

# Leadership Styles and Staff Productivity in Selected Tertiary Institutions in Kwara State

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## Abstract

*This study was carried out to determine the leadership styles and staff productivity in selected tertiary institutions in Kwara state. The study adopted a survey research design and a self-designed but validated questionnaire was used to collect the data. The population of the study was made up of chief executives of tertiary institutions in Kwara state. The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis. The two research questions were answered using mean scores and ranking order, while the null hypothesis was tested using Pearson product moment correlation statistics. The findings of the study revealed that, the leadership styles of Chief Executive of tertiary institutions in Kwara state has significant relationship with staff productivity. The leadership style mostly used by heads of tertiary institutions in Kwara state are: autocratic, democratic and laissez faire leadership styles respectively. The level of staff productivity in tertiary institution in Kwara state is high. The study concluded that the leadership styles exhibited by Chief executives of tertiary institutions in Kwara have strong influence on productivity. Finally, the study suggested that government at all levels (Federal, state and local) should urgently organize continuous trainings, workshops and seminars that would expose the Chief executives of tertiary institutions to modern transformational leadership styles.*

## Introduction

Education which can be described as, the transfer of knowledge from one person to another, or generation to generation leads to innovation, creativity and change. Education also equips people with relevant skills and competencies which enable them perform better in their chosen careers, thereby making them to be functional and useful to themselves and their societies, perhaps it is in line with this that, the National Policy on Education is made as a guideline for primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. The goals of these levels of education are clearly spelt out in National Policy on Education (FGN 2004); inculcation of national consciousness and national unity; inculcation of the type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individuals and the Nigerian Society; training of the mind in the understanding of the world around us and acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competences as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society.

Specifically, the aims of primary education include inculcation and development of literacy, numeracy, communicative and manipulative skills, laying foundation for scientific and reflective thinking, character development and preparing the recipients for studies. Those of secondary education are: preparation of



individuals for useful living in the society and higher education while tertiary education focuses on: contribution to national development through manpower training encouraging scholarship, ensuring self-reliance through intellectual development and enhancing unity and co-operation both within and outside Nigeria.

Tertiary or higher education in Nigeria is in various forms which include Monotechnics, Polytechnics, College of Education and Universities. The Monotechnics specialize in one course while the polytechnics cover many courses such as Agriculture, Commercial Courses, Engineering, Science and Technology. Monotechnics have similar objectives with the Polytechnics. They are both responsible for provision of technical knowledge and skills leading to production of technicians, technologists and other skilled personnel. The Colleges of Education are in charge of teacher education. They produce professional teachers who are expected to teach in our primary and Junior secondary schools while the Universities are to provide high level man power through offering wide range of courses. They are also expected to indicate community co-operation, conduct and disseminate the outcome researches (FGN, 2004).

The productivity of an employee is to a greater extent determined by the relationship with the immediate supervisor (West, 2020). Furthermore, West (2020) points out that a poor supervisor is the first factor responsible for low productivity. This is because a leader who fails to keep promise, never gives credit when due, makes negative comments and blame others for his mistakes will discourage the subordinates to work hard. On the other hand, a good supervisor who motivates and rewards good performance will, all things being equal, stimulate higher productivity. Similarly, Gudensha (2012), states that inefficient management resulted into low productivity in most construction companies in USA, despite the presence of trained manpower and latest technology. In the same vein, Akrani (2013) is of view that productivity rests on management. He also state that a future oriented, sincere, competent and imaginative manager, ensures optimum use of resources and better relationship with the employees. These imply that the success or otherwise of an organization depends on those who manage it. In the light of this, management is seen as a key to employee's productivity.

Leadership style described a leader's characteristic behavior when directing, motivating, guiding and managing group of people (Cherry, 2006). This shows that, the characters and behaviours exhibited by a leader while dealing with his subordinates describe his leadership style. Leadership styles could also be seen as a representation of the various approaches through which leadership goals and objectives are achieved. This implies that the leadership styles describe the strategies and methodologies adopted by leaders in order to ensure that they achieve their goals and objectives; thereby leadership styles are classified in different ways. A critical look at the classifications however revealed that all the classification are deeply rooted in the three leadership styles based on the use of authority namely; autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. These leadership styles are discussed as follow:

**Autocratic Leader:** This is also called authoritarian leadership style. The leadership style characterized with concentration of authority on the leader who



makes use of reward and punishment to enforce compliance to decision taken by the leader (Ile, 1999). According to Cherry (2006), an autocratic leader provides clear expectation for what is to be done, when and how it should be done. There is a clear division between the leader and the led, the leader controls and command the followers' and also taken decision with little or no input from the followers. Inline with these, the Singapore Productivity Association (SPA, 2010), pointed out that a leader that adopts this style has power over the leader is the most knowledgeable, workers must be coerced, directed, controlled, there is emergency and no time for group decision making (Ile, 1999; Cherry, 2006). It should however be noted that the autocratic leadership style could lead to absenteeism, employee turnover and hostility. This is because dissatisfied workers may register their hostility against the leader, abscond from duty or decide to quite the organization.

To avoid the aforementioned situations, Welhrich, Cannie and Koontz (2008) pointed that some autocratic leaders choose to be benevolent. This implies the leader considerably listen to the follower before taking decision. **Democratic Leader:** The democratic leadership style is also known as the participative style of leadership. According to Ile (1999), this style considers the wishes of both the leader and the member, it is a human relation approach in which everybody is seen as a contributor to decision making and the participation sought to improve the quality of decision taken. In the same vein, Adeleye (2005) stated that in using this style, leader consults with the subordinates when taking actions and decisions. Adeleye (2005) also stated that the democratic leader is seen to be a spectrum which ranges from a leader who does not make a decision without the consent of the subordinates to the one who takes decision but consult the subordinates before doing so. As put forward by Cherry (2006), the democratic leadership style is the most effective, it prompts the leader to offer guidance to group members participation and allows input from the members.

The leader however, retains the right for final decision. It should be noted the retention of the final decision does not discourage the subordinates. This is because, they feel engaged in the process, more motivated and creative. In line with these, SPA (2010) points out that the democratic leadership style increase job satisfaction in the own destiny. This style is most suitable when teamwork is essential. It could be deduced from these expressed views that the democratic leadership style encourages participation of both the leader and the led which makes them to see each other as important stakeholder, thereby bringing about co-operation which would lead to organization's success.

**Laissez Faire Leader:** This leadership style is known as the free reign style of leadership. Ile (1999) points out that the style attempts to transfer responsibilities of the leader to the group. The leader gives little or no direction and allows the group members a lot of freedom. This leadership style gives opportunities for individual development and chance for self-expression with relative freedom. Based on these, Adeleye (2005) is of the opinion that the laissez-faire style gives the subordinates a high degree of freedom in their operation. Also, Cherry (2005) is of the conviction that this leadership style is most appropriate when the members are qualified in an area of expertise. This implies that the employees in this situation are highly



experienced and skillful. They can also discharge their responsibilities with little or no supervision from the leader. This owns to the fact that they are skillful which gives opportunity for proper discharge and completion of tasks.

The researcher observed that all the tertiary institutions in Kwara State are endowed with human and materials resources which enhance productivity and make the institutions to be among the best in Nigeria. The researcher also observed that the success of these institutions might be attributed to the leadership styles exhibited by the leaders. Therefore, this research is out to determine the extent to which leadership styles enhances staff productivity in selected tertiary institution in Kwara State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine leadership styles and staff productivity in selected tertiary institutions in Kwara state. The specific objectives were to find out:

1. What types of leadership styles are mostly used by Chief Executive officers of tertiary institutions in Kwara State?
2. What is the level of staff productivity in Kwara State tertiary institution?

### **Research Questions**

In line with the specific objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Which leadership styles are mostly used by Chief Executive officers of tertiary institutions in Kwara State?
2. What is the level of staff productivity in Kwara State tertiary institution?

**Research Hypothesis :** is there any significant relationship between the leadership styles of Chief executive officers and staff productivity in tertiary institutions in Kwara State?

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for the study was the Descriptive survey research design. This research design is taken to be appropriate for the study. The population of study consists of both academic and non-academic staff of all the selected tertiary institution in Kwara State. In determining a sample size, there is no any fixed number that is taken to be ideal. Rather, it is the circumstance and study situation that determine the percentage that could be used. If carefully selected, the sample which is a representation of the population of the study can generate results that can be generalized to some extent. The actual population for the study was 200 respondents drawn from tertiary institutions in Kwara State. The instrument used for the data collection is a self-designed, twenty-one items, and four-point rating scale questionnaire. The instrument is be made up of three sections 'A' and 'B'. Section A was aimed at generating information on the demographic variables of the respondents, while section B which is composed of the three sub-sections, was designed to generate data on leadership styles and staff productivity. Each of the three sub-sections was made up of seven questionnaire items. The items in each of



sub-sections were designed for the purpose of collecting and generating data needed for answering the research question in their respective order.

The instrument was validated by three experts in the field of Educational administration and planning. Their suggestions were used to revise the questionnaire. This was to ensure that both the face and content validity of the instrument are met. To test the reliability of the instrument, it was subjected to a pilot test, using T-test reliability techniques. The instrument was administered on 20 academic staff of FCT College of Education, Zuba-Abuja, which was not among the selected institutions. It was re-administered to the same group of respondent after an interval of two weeks. The responses were then correlated using Spearman coefficient of 0.83. This reveals that the instrument is reliable for conducting the study.

The researcher administered the instrument personally. The copies of the questionnaire were also retrieved personally through the assistance of few people in each of the tertiary institutions. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Frequency percentage scores were used in analyzing the demographic data of the respondents. The mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions where benchmark mean of 2.50 was adopted for the four-point rating scale questionnaire is 2.50 ( $4+3+2+1 \div 4 = 10 \div 4 = 2.5$ ). Therefore, any item or research question with a mean of 2.50 or above will be accepted and vice-versa.

## Results

This deals with collations, analysis, presentation and interpretation of data collected through the use of questionnaire on leadership styles of chief executive of tertiary institutions in Kwara State on staff productivity. The analysis is presented based on the two research questions and one hypothesis formulated for the study. Descriptive statistic of mean was used to answer the research questions.

**Research Question 1:** What leadership styles are mostly used by Chief Executive officer of tertiary institution in Kwara State?

**Table 1:** Mean and Rank Order on the leadership styles mostly used by Chief Executive officers of tertiary institution in Kwara State

S/N	Leadership Styles	X	Rank
1.	Autocratic leadership style	3.06	1 <sup>st</sup>
2.	Democratic leadership style	2.95	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3.	Laissez-fair leadership style	2.45	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Table 1 showed that the leadership styles mostly used by Chief Executive Officers is the Autocratic leadership style, follow by Democratic and Laissez faire leadership styles with the mean scores of 3.06, 2.95 and 2.45.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of staff productivity in Kwara State tertiary institution?

**Table 2:** Mean and standard Deviation of the level of staff productivity in Kwara State Tertiary institutions



S/N	Lecturing	N	X	SD	Decision
1.	Give note to student	183	1.92	.40	Low
2.	Students evaluation	183	1.79	.41	Low
3.	Moulding student Character	183	1.51	.39	Low

Table 2 showed that the level of staff productivity is comparatively low with the mean scores of 1.92, 1.79 and 1.51.

### Discussion

The result of the first research question showed that the leadership styles mostly used by Chief Executive Officers is the Autocratic leadership style, follow by Democratic and Laissez - faire leadership styles. This is in line with the finding of Cherry (2006) who found that autocratic leader provides clear expectation for what is to be done, when and how it should be done. There is a clear division between the leader and the led, the leader controls and command the followers and also takes decision with little or no input from the followers.

The result of the second research question showed that the level of staff productivity in tertiary institution in Kwara State. Based on the above finding, it is evidenced that, staff productivity is comparatively low. This is in line with the finding of Adeleye (2005) who found that using this style leader consults with the subordinates when taking actions and decisions. Adeleye (2005) also stated that the democratic leader is seen to be a spectrum which ranges from a leader who does not make a decision without the consent of the subordinates to the one who takes decision but consult the subordinates before doing so. As put forward by Cherry (2006), the democratic leadership style is the most effective, it prompts the leader to offer guidance to group members participation and allows input from the members. He (1999) points out that, style attempts to transfer responsibilities of the leader to the group. The leader gives little or no direction and allows the group members a lot of freedom. This leadership style gives opportunities for individual development and chance for self-expression with relative freedom. Based on these, Adeleye (2005) is of the opinion that the laissez-faire style gives the subordinates a high degree of freedom in their operation. Also, Cherry (2005) is of the conviction that this leadership style is most appropriate when the members are qualified in an area of expertise.

### Conclusion

On the basis of the findings emanating from the study, it is important to note that leadership styles of Chief Executive officers of tertiary institution in Kwara State have a strong influence on staff productivity. In view of the findings as discussed above and as reflected in the data collected, it is clearly evident that, autocratic style has a moderate influence on staff productivity while laissez-faire and democratic leadership styles have high impact on staff productivity.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is the urgent need for government at federal state and local levels to organize trainings, workshop, seminars and conference for Chief executive officers of tertiary institution on leadership styles that are suitable for different situation. This is to equip Chief Executive officer of tertiary institutions with modern leadership styles to enhance transformation and productivity while at work.
2. Chief Executive officers leadership style in autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire were found to be a determining factor of staff productivity. Therefore, Chief Executive officers of tertiary institutions should be encouraged to intensify their efforts in their styles that would bring about effectiveness in staff productivity.
3. There is need for proper orientation of staff perception towards the leadership style of the Chief executive officers for good in order to enhance effectiveness in staff productivity.

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