

Chapter 14

Predictive Leadership Style of Private Secondary School Principals in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This research is a qualitative study of two private secondary schools in Nigeria. Data was collected from eight (8) participants through in-depth interview (IDI). Observation was employed to triangulate and validate the leadership style claims of both principals and teachers as few researches have dwelled on such. Findings revealed that a situated involvement of teachers in responsibilities motivate them to do their most excellence to achieve result through initiating change in schools' organizations as well as others referred to as transformational leadership.

INTRODUCTION

School A in Kano state and School B in Kaduna state in Nigeria were used for this study based on their high-performance level. They have a track record of nurturing academic excellence and value in their students. These two schools have exhibited trend of producing high achieving students who are also very disciplined, and well-behaved. They have recorded oversubscription in the entrance class of Junior Secondary School 1 for over 10 years. The researchers have cause to assume that the success of these two schools was achieved due to the kind of leadership approach employed by the school principals to lead the schools. The principals exhibit attributes and characteristics of transformational leadership of intellectual stimulation (IS) idealized influence (II), individual consideration (IC) as well as inspirational motivation (IM). This study describes the context and methodology to help others understand how the findings of this study could be applicable to other similar circumstances. Transferability is therefore possible where it is up to the consumer of the research findings to speculate how the results can be

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useful (Merriam, 1995). Authors like (Eval and Roth, 2011) investigated to find out the bond between transformational leadership and motivation, and they established that leadership style was a significant factor in motivating teachers.

Teachers reported that principals who had the utmost influence were open, participatory, and effective (Blase & Blase, 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Blase & Kirby, 1992; Hoy & Smith, 2007). Better student learning and more committed teachers were associated with school principals demonstrating transformational leadership. Principals work to manage thoughts and feelings of staff while encouraging collaborative culture in addition to interactions among employees. Such leadership tends to facilitate an overall collective and effective school design (Chirichello, 1999). Leadership approach has over time been demonstrated by several scholars like (Bass and Avolio, 2003) as having encouraging association amid transformational leadership and the organizations' performance levels.

Past scholars argued that about twenty years of leadership research have confirmed that leaders possessing some ideals of leadership in terms of transformational style are likely to produce higher level of employees' commitment and contentment (Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang, & Shi, 2005). This present study corroborates this notion and provides understanding of how this leadership style works in school environment. Given that, the researchers have cause to assume that the success of these two schools was achieved due to the kind of leadership approach employed by the school principals to lead the schools. While, exhibiting attributes and characteristics of transformational leadership of intellectual stimulation (IS) idealized influence (II), individual consideration (IC) as well as inspirational motivation (IM). Bearing this in mind, this study attempts an illustration of how principals of two identified private secondary schools in Kaduna and Kano states in Northern Nigeria achieved school success, teacher followership, student high academic performance through transformational leadership style of the principals, so that others could adopt the same to achieve success.

Since, few researches in Nigeria have dwelled on the predictive leadership style of secondary schools, fewer still used the qualitative approach of research. This particular study addressed these gaps and the research provides understanding of a situated predictive leadership style in private secondary schools in the sense that involvement of teachers in handling responsibilities as class teachers, duty masters/mistress, game/sport master etc giving the teachers a sense of being involved and that motivated them to do their most excellence to achieve result that is all about initiating change in organizations, groups, oneself and others referred to as transformational leadership. Opposing to other leadership styles, transforming leaders inspire others to do more than they initially anticipated and frequently even more than they considered doable.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

In Nigeria, Secondary education has recently come under growing criticisms from stakeholders like parents, opinion leaders, politicians, and academia (Adu, Oshati, & Ifeoma; 2012). Ibukun (2008) noted that secondary schools have failed in providing quality education expected of them regarding higher students' academic achievement. Explaining further, Ibukun (2008) recognized various challenges hindering the system, thereby rendering it unproductive in terms of low students' academic achievement. Ten years down the line the situation remains the same, secondary students' academic achievement is becoming poorer and more worrisome. Workers (including teachers) in Nigeria are seen as having lukewarm attitudes towards work which results in low students' academic achievement (Umeh, 1997). Thus, requiring an exigency for excellent leadership in (secondary) schools to bring about positive at-

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