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Extent of principals' application of transformational leadership practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra state

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Abstract

The study sought to examine extent of principals' application of transformational leadership practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was carefully guided by four research questions. Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The population of the study is 261 comprising of all the principals in the 261 public secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample size for the study comprised of the entire 261 principals. The researchers'-developed questionnaire titled "Principals' Application of Transformational Leadership Practices for Effective School Administration (PATLPESAQ)" was used for data collection. The researchers, in analyzing the internal consistency of the instrument made use of the Cronbach alpha reliability and the estimates yielded coefficient values of 0.81, 0.74, 0.78 and 0.78 for clusters, I-IV respectively. In answering the research questions, the mean and standard deviation were utilized. The researchers, made some revealing findings among which include: that school principals should apply inspirational motivation practices for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools that are public in Anambra State to a high extent. It was also reported that principals' apply individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools that are public in Anambra State to a low extent. As a result of the findings obtained, the researchers posited some recommendations and they include among others that National Universities Commission should incorporate transformation leadership as one of the courses for the award of a degree in educational management to enable prospective principals to acquire the requisite and fundamental skills in school management even while still in training as a student.

Keywords: Principals, transformational leadership, effective school administration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation

Introduction

Every organization is established to attain set objectives through people. These set tasks and objectives cannot be effectively achieved if two or more people in the organization are not keen to interact, communicate and coordinate their activities. The levels of interaction and coordination are greatly influenced by the leader in the organization. Uzoechina and Oguegbu (2015) ^[13] stressed that the leader is the pillar and role model for the various activities that go on in the organization and he is posed with the responsibility of coordinating the efforts made by members while overseeing all the activities in the workplace with the sole aim of achieving pre-determined goals and stated objectives. The school leaders guide, direct coordinate, influence and control the activities of educational institutions. The school organization operates in dynamic environment and it is the role of the principals at secondary school levels to provide the kind of leadership that can enable the system survive the changes and innovation. One of the kinds of leadership style that can meet the changes and innovation in the academic system is the transformational leadership. To buttress this, Korejan and Shahbazi (2016) ^[7] stressed that in the current era, change processes and diversity occur in the daily life of an organization and to deal with this uncertain environment and continuous changes, transformational leaders are strongly needed. Transformational leadership is the act of encouraging, influencing and inspiring positive changes, creativity and good professional conduct among subordinates in order to attain set goals and objectives. According to Usen (2016) ^[17], transformational leadership in the

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academic system is shown by the school principals by making sincere efforts to motivate the staff and students while getting them streamlined and focused on the goals, mission and vision of the school. Continuing, Usen pointed that transformational leadership helps to reshape concepts and values of the organization and this in-turn also changes staff aspirations, individual expectations as well as school culture. Transformational school leaders create enabling learning environment which motivates members of staff to actively involve in the attainment of school objectives. According to Emiru (2018) ^[6], transformational leaders are those that motivate others to put in extra effort in their set duties; they set more challenging expectations and manage to achieve higher performance. Transformational school administrators act as mentors, models, coaches, change catalysts, motivators and empower subordinates to attain school goals and objectives. Uzoechina and Oguegbu (2015) ^[13] asserted that transformational leadership spurs teachers towards goal achievement by planning, organizing, directing and integrating the basic demands of the school including the needs of the teachers in such a manner that is quite productive and motivating to individual staff members. The four components of transformational leadership practices include: Idealized influence, Individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation (Ahmad, Noor, Yazan & Khalaf, 2019; Babin, 2014; Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016; Nasir & Ishak, 2016) ^[2, 4, 7, 8].

Idealized influence refers to efforts made by the leader to earn the respect, loyalty and trust of subordinates in an organization. The school principals in their effort to demonstrate idealized influence, should exhibit behaviours that give them of as distinct role models for teachers to emulate. The principals exhibit high standards of professional conduct which earn them respect in the school. Ekpoh and Asuquo (2018) ^[5] reacting to the basic characteristics of idealized influence, stated that such leaders are admired, respected and trusted and this further paves way for the leader to serve as a role model for his teeming followers. Also, in extension, the leader is not only admired, respected, and trusted, the followers tend to identify with such a leader and want to follow their footsteps (Arokiasamy, Abdullah & Zohir, 2016) ^[3]. Continuing, Arokiasamy *et al.* noted that these followers perceive their leaders as possessing such unique and extraordinary capabilities, continuous persistence, and self-determination. Such leaders inspire their subordinates by their personal values and behaviour such as justice, transparency, fairness, accountability and honesty. Principals who possess attributes of idealized influence are often punctual to school, quite dedicated and committed to the attainment of school goals and objectives.

Individualized consideration is related to the behaviour and effort of leaders to take into account the personal attributes and personality of members of staff in their dealings with them. Individualized consideration further connotes the behaviour of a leader who is capable of understanding the individual differences of subordinates (Nasir & Ishak, 2016) ^[8]. In their exhibition of individualized consideration, principals treat subordinates based on their unique characteristics, capabilities and personality. The principals consider the individuals skills and knowledge of teachers in delegating duties to them. The school administrators also act as a coach and mentor to enable teachers develop their individual abilities and skills.

Arokiasamy, Abdullah and Zohir (2016) ^[3] posited that by leading as not just a coach but also a mentor, transformational leaders pay special attention to the need for achievement and professional growth of his followers and subordinates alike. Arokiasamy *et al.* added that in their exhibition of the characteristics of individual consideration, the transformational leader is seen as an effective listener, and someone who is poised to recognize and accept that most workers are individually different. The principals' interaction with teachers to identify their individual's on-the-job problem and help them overcome it. The principals create an open channel of communication that enable teachers to air their problems and so that they can be directed with respect to unique problem of each staff. Nasir and Ishak (2016) ^[8] pointed out that individualized consideration leaders understand and appreciate the needs of subordinates and subordinates by taking into account the desire of achievement and developing subordinates. Principals exhibit individualized consideration by showing interest and encouraging personal development of teachers. Inspirational motivation is concerned with the efforts of leaders to boost the morale, confidence and commitment of subordinates to organizational visions and goals. In inspirational motivation, the school principals stimulate and inspire teachers to perform challenging tasks. Principals arouse and boost the morale of their teachers by fairly rewarding them for accomplishing both challenging and complex tasks. Leaders with inspirational motivation, are those leaders that set goals and visions for teachers to pursue while encouraging team work, trust and enthusiasm among members of staff. Srđan, Sveto and Jelena (2012) ^[11] stressed that inspirationally motivated leader develops an attractive vision for the future, using symbols and emotional arguments to persuade the followers to accept the vision with the full commitment, faith and optimism. In the same vein, Abazeed (2018) ^[1] pointed out that inspirational motivation leader acts as a communicator of vision, and uses symbols to motivate efforts and express important goals in simple ways. Abazeed added that such leader also has a bright vision for the future through continuous expectations and commitment to common goals and vision. The principals inspire and create confidence in the ability and skills of subordinates to pursue the school vision and values. Principals who demonstrate intellectual stimulation encourage novel thinking, innovations and creative thinking among teachers by involving and consulting them in the process of making decisions in the school. Babin (2014) ^[4] posited that the leader supports followers to investigate and come up with better ways of undertaking their duties while exploring new opportunities to learn and grow. Talking about intellectual stimulation, such leaders make efforts to stimulate the creative thinking of their followers by encouraging innovation, thinking outside the box, as well as, involving them in proffering solutions to a variety of problems in the school (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018) ^[5]. Furthermore, leaders who engage in intellectual stimulation leadership seek for novel ideas and creative ways to solve problems from followers. Summarily, they are leaders who are determined in using new means in addressing problems and finding solutions (Arokiasamy, Abdullah & Zohir, 2016) ^[3]. Intellectually stimulated teachers are likely to be willing to put in their best to improve teaching and learning in the classroom.

There are several definitions of effective school administration by notable scholars. According to Nwogu and Ebonu (2019) ^[9], effective school administration is concerned with the ability of the school principal's collaboration with other administrative officers to ensure smooth operation of the school in terms of teaching, sporting, and other activities in such a manner that the objectives of the school are realized. There are many indicators of effective school administration. Effective school administration is the ability of principals to successfully manage the available resources in order to attain set education objectives.

Onyali and Nnebedum (2018) ^[10] highlighted the indices of effective school administration to include; excellent academic performance of students, motivation and supervision of staff personnel to improve their level of performance, improved school-community relationship, adequate and proper financial management, good record-keeping, proper conflict management and school plant maintenance among others. Some principals exhibit leadership practices that adversely affect effective school administration. Some secondary school principals in Anambra State order teachers to perform delegated tasks without consideration of their initiatives. Some even concentrate authority in their hands which makes it difficult for crucial tasks to be executed when they are away from the school. Some school teachers with emphasis on those in secondary schools in Anambra State are simply denied the opportunity to join in the decision making process and when they are eventually involved, their opinions are rarely considered. Some principals of secondary schools in the State interfere in the process of execution of tasks, being delegated to teachers. This adversely affects change and innovation in the system. This unpleasant state of affairs prompted this study.

Statement of the Problem

Some school principals in Anambra State rarely delegate responsibility and power to subordinates could provide opportunity for them to utilize their initiatives to execute tasks in the secondary school system. Some principals seem to use force, threat and authority to get teachers to perform their duties without consideration of their skills and ideas. This behaviour contradicts the tenets of transformational leadership practices that create opportunity for change and innovation in the school system through staff creativity, challenging and stimulation of the work environment. These worrisome situations adversely affect effective school administration. In the light of the above, the problem of this study put in question form is what is the extent of principals' application of transformational leadership practices for administrative effectiveness of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to ascertain the extent of principals' application of transformational leadership practices for administrative effectiveness of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, this research study seeks to find out the extent of;

1. Principals' application of inspirational motivation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

2. Principals' application of individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Principals' application of idealized influence practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
4. Principals' application of intellectual stimulation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the extent of principals' application of inspirational motivation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the extent of principals' application of individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the extent of principals' application of idealized influence practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
4. What is the extent of principals' application of intellectual stimulation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Method

The research design utilized for the study was descriptive survey. The population for this study is made up of all the 261 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The researchers-developed instrument titled "Principals' Application of Transformational Leadership Practices for Effective School Administration Questionnaire" was used for data collection. The instrument contains items divided into three clusters namely; I, II, III and IV. Cluster I had eight items on inspirational motivation practices for effective school administration, Cluster II which centred on individualized consideration practices for effective school administration contained seven items, Cluster III contained eight items on idealized influence practices for effective school administration and Cluster IV which focused on intellectual stimulation practices for effective school administration had eight items. The instrument which contained 31 items was structured on a 4-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts; two in educational management and policy and one in educational measurement and evaluation. All the experts are lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The suggestions and inputs of the experts were reflected on the final draft of the instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using the Cronbach alpha to ensure the reliability of the instrument and this yielded coefficient values of 0.81, 0.74, 0.78 and 0.78 for clusters I, II, III and IV respectively. A total of 261 copies of questionnaire were administered by the researchers and three research assistants. Out of these, 247 copies representing 95 percent return rate were properly completed, retrieved and utilized for data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were utilized to answer the research

questions. The decision was adjudged on the following basis: 3.50-4.00 Very High Extent (VHE), 2.50-3.49 high extent (HE), 1.50-2.49 low extent (LE) and 1.00-1.49 very low extent (VLE).

Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of principals' application of inspirational motivation practices for effective administration in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Principals' Application of Inspirational Motivation Practices for administrative effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Principals (N = 247)		
		Mean	SD	Remark
1	Encourage team work in school	2.63	1.05	High Extent
2	Communicate the school visions to staff	2.78	1.11	High Extent
3	Establish good relations with staff	2.64	1.04	High Extent
4	Show genuine care for teachers' welfare	2.59	1.11	High Extent
5	Reward outstanding staff with cash	2.40	1.07	Low Extent
6	Applaud dedicated teachers during staff meeting	2.60	1.07	High Extent
7	Give gift items to committed teachers	2.46	1.14	Low Extent
8	Recommend exceptional teachers for promotion when due	2.56	1.09	High Extent
	Mean of Means	2.58	1.09	High Extent

Table 1 indicates that the mean scores of principals for all items except items 5 and 7 were between 2.50 and 3.49 indicating that there was high extent to which principals apply inspirational motivation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The pooled standard deviation score which stood at 1.09 indicated that there is homogeneity amongst principals indicating a similar consensus of opinion. The mean of means score of 2.58 which fell within the decision rule of

2.50-3.49 indicated that principals apply inspirational motivation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of principals' application of individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Principals' Application of Individualized Consideration Practices for administrative effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Principals (N = 247)		
		Mean	SD	Remark
9	Delegate duties to teachers based on their skills and knowledge	2.51	1.13	High Extent
10	Being empathizes with the individual needs of staff	2.38	1.04	Low Extent
11	Offer professional supports to staff based on their needs	2.43	0.98	Low Extent
12	Set goals for the teachers based on their competence	2.47	1.12	Low Extent
13	Provide opportunities to grow professionally based on their individual needs	2.54	1.05	High Extent
14	Align school programmes to suit staff and school needs	2.50	1.01	High Extent
15	Set target for members of staff based their skills	2.41	1.01	Low Extent
	Mean of Means	2.46	1.05	Low Extent

The result presented on Table 2 revealed that principals showed low extent to which they provide individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness for items 10, 11, 12 and 15 as shown by their mean ratings between 1.50 and 2.49. On the other hand, the mean scores of principals for items, 8, 13 and 14 are within the decision rule of 2.50-3.49 which indicated high extent to which the principals apply the items as their individualized consideration practices. The overall standard deviation score of 1.05 indicate closer disparity and this means that there is no much variation between their responses. The mean of

means value of 2.46 which fall within the decision rule of 1.50-2.49 revealed principals' apply individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a low extent.

Research Question 3: What is the extent of principals' application of idealized influence practices for effective administration in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Principals' Application of Idealized Influence Practices for administrative effectiveness

S/N	Items	Principals (N = 247)		
		Mean	SD	Remark
16	Exhibit honesty in handling the school affairs	2.57	1.13	High Extent
17	Show a high level competence in handling administrative tasks	2.66	1.04	High Extent
18	Operate transparent and open door policies in school	2.55	0.98	High Extent
19	Exhibit high level of trust to staff	2.46	1.10	Low Extent
20	Serve as a role model to teachers	2.54	1.04	High Extent
21	Coach staff when the need arises	2.40	1.09	Low Extent
22	Instill a sense of pride members of staff to connect with one another	2.45	1.16	Low Extent
23	Sacrifice personal interest for school organizational's interest	2.77	1.02	High Extent
	Mean of Means	2.55	1.07	High Extent

As shown on Table 3, the mean scores of principals for items, 16, 17, 18, 20 and 23 are within the decision rule of 2.50-3.49 which indicated high extent to which the principals apply the items as their idealized influence practices. The mean scores of principals for items 19, 21 and 22 were between 1.50 and 2.49 indicating that there was low extent to which principals apply idealized influence practices for administrative effectiveness. The pooled standard deviation score which stood at 1.07 indicated that there is homogeneity amongst principals mean scores. The

mean of means value of 2.55 which fall within the decision rule of 2.50-3.49 revealed principals' apply idealized influence practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent.

Research Question 4: What is the extent of principals' application of intellectual stimulation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 4: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Principals' Application of Intellectual Stimulation Practices for administrative effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Principals (N = 247)		
		Mean	SD	Remark
24	Request for examination of problems from different perspectives	2.39	1.09	Low Extent
25	Take into account different perspectives during solving a problem	2.45	1.02	Low Extent
26	Encourage the spirit of creativity in teachers	2.56	1.07	High Extent
27	Create strong sense of purpose among teachers	2.51	1.02	High Extent
28	Accepting constructive criticism from staff	2.35	1.11	Low Extent
29	Express confidence in teachers' abilities	2.53	1.10	High Extent
30	Encourage staff to be innovative in the delivery of assigned tasks	2.41	1.06	Low Extent
31	Provide constructive criticisms for teachers when the needs arises	2.50	1.12	High Extent
	Mean of Means	2.46	1.07	Low Extent

The result of data analysis presented on Table 4 indicated that principals showed low extent to which they provide intellectual stimulation practices for administrative effectiveness for items 24, 25, 28 and 30 as shown by their mean ratings between 1.50 and 2.49. Further result showed that the mean scores of principals for items, 26, 27, 29 and 31 are within the decision rule of 2.50-3.49 which indicated high extent to which the principals apply the items as their intellectual stimulation practices. The pooled standard deviation score of 1.07 indicate closer disparity and this means that there is no much variation between their responses. The mean of means value of 2.46 which fall within the decision rule of 1.50-2.49 revealed principals' apply intellectual stimulation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a low extent.

Discussion

The findings of this study shows that principals apply inspirational motivation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent. Thus this is in agreement with the findings of Ekpoh and Asuquo (2018) ^[5] who reported high extent of inspirational motivation practices by secondary school principals. The possible explanation for this agreement could be ascribed to the mere fact that both studies were conducted in the same Nigeria. This shows that school principals in Anambra State encourage team work in school, communicate the school visions to staff, establish good relations with staff, show genuine care for teachers' welfare, applaud dedicated teachers during staff meeting and recommend exceptional teachers for promotion when due at high extent. The inspirational motivation practices applied by principals stimulate and empower teachers to develop a sense of responsibility toward the school. It also stimulates team spirit and enthusiasm among secondary school teachers in Anambra State. This may account for excellent academic achievement of students recorded in secondary schools in Anambra state.

The result of the study further revealed that principals apply individualized consideration practices for administrative effectiveness of public secondary schools in Anambra State to a low extent. This is in line with the finding of Emiru (2018) ^[6] which indicated that principals exhibited individual consideration and intellectual stimulation dimensions of transformational leadership practices to a low extent. Both studies were conducted in south-east, Nigeria and this may account for the agreement in findings. It was made known, that secondary school principals in Anambra State are being empathetic with the individual needs of staff, offers professional supports to staff based on their needs, set goals for the teachers based on their competence and set target for members of staff based on their skills to low extent. School principals in Anambra State pay attention to the personal needs of each teachers and takes into account their reservations in delegation of duties, provision of constructive feedback and professional assistance to them to a low extent. This indicated that secondary school principals rarely show genuine concern to each teachers' needs and feelings in school.

It was found that principals apply idealized influence practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent. This contradicted the finding of Arokiasamy, Abdullah and Zohir (2016) ^[3] who observed that the idealized influence practices among the school principals is at a moderate level. This contradiction may be attributed to difference in geographical location of the two studies, This shows that secondary school principals in Anambra state exhibit honesty in handling the school affairs, show a high level competence in handling administrative tasks, operate transparent and open door policies in school, serve as a role model to teachers and sacrifice personal interest for school organizational's interest to high extent. Secondary school principals in Anambra State exhibit leadership behaviour that the staff can emulate. This behaviour include; integrity, transparency, trust, honesty, and sense of purpose in running the daily affairs of the school.

The result of the study indicated that principals' apply intellectual stimulation practices for administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a low extent. This supported the finding of Emiru (2018)^[6] which indicated that principals exhibited intellectual stimulation dimensions of transformational leadership practices to a low extent. The agreement could be due to the fact that the two studies were conducted in Nigeria. Secondary school principals in Anambra State request for examination of problems from different perspectives, take into account different perspectives during solving a problem, accepting constructive criticism from staff and encourage staff to be innovative in the delivery of assigned tasks to a low extent. This is an indication that secondary school principals in Anambra State rarely encourage the efforts of teachers to be creative and innovative in performing their duties. The principals use force, threat and authority to get teachers perform their duties without consideration of their skills and ideas.

Conclusion

As a result of the various findings, it was summarily concluded that school principals in Anambra State should to a high extent apply transformational leadership practices but it was limited to certain aspects. The principals have not fully applied transformational leadership practices of intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration in the school system. This has limited creativity and innovation among secondary school teachers in Anambra State.

Recommendations

With reference to the findings of this study, it was recommended among others that:

1. Post Primary School Service Commission should organize training programmes that lays emphasis on the various aspect of transformational leadership for principals to up-date their skills and knowledge in applying it.
2. Assessment guideline of principals' individualized consideration should be introduced by Ministry of Education as the basic area of evaluation of principals' managerial efficiency on termly basis.
3. National Universities Commission should incorporate transformation leadership as one of the courses for the award for a degree in educational management to enable perspective principals to acquire requisite and fundamental skills in school management.

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