes	245	41.73	6.62

Table 2 shows the level of students’ learning outcomes of Oyo Metropolis public secondary school students who sat for WASSCE senior secondary school certificate examination between 2015 and 2017. The mean score indicates that the performance is 41.73. This implies that 41.73 is low because it is less than 50%.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho₁: There is no significant association between principals' leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State

Table 3: Principals' Leadership Approaches and Students' Learning Outcomes in Oyo Metropolis Public Secondary schools

Variables	N	R	p-Value	Decision
Principals' Leadership Approaches	245			
Students' Learning Outcomes	245	.008	.938	Ho₁ Accepted

***Significant $p < 0.05$**

The result from Table 3 shows the Pearson correlation analysis value yielded 8% which is a positive relationship with p-value .983 > 0.05. This shows a positive but not significant relationship result. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a positive non-significant association between the principals' leadership approaches and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Ho₂ - There is no significant association between transformational leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Table 4: Transformational Leadership Approach and Students' Learning Outcomes in Oyo Metropolis Public Secondary schools

Variables	N	r	p-Value	Decision
Transformational Leadership Approach	245			
Students' Learning Outcomes	245	.008	.936	Ho₁ Accepted

***Significant $p < 0.05$**

The result from Table 4 shows that there is an 8% positive association between principals' transformational leadership and students' academic performance with the p-value of .983 > 0.05. This shows a positive, not significant relationship result. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a positive non-significant association between the principals' transformational leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Ho₃ - There is no significant association between the transitional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Table 5: Transitional Leadership Approach and Students' Learning Outcomes in Oyo Metropolis Public Secondary schools

Variables	N	r	p-Value	Decision
Transitional Leadership Approach	245			
Students' Learning Outcomes	245	.005	.964	Ho₁ Accepted

***Significant $p < 0.05$**

Table 5 shows that there is a 5% positive association between principals' transitional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes with the p-value of $.964 > 0.05$. This shows a positive, not significant relationship result. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a positive non-significant association between the principals' transitional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

HO₄– There is no significant association between transactional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Table 6: Transactional Leadership Approach and Students' Learning Outcomes in Oyo Metropolis Public Secondary schools

Variables	N	R	p-Value	Decision
Transactional Leadership Approach	245			
Students' Learning Outcomes	245	.015	.881	Ho₁ Accepted

***Significant $p < 0.05$**

Result from Table 6 shows the Pearson correlation analysis value yielded .015 which is not significant with p value of $.881 > 0.05$. This shows a non-significant result. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a non-significant association between principals' transactional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State.

Discussion

The findings revealed that transformational leadership was ranked 1st as the most used leadership approach by public secondary school principals based on the responses from the teachers. This means that majority of the principals in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State exhibited transformational leadership traits. This result refuted that of Obama, Eunice and Orodho (2016) who examined the effects of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homabay County, Kenya and reported that school principals utilize diverse leadership behaviour, some pointing to the more democratic and transactional styles while others skewed towards the more autocratic, laissez-faire and transformational leadership types. Variation in the result of this study and that of Obama, Eunice

and Orodho (2016) might be due to differences in study location, statistical tools, sampled respondents and cultural differences.

Another finding of the study showed that students' academic performance level (41.73) was low in the selected metropolis public secondary schools. This means that majority of the students examined in this study scored marks below average. This result is possible where the leadership approach of the principals is not the type that can promote teachers' effectiveness which will in turn bring about good academic performance on the part of the students. This result is in line with that of Waweru and Orodho (2014) who found that students' academic performance in Kiambu County, Kenya was low. Also, the result of this study revealed that there was a positive non-significant association between the principals' leadership approaches and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools, Oyo State. This means that principals' leadership approaches are not significantly related to students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis secondary schools, Oyo State. The study showed non-significant association between the principals' transformational leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis secondary schools Oyo State. Although, transformational leadership offers a normative approach to school principal whose objective is on the process by which teachers are influenced towards commitment to school goals (Bush, 2017). This result refuted that of Osagie and Momoh (2015) who found a significant relationship between transformational leadership and students' performance in the senior secondary certificate examination in Edo State. Variation in the result of this study and that of Osagie and Momoh (2015) might be due to differences in study location, statistical tools, sampled respondents and cultural differences.

It was further revealed that there is non-significant association between transitional leadership approach and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis secondary schools, Oyo State. This implies that transactional leadership approach does not have direct relationship significantly with students' learning outcome. It means there are other variables that contribute to students learning outcome such as educational resources, teachers' variables among others. The role of transitional leadership is germane to moving succession process forward in the attainment of institutional goals (Salvato & Corbet, 2013). Moreover, it was revealed that transactional leadership approach does not have a significant direct link with students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis secondary schools, Oyo State. Hence, the need to examine other contributing factors that could predict the students' academic performance. Although, the principal may make clear what he/she expected the staff to receive when performance goals are achieved, yet the relationship may not be directed to students' learning outcomes. The finding is line with Sirajul and Javed (2017) that transactional leadership approach can have an impact on institutional performance in accordance with their characteristics.

Conclusion

This study examined principals' leadership approaches and students' learning outcomes in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools Oyo State. Based on the findings from this study, it was concluded that the majority of the public secondary school principals in Oyo Metropolis employed transformational leadership. The leadership approaches adopted by the school principals do not promote environments capable of facilitating the good academic achievement of students. Students' learning outcomes principals in Oyo Metropolis public secondary schools does not significantly correlate with leadership approach used by the school principals.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is hereby recommended that:

1. School principals should be orientated on the benefits of each of the leadership approaches and the need to adopt one that will facilitate good academic performance.
2. There should be continuous motivational schemes for both students and teachers. Principal(s) needs to be consistent with the supportive aspect of supervisory types of behaviour.
3. The principals should change their leadership approaches in order to improve the academic performance of their students in public examinations.
4. Educational planners in the Ministry of Education should sponsor and organize conferences, seminars, and workshops set on a framework for leadership development for principals in all the secondary schools in Oyo State.

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