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# Transformational Leadership Style of Principals for Employee Motivation and Quality Secondary Education

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**Abstract**   The administration of secondary schools in Nigeria has undergone phenomenal transformational change after the introduction of Western Education. It has been an established fact that secondary school administration has also witnesses a deluge of problems ranging from administrative style of the principal; lack of adequate educational policies and guidelines; non implementation of education laws and policies; quality of teaching and poor instructional methods; rote learning; indiscipline, poor teaching aids, inadequate funding amongst others. The presupposition is that leadership style has a nexus with employee motivation and task-oriented performance. This paper examines the value and impact of transformational leadership style for employee motivation and optimum performance. Transformational leadership style engenders employee effective participation and commitment. The paper concluded that transformational leadership style in secondary schools will foster quality education in the school system. It would also improve the quality of education in the secondary school system through effective instructional supervision vis-à-vis high performance, motivation and morale among teachers. Suggestions were made for improved application of transformational leadership style in the management of secondary schools to boost teacher motivation and quality assurance in secondary education.

**Keywords**   Educational policies, education laws, transformational leadership, motivation, instructional supervision, management

## Introduction

The administration of secondary school system in Nigeria has undergone some changes since the establishment of schools in Nigeria and government's takeover, involvement and management of secondary schools. Ekundayo (2015) argued that a lot of problems have hampered the smooth administration or schools in Nigeria. These factors include endogenous and exogenous dimension.

The endogenous factors are critical issues embedded in the school and learning process that are within the control of the school system and internal stakeholder. These factors range from the style of administration which presupposes the type of leadership style opted by the school administrators and this has a nexus with motivation of the employees of the school. Others are quality of teaching, poor instructional methods, maintenance of discipline etc.

A leadership style that portrays all –inclusiveness of members of staff in the process of decision making will deepen good relationship among staff and entrenched a conducive environment for pedagogical innovation, (Benson (2023), Adeyemi (2019), Asuka (2019). The Federal Government of Nigeria (2014) in its educational policy stated that the level of a nation's education cannot rise above the quality of its teachers. With this insight, secondary school education that serves as a bridge between the primary and tertiary level of education serves as a feeder to university education occupies a pivotal stage of the educational system of any country. Given the above prognosis vis-à-vis the attainment of organizational objectives, it is extremely essential that principals of secondary schools need positive attitude towards creating a transformational leadership style devoid of rancor and imbued with collegiality among employees and students. Nwachuckwu (2013) in Hoy and Miskel (1995) posited that leadership is a social process in which an individual or a group influences behavior towards actualizing desired goals.

Benson (2018) described a leader as that person who has indescribable and indefinable magnetism that irresistibly draws people to himself. Oboegbulum (2011) sees leadership as a process or a current that effortlessly carries people along as it flows like a river. Giving all these imputations, the leadership style and techniques applied in the administration of secondary school will phenomenally impinge on the effectiveness of the administration of secondary schools. Employee or teacher motivation at the secondary school level therefore requires the application of transformational leadership style of a principal in administrative and instructional supervision. Igwe (2015) argued that teacher motivation at any level cut across a measurement and degree of conformity to standards, policy formulation and the implementation of educational process. It is expected that the transformational Leadership role of the principal in the motivation of employee will enhance quality pedagogical outputs in teachers and students thereby yielding quality educational output. It is a determinant factor for secondary schools to motivate teachers in the achievement of organizational objectives.

## A Transformational Leadership Style.

Transformational leadership theory or relationship focus on synergies between school administrators, teachers and followership in this case between the principal and the teachers. Leadership is a dynamic process by which the leader engages with his subordinates to "create a synergy" that result to increased motivation and commitment in both the principal and teachers and subordinate members. Lumb (2013) compared transformational leadership styles to a charismatic leadership style in which leaders with certain qualities such as openness, confidence, extroversion, interpersonal, integrity, responsibility, accountability with clearly stated values, mission and vision are seen as best options to motivate followers.

Similarly, (Nonyab and Schied 2011) defined transformational leadership as the style characterized by vision, creativity, and positive changes in the organization. It promotes high performance, motivation and morale among followers. To this end, transformational leadership offers support and buttress the individual follower to perform his or her given task. Burns (2015) opines that transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers make each other advance to higher level of morality and motivation. Thus, transformational leadership inspires through synergistic effort of members by turning to higher ideals and moral values of freedom, transparency, justice, equality, peace, commitment and not to heighten negative and demotivating forces like fear, greed, envy or hatred. In transformational leadership style driving forces are generally positive, reasonable, logical conscious and productive. In juxtaposition, restraining forces are often negative, emotional, illegal, unconscious and psychologically frustrating.

## Application of Transformational Leadership Style

Burns (1998) in Adiotomre (2019) perceived transformational leadership as not a set of specific behavior but rather a process by which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. Conceptualizing further, transformational goals and moral values such as justice and equality are the hallmark of an improving sustainable school organization. Bass (1985) in Adiotomre (2015) asserts that transformational leader motivate followers by appealing to story emotions regardless of the ultimate effects. Transformational leadership style is a means by which principals and secondary school leaders can respond to the demands of reform/change to achieve appropriate and effective learning outcomes. Transformational leadership therefore motivates its team to be effective and efficient. It is a leadership style that requires effective communication, always looking for new ideals that move the organization to reach the schools vision and educational objectives.

Obvious from the above, the cardinal principles and values of transformational leadership are discipline commitment, consensus, empowerment, quality standards, excellence and performance control. In the main the application of transformational leadership in contrast to transactional leadership approach is an alternative to leader driven change is to continue exploring and practicing the democratic values of freedom, participation, respect choices and trust that enable engagement and good will relationship in the educational environment. Cochrame (2012), Colacho (2013), Kline (2014) and Collins (2011). Similarly, Marquarat (2005) identified other ways of describing transformational leadership by describing competences and the kinds of knowledge and skill that are necessary to perform effectively. Focusing on the processes and results, and leading with questions are the ways of describing transformational leadership. So many research also affirms that questions serve as the foundation for individual, team, and organizational learning. All the above-mentioned practices are important and can be justified, and must be integrated in the application of transformational leadership style for effective and efficient school management.

Bass (2014) averred that transformational leadership stimulates and motivates followers by increasing their awareness of the importance of task orientation. Elliot (2017) asserted that transformational leadership is more potent and occurs when one or more teachers engage with others in such a way that administrator and teachers raise one another to higher levels of commitment and dedication, motivation and morality.

Admittedly, this collegial or synergistic efforts and solutions to the administration of secondary schools is the hallmark of improved and sustained standard of education. Transformational relationship is that which involved all followers in the process of policy formulation, decision making and policy implementation. Nothing is ever done alone. Viewing form the above prognosis, transformational leadership operationally is participatory and all-inclusive leadership style that involves the school administrators, teachers, workers and students, all making contribution and inputs to make superior strategies.

## Motivation In Transformational Leadership

In an organizational setting, the concept of "Motivation" stands for everything and all in all for organizational success and achievement of stated objectives. Etymologically, the word motivation is Latin, origin "motivus" meaning moving. Similar to other educational concepts, 'motivation' has defied a universally acceptable definition amongst educationist and psychologist. The different colorations of the definition relied more on expert's perception and the fluid nature of the concept. According to Agina Obu (2014) motivation is a process by which the internal energies of the teacher or employee are directed towards various goal objectives in his environment. Thus, motivation is therefore the reason why human beings do certain things. The application of motivation will not only give reason why human beings do certain things. The application of motivation will not only give reason not only for doing the things but will also make human beings to be more committed, have passion for the sustainability of what he has been motivated to carry out.

In trying to explore and fashion out strategies for applying transformational leadership, Cladio (2008) identified the following principles as underpinning when faced with new or different situations. Four of such principles are;

- Widening the circle of involvement
- Connecting people to each other and to different ideas
- Creating communities for action i.e., outstanding learning communities.
- Embracing democracy.

Cardio asserted further that teachers who successfully apply these deceptively simple yet extremely powerful principles reap the benefits of creating and sustaining educational institutions that are able to respond effectively to chaos, confusion and complexity of an ever-changing environment.

According to Chinweuba and Onah (2018) a transformational leader who has a clear concept of how an educational organization needs to change and evolve has a better chance of engaging and guiding everyone concerned with the teaching and learning of the students. Thus, he proposed the followings as characteristics in educational institutions in which the leader should identify and apply.

- People grasp the big picture, fully understanding the dangers, limit and opportunities for action.
- There is urgency and energy as people become aligned around a common purpose and create new directions.
- Accountability and responsibility are fully distributed throughout the institution, as people come to understand the whole system.
- Collaboration across boundaries increases because people are connected to issues and to each other's.
- Broad participation quality identifies performance gaps and their solutions improving their own productivity.
- Creativity is sparked when people from all levels especially teachers contribute their best ideas and experiences.

Oladele (2014), averred that motivation is a two-way traffic example of intrinsic or internal motivation and extrinsic or external motivation. The internal or intrinsic motivation has to do with motivation or force that comes from within the individual. This has to do with the individual having those intrinsic values inherent in him. The individual having the natural propensity of being motivated to do things without being compelled. He will always be motivated to do it until an equilibrium sets in. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation has to do with motivation coming from outside the individual. It has to do with force, instigation or coercion applied on the individual from outside. This is when the teacher will use extrinsic motivation on mostly children because they should always be let to do what they ought to do through motivation.

Abraham Maslow has been known to have propounded the most adulated theory of motivation known as "Abraham Maslow's theory of "Hierarchy of needs" both in the fields of education, psychology etc. Abraham Maslow stated that man has certain needs which he always strives to satisfy and he described them as biological. He therefore proposes five types of needs in a hierarchal order as physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonginess, self-esteem needs and self –actualization needs. Maslow theory of motivation has stood the test of time owing to its importance in the field of educational psychology.

Agina-Obu (2013), conducted a study on motivation and students learning outcome pointedly came up with findings that with motivation, students developed a sustained and improved performance in their studies. Furthermore, he averred that with motivation, teachers also become more enthusiastic, lively and energetic in their subject matter. Motivation is topical as two sides in its application is necessary, for students of temperamental tender age and two for unwilling teachers. It is appropriate that the "carrot and stick" approach be applied as praises, incentives, appreciation, recommendation could highly motivate a student in any circumstance.

### Strategies For Motivating Employee in Secondary School

Teachers are the most important variables in the school system. It is said that a nation cannot rise above the quality of its teachers. In according due recognition to teachers, Bernard (2005) asserts that ultimate test for an organizational success is the ability to create values to compensate for the burdens imposed upon resources contributed. In this era of ICT driven, teachers must be careful to meet the needs of the students and society otherwise they will lose their creative talent and superiority in knowledge and professionalism to other organizations and professions who are ready to meet their needs and demands including the students themselves. With this problem stirring the monopoly of teachers in the profession the question is, what could be the strategies used to motivate teacher?

Akintoye (2005) asserts that money remain the most potent and effective motivational strategy. Akintoye further remarks that money (salary) being an effective motivation, policy makers should consider four major components. These are job rate, which relates to the importance the organization attaches to each job payment, which encourages workers or groups by rewarding them according to their performance; special or personnel allowance associated with factors such as science or mathematics allowances; rural or long service benefits such as holidays with pays.

Other considerations in this regard could be in the sphere of presenting gifts and or incentives like sponsored foreign trips to attend seminars and understudying other schools. Early educational psychology studies as far back as 1911 by Fredrick Taylor and his scientific managers team also averred that money is the most efficacious factor in motivating the industrial workers to achieve greater productivity. Money possesses significant motivating power in as much as it symbolized tangible goods.

Akinwunmi (2008) demonstrates the motivational power of money through the choice of job and explains that money has the power to attract, retain and motivate individuals towards higher performance. Akinwunmi further argued that if a teacher has another job offer which has greater financial reward, that teacher would in all probability and possibility be motivated to accept the new job offer. Banjoke (2016) states that many managers and school administrator use money to reward or punish workers/teachers. This is done through the process of rewarding employees/teachers for higher productivity by instilling fear of loss of job e.g. premature retirement due to poor performance.

## Motivation And Job Satisfaction

Another probable and indeed possible area of teacher motivation and commitment is in the area of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is an emotional response to a job situation. So, in most cases it is not seen but can only be inferred. Ajayi (2015) gave a comprehensive definition of job satisfaction as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experience. It is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important dimension to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction often determines how several related attitudes which are most important characteristics of a job about which teachers have effective response. Job satisfaction is so important that its absence leads to atrophy and attenuates organization commitment. Moser (2007) points that teachers are not committed to the job of teaching and this lower the quality of education. From this analogy, teachers might be motivated by the nature of the job, the conducive climate and social nature of the organization and extent to which worker's peculiar needs are met.

According to Amadi (2008), morale of workers and productivity are highly related. Stating further, higher morale leads to improved productivity. This is no doubt in consonance with the popular dictum that a happy worker is a productive worker, and principals increase the productivity of their teachers by satisfying their needs. In a study carried out by Eromosele (2009), investigating those factors which gave satisfaction and dissatisfaction to teachers in Kenya found out that there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and teachers productivity. To this end, it is possible for any satisfied worker to contribute effectively and productivity towards the achievement of the goals of an organization.

Thus, one of the perceived problems in school management is that some administrators place too much emphasis on the requirements and needs of the institution and show little concern for the basic needs of the personnel. This breeds organizational and individual mix mass in an organizational setting. It is therefore exponential that job satisfaction is a product of teacher motivation that equals productivity and satisfactory quality education.

## Impact of Transformational Leadership on Quality of Education

Transformational leadership style of principals has the tendency to influence quality assurance. (Morgan and Sampson 2012) defines quality assurance as the confidence that is being established regarding the satisfactory state of services or products. Similarly, Malus (2014) divided quality assurance into major areas; development, quality, control, production, distribution and inspections. However, quality assurance comprises administrative and procedural activities implemented in a quality system so that requirements and goals for a product, service or activity will be fulfilled. Operationally, quality assurance has to do with obtaining confidence that service or product will be satisfactory,

Closely related to the need for quality assurance is quality control. For a continuous impact of transformational leadership style that motivates teachers, the quality of education is maintained and sustained over the time. According to Enaowho (2014) the most essential element of Total Quality Management (TCM) is guaranteed when principals and school management applied true transformation leadership style in their day-to-day administration of schools. Transformational leadership style will give a clear definition of the workload and responsibilities of principals, teachers and other school managers. Importantly, these professional staff of the school need the protection of the law to carry out their functions without inhibitions. Amachala (2015) highlighted that transformational leadership style produces highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all

levels of our educational system, to encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers. Application of transformational leadership style leads to production of well-motivated teachers with high personal and professional discipline, integrity and competence at all levels of the educational system. Thus, the impact of transformational leadership on motivation and on the entire educational system cannot be overemphasized. Apart from the production of well-motivated and discipline workforce, it has the ability to create commitment, passion and improved instructional pedagogy. All in all, a principal or teacher that is not motivated is not enthusiastic and largely unprofessional. This to a large extent affects the organizational objectives and will ultimately lead to organizational entropy.

## Conclusion

Universally, it has become a general notion that education is the linchpin of national development. With the belief that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers, it is imperative that teachers be given the necessary motivation to be satisfied with their job. One of the topical issues in school management is that school managers more often than necessary placed too much emphases on the requirement about the organizational success and no concern for the individual worker. This incongruence between institutional and individual needs breeds organizational apathy. It also attenuates standards of the organizational products. Research literature in teacher motivation issues in Nigeria and relevant documents and impulses from stakeholders abound in Nigeria shows that there is a teacher motivation crisis among teachers in Nigeria school system. To this end, the only viable option is the application and practice of transformational leadership style in the management of secondary schools.

## Suggestions

From the discussions highlighted above, the following suggestions are made;

1.  Staff/teacher motivation is essential. There is need to improve remuneration and condition of service for teachers in order to get the best from them. Special allowance should be paid to teachers on a regular basis.
2.  Teachers' salary structures should be upgraded and made attractive so that they can live comfortably and be motivated to put in their best.
3.  Linkages between teacher education institutions should be established with some top-ranking foreign universities with international standards and developments.
4.  Provision of ICT training programmers should be introduced for teachers. Teachers and the school are major change agents.
5.  Secondary school administration should apply and adopt transformational leadership style in the administration of secondary schools in Nigeria.

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