Research Paper

Teachers' Transformational Leadership Style and Students' Learning Motivation in Owerri Educational Zone, Imo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
Students' learning behavior and outcome are often influenced by the leadership style of their teachers. Teachers' leadership style can affect students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. Considering the importance of teachers' leadership in the overall development of students, this study investigated the effect of teachers' transformational leadership style on students' learning motivation in secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone, Imo State, Nigeria. The study was anchored on the Leader-member exchange theory. A sample of 363 students was drawn from four schools in Owerri Educational Zone, Imo State. Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The survey data were analyzed with frequency and percentage distribution and chi-square statistic. The study found that teachers' transformational leadership style has had positive effect on students' learning motivation in the selected secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone. The study found that there is a significant relationship between teachers' leadership style and students' motivation. Based on the findings, the study recommended that teachers should adopt transformational leadership style in order to motivate students to seek knowledge.
KEYWORDS: *Leadership, Leadership Style, Learning Behavior, Learning Motivation, Transformational Leadership*

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play fundamental roles in the education of students. Professional teachers deploy their knowledge, skills and experience to impact the lives of their students. The academic success of studentsdepends greatly on the effectiveness of the teachers employed by the school. Teachers' effectiveness is dependent on many factors particularly,on teacher leadership.In a classroom situation, the teacher is the leader and the students are the followers. Hence, it is the duty of the teacher as the leader, to influence, motivate and energize his students, as followers, to higher levels of performance [1].

Teacher leadership in the classroom is becoming increasingly topical in recent times due to the influence on students' development, especially on their cognitive and affective development.Surprisingly, the influenceof teachers' leadership in students' development has not attracted the deserved attention of educationists, school administrators and scholars in developing countries,compared to the very advanced nations.However, some researchers in the developing nations have risen to fill the gap byconducting studies to examine the effect of teachers' leadership on students' learning behavior and outcome. Some of these researchers have probed the effect of teachers' leadership on students'academic performance; others have studied the effect of teachers' leadership style on students' learning motivation. For example, Amalu and Njoku [2]investigated Mathematics teachers' leadership styles and learning motivation among secondary school students in Calabar Educational Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

The present study is similar to the above mentioned study because of its focus on teacher's leadership style and students' learning motivation. However, this study differs from the earlier study because it specifically examines the effect of transformational leadership style on students' learning motivation in secondary schools in Imo State, Nigeria. Hopefully, the outcome of the study would help to enhance the leadership skills of the teachers in the state and beyond.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study was to investigate the effect of teachers' leadership style on students' learning behavior insecondary schools,Imo State, Nigeria.The specific objective of the study was to interrogate the effect of teachers' transformational leadership on students' learning motivation in secondary schools inOwerri Educational Zone of Imo State, Nigeria.

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following research hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.
*H*1 -There is no significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style andstudents' learning motivation in the secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone, ImoState, Nigeria.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Concept of Leadership

Leadership appears to be one of the most researched topics in organizational studies. Scholars in this field of study have written extensively on the importance of leadership to the success or failure of groups. What then is leadership?The term*Leadership* refers to the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a set goal. Leadership is also defined as the exercise of influence or power in social collectivities [3]. Cole [4] defined leadership as a 'dynamic process in a group whereby one individual influences others to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of group tasks in a given situation.' Robbins and Judge [5] described"leadership as the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or set of goals".

Discussions on leadership have centered on the key elements of leadership and on leadership traits, behavior and style. For instance,Cole [4] wrote that the key elements (variables) of leadership are: the leader, the tasks/goals, the group members (subordinates), and the environment/situation. Cole [6] argued that any analysis of leadership should consider the attributes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) of the leader; the nature of the task or goal; the nature of the group or team; and, the climate or culture of the organization. In his view, these variables form the total leadership situation and the art of leadership is to find the best balance between them in the light of the total situation.

Researchers have over the years been working to identify the traits which leaders must possess in order to guide their organization to success. The search for personality, social, or intellectual traits or attributes that describe leaders and differentiate them from non-leaders, date back to the earliest stages of leadership research [5]. As many as 80 leadership traits have been identified [7], but most of these traits can be organized around the five-factor model of leadership personality (popularly known as the Big Five). The Big Five model consists of the following personality traits: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience[5]. These traits no doubt have varied effects on members of the group.

There are two main dimensions of leadership behavior namely: employee-oriented behavior and production-oriented behavior [5]. Employee-oriented leaders take personal interest in the needs of their employees and accept individual differences among members. In contrast, production–oriented leaders lay great emphasis on the technical aspects of the job and on the accomplishment of group tasks. Employee-oriented leadership is often associated with higher group productivity and higher job satisfaction when compared to production-oriented leadership. However, this is contingent on several factors such as the context of employment or the nature of work.

An aspect of leadership that has been extensively researched is leadership style**.** Leadership style describes the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plan, and motivating people. There are various styles of leadership which include: (a) autocratic (or authoritarian) leadership style, (b) democratic (or participative) leadership style, (c) laissez-faire (or free-rein) leadership style, (d) transactional Leadership style and, (e) transformational Leadership style. Many factors could influence or contribute to the leadership style adopted by a leader such as:the personality trait of the leader; the nature of the task or goal; the nature of the group or team; and, the climate or culture of the organization. Because of the thematic scope of this study, only transformational leadership is discussed herein.

4.2 Transformational Leadership

The concept of transformational leadership was introduced by James MacGregor Burns, and later broadened by Bernard M. Bass [8]. Transformational leadership is a leadership style in which leaders encourage, inspire and motivate employees to innovate and create change that will help grow the organization [9]. Transformational leaders help their subordinates to solve work-related tasks and also teach them how to tackle the challenges. It is characterized by a mixed approach to work based challenges. Transformational leadership enable and presuppose a high level of communication between the team members [10]. It (transformational leadership) can thus be seen as a constellation of different behaviors that include: the ability of leaders to inspire followers, to

work with subordinates individually to meet their idiosyncratic needs [11], and to encourage creative and effortful problem solving [12].

The transformational leadership model encourages leaders to demonstrate authentic, strong leadership, with the idea that employees will be inspired to follow suit. A transformation leader inspires staff by creating an environment of intellectual stimulation. He fosters an environment in which employees voice ideas and converse freely [13]. According to Bass [11], a transformational leader is someone who:

1. builds company culture by encouraging employees to move from an attitude of self-interest to a mindset of common good (collective interest);
2. fosters an ethical work environment with clear values, priorities and standards; and,
3. provides coaching and mentoring but allowing employees to make decisions and take ownership of tasks.

4.3 Teacher Leadership style and Students Motivation

The classroom behavior and leadership of teachers impact a variety of student outcomes [14]. Teacher leadership, specifically transformational leadership, has been linked to instructional outcomes such as extra effort and perceived instructor effectiveness [15]. Bolkan and Goodboy [14] suggest that transformational leaders in the classroom correlate with traditional learning outcomes which include cognitive learning, affective learning, motivation, communication satisfaction, student participation, and student perceptions of instructor credibility. Some studies (e.g. Piccolo and Colquitt, [16]; Shin and Zhou, [17]) suggest that transformational leadership is associated with intrinsic motivation in subordinates.

Deci and Ryan [18] assert that "intrinsic motivation concerns active engagement with tasks that people find interesting and that in turn, promote growth". Intrinsic motivation in education is important because the classroom environment is a context where motivational orientation plays a salient role in performance outcomes [19]. In classroom learning, intrinsic motivation is related to students' interest, value of the material (or subject), and perceptions of mastery [20]. Changes in (students' learning) behavior are most productive and lasting when intrinsic motivation is tapped, and students become in the best sense, self-motivated [21]. Wolters [22] notes that students who are intrinsically motivated persist in their task longer and are more deeply engaged with their studies than those who are not. Pintrich and de Groot [23] claim that intrinsic motivation is linked to cognitive engagement and classroom performance by way of self-regulation and the use of adaptive strategies for studying.

4.4 Motivation and Learning Behavior of Students

The term *Motivation* describes an internal state or condition that serves to activate or energize behavior and give it direction [24]. Motivation can also be defined as a state that energizes, directs and sustains behavior [25]. In simple terms, motivation refers to a person's reason or reasons for acting or behaving in a particular way. In an educational environment, motivation is concerned with the arousal of interest in learning which is fundamental in learning. In other words, the fundamental aim of motivation is to stimulate and to facilitate learning [26]. The indices of motivation (in the classroom) include: choice of task, effort, persistence, and level of achievement [25].

Table 1: The Indices of Motivation

Index	Relation to Motivation
Choice of Tasks	Choosing a task freely indicates motivation to perform the task
Effort	High effort indicates motivation
Persistence	Working for longer time indicates motivation
Level of Achievement	Choice, effort and persistence raise task achievement

Source: Melissa Hurst (2019). The importance of motivation in an educational environment
https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-importance-of-motivation-in-an-educational-environment.html

The source(s) of motivation can be categorized as intrinsic (internal to the person) or extrinsic (outside the person) [27]. The sources of motivation have varied effects on the learning behavior of students. For instance, Duff [28] stated that intrinsic motivation influences three specific studying behaviors: a deep approach, a surface approach, and a strategic approach. According to Duff [29], a deep approach to studying entails looking for meaning in the matter being studied and relating it to other experiences and ideas with a critical approach, whereas a surface approach to studying entail relying on rote-learning and memorization in isolation to other ideas. For Mattick, Dennis and Bligh [30], a strategic approach to studying means to do so in organized and effortful ways and to optimize success through effective use of space and time. The other source of motivation in an educational environment is the extrinsic source. Extrinsic motivation, often referred to as situational motivation, is a phenomenon in which aspects of the immediate environment enhance motivation to learn particular things or behave in particular ways [25].

Motivation and learning behavior are two very important factors in determining student's learning achievement [31]. Anni [32], notes that motivation is not only important in encouraging students to learn, but also, in influencing their learning achievement. According to Tokan and Imakulata [31], learning motivation, both from the students, as well as from outside, will determine students' learning behavior. The results from the study of Bolkan and Goodboy [33] suggest that teachers who promote intellectual stimulation empower students and promote both cognitive and affective learning. According to (LeTeller [1], a teacher's influence as a leader will be greatly enhanced if the teacher has rapport with students and a relationship based on respect.

4.5 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Leader-member exchange theory. Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory focuses on the interactions between leader(s) and follower(s). In a classroom setting, the teacher is the leader, while the students are the followers. The application of Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory in this study will entail exploring how the teacher and students develop relationships that could influence the social behavior, attitude and learning behavior of students. The LMX theory involves a three step process namely, role taking, role making and routinization. It is at the routinization stage that routines, norms and expectations are established [34].

Leader-member exchange (LMX) is a dyadic relational approach. The central premise behind leader-member exchange theory is that within work units or teams (or classrooms), different types of relationships develop between leaders (teachers) and their subordinates (students) [35]. LMX research reveals that leaders (teachers) form warm, inclusive, and communicative relationship with some members (students) compared to others [36]. Leaders (teachers) often establish stronger or closer relationship with a select few of lieutenants, assistants, (or students) to whom they give higher levels of responsibility, greater access to resources, and greater opportunity to contribute to decision making. It is often argued that this select few (in-group) are more committed to task (or learning) objectives [37]. Those who have weak leader-member exchange are less likely to participate in decision making and class activity, and to enjoy full access to resources. Such subordinates or students are more likely to be less committed to task or learning objectives or to volunteer for extra-work.

V. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted across sectional survey design in investigating the link between teachers' transformational leadership style and students' learning motivation. The Primary data for the study were collected from a sample of 363 respondents. The sample consisted of Senior Secondary 2 and 3 students in four schools in Owerri Educational Zone, Imo State. A structured questionnaire with a reliability co-efficient estimate of 0.782 was used to collect the primary (i.e., quantitative) data for the study. The analysis of survey data involved the use of frequency and percentage distribution tables to present and analyze respondents' responses to questionnaire items addressing the research objectives. The research hypothesis was tested with the chi-square statistic.

VI. DATA PRESENTATION

In order to investigate the effect of teachers' transformational leadership on students' learning motivation, respondents were asked to respond to questionnaire statements by indicating whether the strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2: Effect of teachers' transformational leadership style on students' learning motivation

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1.I volunteer answers in class because my teacher promotes participation?	169 (46.6%)	154 (42.4%)	19 (5.2%)	21 (5.8%)	363 (100%)
2. I enjoy attending classes because my teacher makes learning interesting	174 (47.9%)	172 (47.4%)	3 (1%)	14 (3.7%)	363 (100%)
3. I am not deterred by failure in class because my teacher is very accommodating	195 (53.7%)	151 (41.6%)	7 (1.9%)	10 (2.8%)	363 (100%)
4.I take my studies seriously because my teacher showed me the relevance to my live	199 (54.8%)	130 (35.8%)	30 (8.3%)	4 (1.1%)	363 (100%)
5.My confidence has grown because my teacher challenges me always	111 (30.6%)	224 (61.7%)	25 (6.9)	3 (0.8%)	363 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table 2evidently shows that the majority of the respondents affirmed that: they volunteer answers in class because their teacher encourages participation; they enjoy attending classes because their teacher makes learning interesting; they are not deterred by failure in class because their teacher is very accommodating; they take their studies seriously because their teacher showed them the relevance to their lives, and; their confidence had grown because their teacher challenges them always.

VII. TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

H1- There is no significant relationship between teacher's transformational leadershipstyle and student's motivation.To test this hypothesis, the responses to questionnaire item 1, 3 and 5 as shown in Table 2 were represented inTable 3.

Table 3: Observation for Hypothesis One

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	169	154	19	21	363B1
3	195	151	7	10	363B2
5	111	224	25	3	363B3
Total	475A1	529A2	51A3	34A4	1089

Computing formula for chi-square

$$X2 = \frac{\sum(O_1 - E_1)^2}{E_1}$$

Where ∑ = Summation

O = Observed values

E = Expected values

To obtain the expected frequencies

$E = \frac{\text{Row total x column}}{\text{Grand total}}$

Decision Rule

If the calculated value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4: Calculation for Hypothesis One

O	E	(O - E)	(O - E)$^{2/E}$
475	158.3	316.7	4.0
529	176.3	352.7	4.0
51	17	34	4
34	11.3	22.7	4
475	158.3	316.7	4.0
529	158.3	352.7	4.0
51	17	34	4
34	11.3	22.7	4
475	158.3	316.7	4.0
529	176.3	352.7	4.0
51	17	34	4
34	11.3	22.7	4
Total			48

The table value of X^2 at 0.05 significance level and 3 degree of freedom is 7.815. The calculated value of $X^2$is 48. Since the calculated value of X^2 is greater than the table value of X^2, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and students' motivation, is rejected. Therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and students' motivation.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of teachers' leadership style on the learning behavior of secondary school students in Imo State, Nigeria. The study specifically examined the effect of teachers' transformational leadership style on students' motivation in selected secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone. Based on the data analysis, the study found that teachers' transformational leadership style has had positive effect on the secondary school students' motivation with the educational zone.The findings suggest that the teachers' transformational leadership styles had positively influenced students' classroom attendance, participation, and commitment to learning. Hypothesis One which states that there is no significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and students' learning motivation, was tested

with chi-square statistic. The test result provided proof to reject the null hypothesis, and the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and students' learning motivation. The effect of teachers' transformational leadership on students' motivation can be explained using the Leader-member exchange theory which shows how the nature and quality of relationship between teacher/leader and students/followers can influence the students' learning behavior.

IX. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from the study is that teacher leadership is vital to students' learning motivation. The findings of the study suggest that students' desire to learn can be kindled or dampened by teachers' leadership style. The transformational leadership was shown to have positive effect on students' learning motivation. This is a major factor in achieving positive learning outcomes.The study therefore recommended that education administrators in Imo State should make teacher leadership training a priority;they should design programmes aimed at instilling functional leadership skills in teachers. The continuous participation of teachers in leadership training programmes will enhance their student management skills, which will in turn enhance the quality of learning, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria.

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