

## **TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLE IN SELECTED SCHOOL IN MAIDUGURI METROPOLITAN AREA, BORNO STATE NIGERIA.**

**Alhaji Yakubu, Haman Modu, and Bintu Bukar Zanna**  
**Department of General Studies,**  
**College of Business and Management Studies, Konduga, Borno State, Nigeria.**

### **ABSTRACT**

*This study was conducted to investigate teachers' perception of principals' leadership style in selected schools in Maiduguri Metropolitan Area of Borno State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study are to determine the perception of principals' leadership style and staff commitment and also to determine staff perception of principals' behavior towards students. Two research questions were raised and answered. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study comprises of teaching staff and sample of the study is made up of one hundred (100) teaching staff selected from the four (4) different secondary schools comprises of twenty-five (5) members of staff from four (4) schools in Maiduguri Metropolitan Area. A simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample. Finding of the study reveals that, the study found that leadership is an important aspect and canner-stone in all organizations. It also found leadership style has a profound effect on school's academic performance. Similarly, leadership of school determines the level of discipline of both the staff and students of school. In addition, based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made as government should organize seminars, conferences etc. to principals and secondary schools administration to educate them on management skills. Finally, the principals of secondary schools should have an interactive session with both staff and students regularly, to make sure things are in order.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Leadership as concept has been the topic of discussion by researchers for a long period of time, and has been related to subjects that touch our lives. Therefore, this study is not an exception, although similar works had already been done related to this particular topic, however, we found it desirable to undergo a similar research related to leadership which is titled; "Teachers' perception of Principals Leadership Style in some selected secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolitan Area of Borno State, Nigeria." This particular topic was chosen to digest the importance of leadership in secondary schools.

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The concept of leadership generally according to Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) should be understood as encompassing a wide range of activities. It applies to managing small groups and the governing of the nations. It may concern the relatively diverse influence in establishing norms, opinions or it may involve specific orders in a chain of command. It includes supervision and routine administration and organization building.

Boulding (2007), in his own contribution sees leadership as a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent.

Similarly, leadership style according to Fiedler (1965) is the underlying needs structure of the individual which motivates his behavior in varying leadership situation. It is the consistency of goals or needs over different situations. Leadership styles are referred to as behavior styles which are based on types of control leaders' exercise in a group and their behavior toward group members. Odum (1989) maintained that the behavior exhibited by the leader during supervision of subordinates is referred to as leadership styles. This can be viewed as being composed of two distinct elements, the leaders' assumptions about subordinates and the leaders' actual behavior when interacting with group members.

Tal (2006) says; the proliferation of definitions of leadership styles portrays how difficult it is to define abstract concept. However, what is obvious from these definitions is that leadership styles are determined by the leaders' pattern of behaviour and types of actions he employs for the effectiveness of the organization.

Therefore, students' academic performance rely on how effective is leadership styles adopted and conducted by secondary school administrators. Okwechime (1987), in his contribution to the concept of successful leaders opined that: successful accomplishment of the end results or the name of it depends almost entirely on the leadership style of the administrator. His submission reaffirms Carlens (1982), earlier assertion that: the chief executive of any organization can become any kind of manager that he wants to become.

Everyone else in the organization must confirm to his direction and leadership to the kind of management climate that he creates and maintains. His managerial strengths and weaknesses affect the performance of the entire organization.

### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

According to Hal pin (1996), the ability of a principal to achieve the objectives of a school depends not only on having committed staff, sufficient equipment for training, conducive work environment, good human relations, appropriate physical and other facilities, but also on his style of leadership which is supportive of staff commitment and student's academic performance.

Against the background, it is here stated that the problem of the study is to determine the relationship between the principles of leadership styles of administrators in some selected secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolitan Area of Borno State.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the perception of principals' leadership style and staff commitment.
2. Determine staff perception of principals' behavior towards students.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions were formulated by the researchers to meet the above objectives.

1. Does staff perception of principals' leadership affect staff commitment?
2. Does principals' behavior toward students affect staff perception of his leadership style?

### **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study is designed to investigate teachers' perception of principals' leadership styles in relation to staff commitment to duty in some selected secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolitan Area of Borno State. Therefore, the study will be limited to these secondary schools.

It is hoped that the information therein will serve as a guide for further study to whom may wish to conduct further research on the field of study.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework for this study is the leadership effectiveness thesis generated from the studies conducted by organizational behavioral theorists like Fielder's (1962), The contingency model theory and Bezels and Guba's (1967), The human behavior Theory.

Fiedler's (1967) contingency theory of leadership effectiveness held that people become leaders not only because of the attributes of their personalities but also because of various situational factors and the interaction between leaders and group members. Fiedler (1967), contended that the effectiveness of a group is a function of:

- a) The leader motivational orientation

- b) Nature of the situation,
- c) Structured of the task,
- d) The position of the power of the leader, and
- e) The quality of leader - member relationship.

In his theory, he described three critical dimensions of leadership situation that help determine what type of leadership will be most effective.

1) **Position Power:** This is the degree to which the power of a position, as distinguished from other sources of power, such as personality or expertise, enables a leader to get group members to comply with directions, in the case of managers; there is the power arising from organizational authority. As Fiedler pointed out a leader with clear and considerable position power can obtain good followership more easily than one without such power. Therefore, to deduce from the position power dimension, a principal who practices this dimension influence the commitment, morals, loyalty and effectiveness of his staff by ensuring that goals of the school are achieved.

2) **Task Structure:** With the dimension Fiedler had in mind the extent to which task can be clearly spelled out and people are held responsible for them. If tasks are clear (rather than vague and unstructured), the quality performance can be more easily controlled and group members can be held more definitely responsible for performance.

3) **Leader-Member Relations:** Fiedler (1967) regarded this dimension are most important from a leader's point of view, since position power and task structure may be largely under the control of an enterprise. This dimension has to do with the extent to which group members like, trust and are willing to follow a leader. The implications of this dimension for a principal and his staff is that when they (staff) like their leader, they see him as one who is trusted and the staff are willing to follow him. Staff commitment in their work and cooperation with leadership of the school will be maximized, work become pleasant for them, output increased, and the effectiveness of the school will be improved when the staff possess those qualities they will be of great help to the students, since it will make the students achieve much in their academic pursuits. Thus, people orientated leader is one whose orientation is primarily directed towards achieving good inter-personal relations attaining a position of prominence. This study is also based on Bezels and Gubals (1957). The human behavior theory they indicated various dimension of leadership behavior derived from their study of administration as a social process. They stated that administration occurs, structurally as a hierarchy of subordinate super ordinate relationship within a social system. Functionally, the administrative process consists of the allocation and interpretation of roles and facilities for their achievement of the goals of the system. Operationally administration takes place in an inter-personal setting and is invariably concerned with social relationships. (Getzels and Guba, 1957). Viewed in educational institutions vis-à-vis secondary schools is a function of the interaction of three classes of the independent phenomena, namely, Homothetic Dimension, Idiographic Dimension and the Transactional Dimension. In other words, they mean behavior that stresses homothetic considerations and behavior that utilizes judicious combination of the two. Therefore, a schools administrator who employs the homothetic dimension in leading his staff emphasizes goals accomplishment, rules and regulations and the precedence of centralized authority over the needs of the schools staff. The idiographic dimension on the other hand, portrays that leader who emphasizes few rules and regulations, places values on people as individuals and characterized by individualistic relationship between superior and subordinates. Against this backdrop, the effective leader is one who judiciously combines the two dimensions. This suggests, in the worlds of Gazelle and Guba (1957) a transactional leader. The Effective leader who is transactional appreciates the needs to achieve the school goals and at the same time makes sure that individual member needs are not ignore as they strive towards the schools goal and students' academic performance. This dimension has greater chance of ensuring commitment and the schools' staff such that it will lead to achievement (McLeay, 1965).

Therefore, an efficient and effective leadership requires emphasis on both homothetic and idiographic dimensions. The transactional leadership always achieves productivity through committed

staff which also affects productivity and influences student's performance (Musaazi, 1982). Hence, it is needful to see that every member of the staff in a school share in the activity towards a common goal, maintain themselves and met the needs of the individual staff of the school in general.

On a final note, effective leaders must align and integrate staff effort and interests with the goals of the school. As a result, this study, which is based on the theoretical framework of leadership effectiveness, is designed to investigate the relationship of principal leadership styles of administration in relation to students' academic performance in some selected secondary schools in Maiduguri metropolitan council of Borne state.

### **LEADERSHIP AS A CONCEPT**

Leadership has occupied the mind and imagination of man for a long time. Indeed, much of the record of human history and experience which the civilized world has accumulated concerns leadership. Extensive volumes of theory and research have emerged over the years in the fields of leadership, and students' academic performance, both as separate yet dynamic and interrelated areas.

Leadership is a concept with the largest but very inconsistent volume of literature. According to Nicholson and Wald (1982), there has been an immense volume of research effort in leadership for very little substantive return. The inconsistency of literature on leadership vis-à-vis the little substantive return from research efforts could be partly accountable for the divergent perception of the concept as held by numerous theories. Indeed, there is difficulty to a clear-cut meaning of leadership as expressed by Duke (1986); leadership is a concept whose etymology derives from the noun 'leader' many management authors defined a leader as the man who comes closest to realizing the norms, and the group values which attracts other people and implies the right to assume control of the group. Fiedler (1962) saw the leader as 'one who initiated and facilitates member interaction. Lots of organizational behaviorists admitted that leadership is a process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts towards accomplishing goals in a given situation. It is the "process by which an agent induces a subordinate to behave in a desired manner." Tannenbanm (1991) Saw leadership as an "interpersonal influence exercised in a situation and directed through the communication process toward the attainment of a specific goal."

According to Owen (1981): "Leadership is a process through which others are influenced to achieve goals in a specific situation. Thus, the important elements of leadership are:

The behavior of leadership

The behavior of the following, and environment of the situation koontz and weihrich (1988) attached that leadership means influencing people so that they will contribute to organization and group goals. It has to do predominately with the interpersonal aspect of managing an organization." They continue that it is the "art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals." Davis and Newstrom (1985) stated that leadership is the "process of helping and encouraging others to work enthusiastically towards group objectives. It is the human factor that binds a group together and motivates it towards goals." Deducing from the foregoing definitions of leadership are such reworking concepts as influence, goals attainment, problem solution role, position, structuring expectation, initiating structure, willingness e.tc this provides the Plat form for theory development and research. But on a final note, and for the sake of the study, the choice of Davis and NewsTrom's (1985) definition of the concept of leadership are upheld here.

### **TYPES OF LEADERSHIP**

According to Eghe (2003), there are four (4) types of Leadership:

1. Authoritarian
2. Laissez -faire
3. Charismatic

#### 4. Democratic

Authoritarian leadership is referred to as unquestioning submission to a leader in which he has the power or right to command or control a person or persons. (Eghe, 2003) the authoritarian leader is not concerned with the welfare of his subjects rather he is only interested in power and control. This type of leadership normally leads to tyranny which results in spread of mayhem and the destruction of the community, subjugation man by force and degradation.

Laissez-Faire is a type of leadership which simply means non- interference by the leader a complete freedom of the people without direction as it is also seen as the policy of non-interference of government with personal freedom. This style of leadership provides the followers with little or no direction whatsoever (Eghe2003).

Charismatic leadership is that type in which there is an inherent quality in a person which leads people following him automatically it is seen as a type of leadership in which a person is endowed with a special quality to be a natural leader to men. People follow him automatically because of his inborn qualities. He is a friend and a guide to his followers or subordinate (Eghe, 2003). Similarly, a

Charismatic leader is a person who possesses a special gift or power conferred on him. It is a personal aura or leadership quality endowing its possessor with the capacity for inspiring popular enthusiasm and Support.

Democratic leadership is a type that involves catering to the tastes or serving the interests of the masses pertaining to or characterized by the principle of political or social equality for all the type of leadership is based on human relations approach. The basis of modern democracy is usually attributed to the participation of each citizen in governing or deciding his own affairs on all levels, Individuals, organizations as well as governmental levels

### **METHODOLOGY RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research is a survey study. Survey study has been widely used in the study of organizations. Hellinger (1981) observes that a survey research is a potentially useful technique in education and it is a valuable means of gathering data, which aims at evaluating a particular programme. Best and Idian (1989) contributed that the survey method gathers data from a relatively large number of samples at a particular time.

### **POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population of this study comprises the teaching staff of four (4) Different secondary schools in Maiduguri that is Government College Maiduguri, Government Girls College Maiduguri, Foundation Secondary School Maiduguri and Capital Secondary School Maiduguri. Nwana (1981) says that the conditions under which the entire population should be studied is when the entire size of the population is small, when the time available for the project is ample; when the resources available for the project are adequate and when the sole objective of the study is to make a complete count of the population. This study satisfies most of these conditions.

### **SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

The sample of the study is made up of hundred (100) teaching staff selected from the four secondary schools mentioned earlier, comprising twenty-five (25) members of staff from each school. A simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample.

### **METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

Nworgu (2001) explained that a survey study seeks to establish what relationship exist between two or more variables, hence this is a survey study the researcher used percentage of

respondent to every item of the instrument. Responses were provided by 100 teachers from the four schools selected.

However, the following scheme of classification will be used,  
70-100% very important perception  
50-69% important perception  
30-49% Probable perception  
0-29% insignificant perception

**TABLE 1 SHOWING FREQUENCY DESTRIBUTION OF STAFF PERCEPTION ON PRINCIPALS BEHAVIOUR.**

S/NO	STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	TOTAL %
1	The principal is friendly and Approachable	87%	13%	100
2	He looks out for the welfare Of the individual staff of the school	68%	32%	100
3	He back up members of staff in their actions	86%	14%	100
4	He put suggestions made by his staff members into consideration	95%	5%	100
5	He gets staff approval on important matters before going ahead	70%	30%	100

Table 1 above is present a frequency distribution of staff perception on principals' behavior. In item 1, 87% of the respondents agreed that their principals are friendly and approachable, while 13% disagree. Similarly, in item 2, 68% of the respondents agreed that their principals look out for their welfare in their respective schools, while 32% disagrees. In item 3, 86% of the respondents agreed that their principals back members of staff in their actions, while 14% disagrees. Similarly, in item 4, 95% of the respondents agreed that their principals put suggestions made by them into consideration, while only 5% disagree to it in item 5, 70% of the respondents believe that their principals get their approved on important matters before going ahead with it.

**TABLE 2 SHOWING FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF PERCEPTION ON PRINCIPALS BEHAVIOUR DESCRIPTION TOWARDS STUDENTS.**

S/NO	STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	TP
1	The principal democratic in handling students' matters.	76%	24%	100
2	He makes sure that students abide by the rules and regulations governing the school	80%	20%	100
3	He encourage definite standards of performance for students	84%	16%	100
4	He goes round the school promptly to ensure that academic activities are co-ordinate.	78%	22%	100

5	He finds time to listen to his students	72%	28%	100
---	---	-----	-----	-----

TABLE 2 above shows that frequency distribution of staff perception on principal's behavior toward students.

In item 1, 76% of the respondents agreed that their principal is democratic while 24% disagree. Similarly, in item 2, 80% of the respondents agreed that their principals make sure that students abide by the rules and regulations governing the schools. While 20% disagree. In item 3, 84% of the respondents also 78% of the respondents believes that their principals go round their while 22% disagree. In item 5, 72% of the respondents agreed that their principals find time to listen to their students, while 28% disagree

**TABLE 3 SHOWING FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF PERCEPTION ON COMMITMENT TO THE JOB AND SCHOOL.**

S/NO	STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	T/P
1	I am willing to abide by the rules and regulations of the school.	90%	10%	100
2	I am punctual to my duties.	82%	18%	100
3	I offer guidance and counseling services to students.	79%	21%	100
4	I ensure that my personal goals do not override the overall goals of the school.	85%	15%	100
5	I do my job regularly without being prompted.	65%	35%	100

TABLE 3 above presented a frequency distribution of staff perception of their commitment to the job and school.

In item 1, 90% of the respondents agreed that they are willing to abide by the rules and regulations of their schools, while 10% disagree. Similarly, in item 2, 82% of the respondents do agree that, it is duty-bound on them to be punctual to their duties while 18% disagree. In item 3, 79% of the respondents agreed that it is their responsibilities to offer guidance and counseling services to students, while 21% disagree. Similarly, in item 4, 85% of the respondents agreed that they are willing to ensure that their personal goals do not override the overall goals of their schools, while 16% disagree. In item 5, 65% of the respondents agreed that they are willing to go on with their job even when their principals do not alert them, while 35% disagree.

**TABLE 4 SHOWING FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF PERCEPTION ON STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.**

S/NO	STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	T/P
1	The student attends classes regularly	76%	24%	100
2	The students frown on lazy teachers	63%	37%	100
3	The students are working very hard to pass their S.S.C.E examination.	82%	18%	100
4	The students are motivated by their parents	79%	26%	100
5	Most of the students are dedicated to their primary assignment in the school.	74%	26%	100

Table 4 above presented a frequency distribution of staff perception on students, academic performance.

In item 1, 76% of the respondents agreed that their students attend classes regularly, while 24% disagreed. Similarly, in item 2, 63% of the respondents agreed that their students frown on them, while 37% disagreed. In item 3, 82% Of the respondents agreed that their students are working very hard to pass their S.S.C.E. examination, while 18% disagreed. In item 4, 79% of the respondents believe that, students are motivated by their parents, while 21% disagreed. In item 5,

74% of the respondents agreed that, most of the students are dedicated to their primary assignment in the school, while 26% disagreed.

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.**

The study discovered that principal leadership style and staff commitment to duty are two different variables but interrelated concepts. It found out that a principal's leadership style can influence teachers' performance significantly. The findings is in agreement with the work of Jiboyewa (1983), that academic performance among students, a variable closely related to teacher commitment, was found to be strongly related to the school leadership. Therefore, since leadership has to do with the act of influencing the behavior of the staff, it impels them to willingly and enthusiastically be committed to their work, which in turn influences the academic performance of students. Similarly, Wazia (1994), found out that 54.98% of the teachers in some selected secondary schools in Borno state agreed that the leadership of principal always provides the desired administrative leadership which warranted high students' academic performance in the schools.

Furthermore, the study found out that leadership in secondary Schools only succeeds with the commitment of the teaching staff; Wazia (1994) affirms that assertion when he stated that for any leadership to proceed in the running of its institution, and such leadership must depend on the commitment loyalty and co-operation of his subordinates. Accordingly, Jiboyewa (1994) declared that since leadership and followership form an interactive process, commitment among teachers could not be fully understood in the absence of the principal's role behavior. Hence staff commitment and leadership are major correlates and criteria for organizational effectiveness.

The finding of this study also revealed that leadership has a profound effect on organizational achievement. The study found that the principal in a secondary school plays a vital role in the achievement or failure of the school. This finding agreed with the studies of Aderomu and Aina (1986) that asserted the administrators' leadership strength and weaknesses affect the performance of the entire organization.

### **SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS**

The major findings of the study are as follow

1. The study found that leadership is an important aspect and canner-stone in all organizations.
2. A leadership style has a profound effect on school's academic performance because a dedicated principal makes sure that all the affairs of his school are properly coordinated, which return helps the school in achieving its desired goals.
3. The principal of a school determines whether or not the level of commitment on the part of his teaching staff is for the attainment of the school goals.
4. The leadership of a school determines the level of discipline of both the staff and students of the school.

### **CONCLUSION**

The analysis of the study shows that, principal's leadership style and staff commitment to duty are two different, but interrelated concepts. The findings of the study also revealed that, because of the good leadership style of principals, the teaching staffs of schools commit themselves to the achievement of school curriculum objectives.

Similarly, the study discovered that principals' leadership style determines the level of discipline of students in such secondary Schools. The principal makes sure that students abide by the rules and regulations governing the school. From the foregoing, it is safe to conclude that, the leadership of a principal to large extent determines the staff commitment to duty.

### **REFERENCES**

- Adeniyi, T. J. (1988) Effects of principal's leadership styles on staff Performance in Imo state secondary schools. African journal of educational research.
- Anderoum., O. and Aria, O. (1986) Managing the Nigerian education enterprise. Ikeja - Lagos: John West publication Ltd.
- Dlakwa, D. K. (2003) staff strength, staff utilization and students academic achievement in Borno state secondary schools. (M. Ed. Dissertation University of Maiduguri).
- Edem, D. A. (1982) introduction to education! administration in Nigeria. Ibadan Johann widely and Dons.
- \*Eghe, E. V. (2003) Rudiments of public administration. Kaduna- Nigeria Joyce graphic printers and publishers.
- \*Fiedler, R. (1962) The contingency mode! A theory of leadership effectiveness Basic studies in social psychology New York: Mc. Graw-Hill.
- \*Jiboyewa, D. A. (1994) Organisation commitment and leader behavior in Borne state secondary schecl, Annals of Borno.
- Lucey. I. (1995) Management information system (7" ed). London: Dp publishing Ltd
- Malgwe, I. H. (1985) The leadership between leadership styles of principais and job satisfaction of teacher's in selected secondary schools in Borno state. (unpublished M. ED). Thesis, University of Maiduguri.
- \*MC Cleary, L. E. and Hencay, S. P. (1965) secondary scnool administration: theoretical basis of professional practice. New York: Doeld, Mead and Coy.
- \*Musaazi, J. C. S. (1982) the theory and practice of educational administration London: Macmillan publishers Ltd.
- \*Tal, P. {2006) Department leadership style, staff commitment and student, Academic Achievement in Federal college of Education (Technical), Northern states of Nigeria. (unpublished Ph. D Thesis University of Maiduguri).
- \*Tannenbanm, R. and Schidt, W. H. (1973) Leadership and organisation: a behavioural science approach. New York Mc Graw - Hill.
- Vroom, V. H and Jetton, P. W. (1973) leadership and decision making. Pittsburg University of Pittsburg press.
- \*Wazia, R. H. (1994) Leadership role in Borno post-primary schools. Annals of Borno