TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP CAPACITIES AND STYLES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KATSINA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

YERO MUSA
NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (NERDC) STATE OFFICE
OPPOSITE KATSINA COLLEGE KATSINA (KCK), KATSINA STATE
yeromusa1@yahoo.com

Abstract
This study examined principals' leadership capacities and styles as perceived by teachers in public secondary schools in Katsina Local Government Area of Katsina State. A descriptive research of survey type was used for the study. Two research questions guided the study. A total of 200 teachers and 10 out of 27 public secondary schools in Katsina Local Government Area were sampled for the study through a simple random sampling technique. A modified 'Principals' Leadership Capacities Questionnaire' developed by Luo (2004) and a self-structured questionnaire were used to collect data, which was analyzed by using simple percentage technique and frequency counts. Findings showed that, the teachers perceived their principals as either having no capacity, little capacity, moderate capacity or excellent capacity. The principals were considered to have little capacity in the area of communicating the school vision to staff, students and parents, among others. The principals were considered to be having moderate capacity in the use of effective strategies to implement this vision; allocation and use of human and material resources effectively, legally and equitably, among others. The principals were also considered to have excellent capacity in the area of the vision of learning to promote students' success and effective use of time management. Furthermore, the principals were considered adopting a democratic leadership style in almost all areas in the study. The study, therefore, recommended among others that, school principals required more leadership capacities through professional development programmes/training such as workshops, seminars and conferences so as to enhance their abilities in communicating school vision, accommodating learners' needs due to little capacity identified in these leadership variables.

Keywords: Teacher, perception, principal, leadership capacity, leadership styles.

Introduction

In this age of globalization, school leadership plays a dominant role in the outcome of any organized effort tailored at a particular goal or a set of goals. With the increase of high population, information and ideas across the globe, the desire for leaders to meet the challenges of this age is very crucial. It is the genius of leadership that mobilizes human and material resources and creates the necessary climate for productivity. Research has shown that, leadership accounts for most of the outcomes observable in organizations. Atkinson (2008) viewed that, leadership involves much more than the behaviors exhibited by leaders in any other organization.

The leadership role of any leader has much effect on the subordinates as well as the organization as a whole. Akomolafe (2013) pointed out that, managers are the basic and scarcest resource of any business enterprise. Effective leadership can,

therefore, be said to have contributed immensely towards the success of many business organizations, family units and many developed nations. This point was buttressed by Pounder (2006), who stated that, a group reaches the height of achievement in keeping to its potentials because it lacked leadership. The degree of accomplishment in any institution depends on the nature of its leadership, and education is no exception. Sailesh (2010) also added that, every group of people that performs near its total capacity has some person as its head who is skilled in the art of leadership.

According to Ibukun (2004), leadership is the art of influencing others to work enthusiastically towards the achievement of organizational goals. Building on this definition, the function of organizational leadership can be said to be a relationship of influence on others in and out of an organization towards the achievement of the organizational goals. This is because the attainment of organizational goal is a function of the cumulative inter play of the forces (internal and external) influencing an organization. An effective leader, therefore, is one who diligently influences these forces to achieve the specified goals of the organization.

Leadership capacities are the ability and manifestation of competence of a leader in discharge of his duties and skillful performance of functions in accomplishment of school objectives. Arikewuyo (2007) viewed leadership capacity as the broad-based, skillful participating in the work of leadership that leads to lasting school improvement.

The head of leadership at secondary school in Nigeria is the principal, who administers the school with other teaching and non-teaching staff. Pounder (2006) viewed principal as the chief executive of the school, who is responsible for all that happens in the school. The principal, as the chief executive, assigns duties to those who could perform the duties, though all responsibilities still reside in him as the accounting officer. It is in this vein that Sailesh (2010) saw principals as involving the control of human and material resources of the school. The principal's position in the school is very crucial that the school cannot function without that position. Sailesh further viewed the principal as the supervisor, manager, school climate developer and change facilitator.

Udo (2008) defined leadership styles as the manner in which leaders exercise their power of leading. Udo added that leadership style in any system can make or mar the relationship existing between the leader and the led. Pounder (2006) argued that, the style of leadership of any positional incumbent depends on the following factors: the nature of the leader himself; the nature of the group to be led and the nature of the organization environment. Pounder (2006) and Udo (2008) asserted that, there are three types of leadership styles. These include: the democratic; autocratic and laissez-faire. A democratic principal here has the final say but still invites other members of staff to contribute to decision making (Atkinson, 2008). This not only increases job satisfaction by involving others, it also develops people's skills. The autocratic principal, according to Udo (2008), makes all decisions independent of members input. The autocratic leader dictates direction leaving members in the dark about future plans. The laissez-faire principal according to Pounder (2006), is a leader that allows the group complete freedom for decision-making without participating himself. This leader type provides material and offers to assist only by request. The laissez-faire leader does not offer commentary on members performance unless asked directly and does not participate or intervene in activities.

Statement of the Problem

The persistent dwindling of the goals of school system over the years based on observations of poor performance among teachers and students in public secondary schools of the Katsina Local Government Area has been a source of concern to Katsina State Teaching Service Board, the school authority, the community and the government. It appears the roles of school leaders are becoming more cumbersome with the introduction of the new technology, inadequate resources available for the job at hand, and the need for curriculum innovation to meet the global trend. However, the school leadership seems to be saddled with more roles and assignments to meet the challenges ahead. Unfortunately, principal's competences and authorities as the administrative, technical and pedagogical head of the school have become a matter of concern in recent years as there are increasing public outcries in accountability.

Understanding how teachers perceive their principal's leadership capacities has a great significance and providing evidence for improvement of school leadership. This study, therefore, seeks to examine teachers' perception of principals' leadership capacities in public secondary schools in Katsina Local Government Area, Katsina State. Furthermore, the study was not only limited to identifying the leadership capacities but also to identifying the leadership style adopted in their schools.

Objective of the Study

The following are the objectives of this study:

1) To examine the perception of secondary school teachers about the leadership capacities of their school principals.

2) To ascertain the perception of secondary school teachers on the leadership style of their school principals.

Research Questions

1) What is the perception of secondary school teachers about the leadership capacities of their principals in Katsina Local Government Area?
2) What is the perception of secondary school teachers on the type of leadership style their principals adopt?

Methodology

The study was a descriptive research of survey type. The information was obtained from a sample of the population, which enables the prevailing situation to be described. The subjects used for this study consisted of a target population of 1,002 teachers teaching in public secondary schools (junior and senior secondary schools) in Katsina Local Government Area of Katsina State. The public secondary schools in Katsina Local Government Area have a total number of 27. Ten secondary schools (5 junior and 5 senior secondary schools) were sampled within the Local Government Area. Twenty teachers were sampled from each school, making a total of 200 teachers (100 from junior and 100 from senior secondary schools). A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sampled schools and teachers.

The instrument used for data collection in section B was an adapted questionnaire developed by Luo (2004) which was modified to reflect the socio-cultural background of Nigeria. This instrument was titled "Principals Leadership Capacities Questionnaire (PLCQ)", while the instrument in section C was a self-structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A sought

information from personal data of the respondents. Section B contains 15 items seeking teachers' responses on their perception of their principals' leadership capacities by indicating their assessment with each of the items on the following: having no capacity; having little capacity; having moderate capacity or having excellent capacity. Section C contains 1 item which elicited responses on respondents perception of their principals' leadership style adopted in their schools by teachers indicating their assessment of the item based on the following: Democratic, autocratic or laissez-faire. The instrument was pilot tested to 20 teachers (10 from JSS and 10 SSS sections) of public secondary schools who were randomly selected from two schools in Jibia Local Government Area of the State

that were not part of the study area. The reliability analysis yielded cronbach's alpha of 0.76. The instrument was validated by experts in educational administration, measurement and evaluation. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the sampled schools by himself. The two research questions that guided the study were answered using frequency counts and percentages.

Presentation of Results
Research Question One: What is the perception of secondary school teachers about the leadership capacities of their principals in Katsina Local Government Area?

Table 1: Analysis of Teachers' Responses on their Perception about their Principal Leadership Capacities.

S/No	Options	A		B		C		D		Total
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
1.	Vision of learning to promote success of students.	44	22.0	40	20.0	32	16.0	84	42.0	200 100.0
2.	Use of effective strategies to implement the vision.	12	6.0	64	32.0	88	44.0	36	18.0	200 100.0
3.	Facilitate activities that apply principles of effective instruction to improve instructional practices and curricular materials.	44	22.0	32	16.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	200 100.0
4.	Communicate the vision to staff, parents and students.	24	12.0	72	36.0	48	24.0	56	28.0	200 100.0
5.	Promote positive school culture.	24	12.0	48	24.0	84	42.0	44	22.0	200 100.0
6.	Be fully aware of learners diverse needs and accomm-									

No.	Item	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	Total	%
	odate their needs.	24	12.0	72	36.0	64	32.0	40	20.0	200	100.0
7.	Manage time effectively.	10	20.0	36	18.0	56	28.0	68	34.0	200	100.0
8.	Deploy financial and human resources in ways that promote student's achievement.	44	22.0	60	30.0	68	34.0	28	14.0	200	100.0
9.	Give priority to student learning, safety, curriculum and instruction when development plans of action.	28	14.0	56	28.0	60	30.0	56	28.0	200	100.0
10.	Allocate and use fiscal, human and material resources effectively, legally and equitably.	16	8.0	64	32.0	80	40.0	40	20.0	200	100.0
11.	Use group process skills to build consensus, communicate and resolve conflicts.	28	14.0	64	32.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	200	100.0
12.	Respect the rights of others.	16	8.0	60	30.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	200	100.0
13.	Treat students fairly.	28	14.0	52	26.0	76	38.0	44	22.0	200	100.0
14.	Make and explain decisions based upon ethical and legal principles.	40	20.0	68	34.0	56	28.0	36	18.0	200	100.0
15.	Fully consider political, social, economic, legal and cultural context in school policy development and school operation.	48	24.0	56	28.0	48	24.0	48	24.0	200	100.0

Key: A-Having no capacity; B-Having little capacity; C-Having moderate capacity; D-Having excellent capacity.

From the result on table 1 above, it was found that teachers viewed their principals as either having no capacity, little capacity, moderate capacity or excellent capacity. The teachers viewed their principals as having little capacity in the area of communicating school vision to staff, parents and students with a score of 72 (36.0%); ability to accommodate learners needs 72 (36.0%); fully considering of political, social, economic, legal and cultural context in school policy development operations 56 (28.0%) and an ability to make and explain decisions based upon critical and legal principles 68 (34.0%). Respondents however, viewed their principals as having moderate capacity in the ability to use effective strategies to

implement this vision with a score of 64 (32.0%); in order to promote school culture 80 (42.0%); allocation and use of fiscal, human and material resources effectively, legally and equitably 80 (40.0%); treating students fairly (36.0%); respect the rights of others 76 (38.0%); use of group process skills to build consensus, communicating and resolve conflicts 76 (38.0%); deploy financial and human resources in ways that promote students' achievement 68 (34.0%) and giving priority to student learning, safety curriculum and instruction when

developing plans of actions 60 (30.0%). The principals are also considered as having excellent capacity in the area of vision for the school in order to promote students success with a score of 84(42.0%) and the ability to manage time effectively with a score of 68 (34.0%).

Research Question Two: What is the perception of secondary school teachers on the type of leadership style their principals adopt?

Table 2: Analysis of Teachers' Responses on their Perception about their Principal Leadership Style.

S/No.	Statement	Democratic		Laissez-faire		Autocratic			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	Total	%
1.	What type of leadership of leadership style does your school principal adopt? 100.0	160	80.0	4	2.0	36	18.0	200	

The result in table 2 shows that majority of the teachers 160 (80.0%) viewed that their principals adopt a democratic leadership style. 36 (18.0%) respondents viewed that their principals adopt an autocratic leadership style, while 4 (2.0%) respondents perceived that their principals adopt a laissez-faire leadership style. This implies that majority of the principals in public secondary schools in Katsina Local Government Area employ a democratically leadership style in the administration of their school affairs on which it is considered to be the best system of leadership among the different types of leadership styles we have. When school principals are democratic, it gives members of staff a sense of belonging and easily motivates them to discharge their official responsibilities effectively in order to achieve the school educational goals.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of this study indicated that majority of the public secondary schools' teachers in Katsina Local Government Area considered their principals as either having little capacity, moderate or excellent capacity in the skill areas. Though, a few respondents perceived their principals as having no capacity. This finding is in agreement with Luo and Najjar (2007) who opined that, Chinese teachers perceived their principals leadership capacities as moderately negative. This of course should not be a surprise because all the principals possess minimum of a first degree and/or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education which qualifies them to be competent administrators in their various schools. Almost all the principals have a minimum of twelve years teaching experience at the secondary school level. This implies that school principals could be

said to be qualified on the ground of their educational qualifications and years of teaching experiences.

Respondents perceived their principals as having little capacity in the areas of communicating this vision to staff, parents and students; ability to accommodate learners' needs; consideration of political, social, economic, legal and cultural context in school policy development operations and the ability to make and explain decisions based upon critical and legal principles. This implies that principals are yet to fully enlighten the staff, parents and students about the school vision, accommodating learners' needs and considerations of political, social, economic, legal and cultural context in school policy development and operations. According to Arikewuyo (2007), communication of school vision, accommodating learners' needs and socio-economic, cultural and political context in school policy aid not only teaching and learning, but also effective administration. However, these are mostly on little capacity in majority of school principals. This is very unfortunate to educational system and, therefore, school administrators are expected to wake up to their responsibilities to tackle the socio-economic and administrative problems militating against organizational efficiency. The school managers are expected to update their administrative knowledge to equip them for quality service delivery (Sailesh, 2010).

The school principal's functions and responsibilities are to use effective strategies to implement the school vision, promotion of school culture, treating students fairly; respect of individual's rights; deploying financial and human resources that will promote students' achievement and ability to give priority to student learning, safety, curriculum and instruction. The teachers considered their principals as having

moderate capacity in the areas. This finding in fact negates an earlier finding of Akomolafe (2013) who opined that academic and instructional activities including curriculum development, implementation of the school vision, teaching and instructional practices, student safety; giving attention to students' learning; respect of rights of individuals; fair treatment of individuals as well as financial and human resources, supervision treated with less vigor by many school principals. According to him, most principals' concentrate more with administration and managerial functions, instead of ensuring the actual teaching and learning in the school. Arikewuyo (2007), Alimi, Alabi and Ehinola (2011) stated that the purpose of establishing the school is for teaching and learning and as well as providing leadership for curriculum development, instructional improvement and supervising instructional activities in the school which must be given a proper consideration. Teachers also perceive their principals as having moderate capacity on legal and equitably allocation of human and material resources and the utilization of group process skills to build consensus, communicate and resolve conflicts. This finding is in consonant with the findings of Arikewuyo (2007) who opined that, school managers should have the ability to allocate human and material resources and as well resolving conflicts in their schools.

School principals are also considered by their teachers as having excellent capacity in the area of vision of learning to promote students' success and effective time management. All these are indicators to proof that principals are very democratic in their administrative functions. This finding is in tandem with assertion of Sailesh (2010) and Akomolafe (2013) who reveal that internal leadership capacities which contained in the areas of school vision and

effective management of time and learning resources received a rating of excellent capacity of school principals as perceived by their teachers. Excellent vision of principals in school vision as revealed by this study is adequate enough in the achievement of school goals. Vision, as the force which holds meaning for the people of an organization, provides meaning and purpose to the work of an organization. Furthermore, a compelling picture of the future that inspires commited principal as a visionary leader, encourages people to work and provides guidance to an organization by articulating what it wishes to attain. The teachers are in the best position to identify the leadership capacities of their principals in the various dimensions because of the close working relationship. The manifestation of the capacities of leaders in their administrative and professional duties of school principles, measures to a greater extent their level of success on their job.

Teachers perceived their principals as adopting a democratic leadership style in the administration of the school affairs, which is the best type of leadership style. The democratic leader welcomes team input discussion and decision-making (Udo, 2008). This leadership type shares plans with the group and offers multiple option for group consideration. He encourages members to work freely with each other and allows division of tasks to the group. Alimi, Alabi and Ehinola (2011) stated that, democratic leadership style allows members to express themselves, their desires, and work towards need satisfaction. Pounder (2006) described democratic leadership style as a way in which a leader is neither completely autocratic nor laissez-faire. There is a positive relationship between democratic leadership style and organizational effectiveness. A democratic principal has the final say but still invites other members of staff to contribute to decision-making. This not only increases job satisfaction by involving others, it also develops people's skills.

Conclusion

The leaders' ability and competency to exhibit his skillfulness and managerial strategies in running the organization affairs are of great significance in tackling the challenges of school organizations nowadays. The leadership capacities and styles spelt out in this study are of significant value to build and improve the school system in order to meet the societal needs and aspirations in this technological era. The leadership vision is a pointer to enhancing teachers' behaviors and performance. It was observed from all indications, that public secondary school teachers in Katsina Local Government Area of Katsina State considered their principals as having the leadership capacity to administer their schools. Furthermore, it was also observed from this study that school principals as perceived by their teachers adopt a democratic style of leadership in administering their schools' affairs which is the best type of leadership styles that will lead to the attainment of educational goals of the schools and equally promote job satisfaction among the teachers and non-teaching staff.

Recommendations

The principals should develop their leadership capacities, among others, through continued professional development/training such as workshops, seminars and conferences. These will enhance their leadership abilities in the area of communicating school vision to staff, students and parents; accommodating learners' diverse needs; considering the political, social economic, legal, cultural context in school policy development and operations and make and explain decisions

based on ethical and legal principles due to little capacity identified in these leadership variables of this study.

Furthermore, the school principals are expected to attend continued professional development programmes/training on leadership. This will improve and strengthen their leadership capacities, among others, in the use of effective strategies to implement this vision; improve in instructional practices and curricular materials; ability to promote positive culture; deploying financial and human resources in order to promote students' achievement; giving priority to student's learning, safety, curriculum and instruction. It will also enhance legal and equitably allocation of human and material resources; use of group process skills to build consensus ; communicating in ways that will resolve conflicts; promoting students' achievement; respect of individual's rights and treating students with fairness, due to moderate strength identified in these leadership variables of this study.

Finally, public secondary school principals in Katsina Local Government Area should sustain the democratic leadership style in the administration of their schools. This is because democratic leadership style promotes organizational effectiveness.

References

Akomolafe, C.O. (2013). Principals' leadership capacities as perceived by teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 8 (22), 67-75.

Alimi, O.S., Alabi, F.O. & Ehinola, B.G. (2011). Teachers' perception of principals' leadership effectiveness in public and private secondary schools in Ondo State. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 11 (12), 22-27.

Arikewuyo, M.O. (2007). Teachers' perception of principals' leadership capacities in Nigeria, 5, Issue 3.

Atkinson, S.A. (2008). The multiple administrative roles of principals: In the challenge, *Lagos ANCOPSS*, 3 (1), 20-22.

Ibukun, W.O. (2004). Educational management: Theory and practice, Ondo: NIEPA Printing Press.

Luo, M. (2004). Geographic disparities in Chinese school principals' leadership capacities: A perspective of teachers' perceptions, *International Studies in Educational Administration,* 32 (3), 20-23.

Luo, M. and Najjar, L. (2007). The Chinese principal leadership capacities as perceived by master teachers. *Academic Leadership: The Online Journal,* 4(3).

Pounder, J.S. (2006). Transformational classroom leadership. *Journal of Educational Management Administration and Leadership,* 34 (4), 533-545.

Sailesh, S. (2010). Perceived leadership capacities of Malasian Principals. *International Journal of Educational Administration,* 2 (3), 547-560.

Udo, M.E. (2009). The relationship between teachers' leadership styles and students' attitude to secondary school chemistry. *Journal of Research and Educational Development,* 1 (1&2), 71-80.