RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE AND SCHOOL CLIMATE IN KATSINA STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGES, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to identify the relationship between principal's leadership style and school climate in Katsina state Technical Colleges. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The area for the study was Katsina State. Therefore, all the six technical colleges from the state were used for the study. The population for the study was 3886 subjects. This consisted of 3080 students, 800 teachers and 6 principals. Stratified random sampling in accordance with the three senatorial districts of the state was used to select a sample of 354 students, 266 teachers and 3 principals totalling 623 subjects for the study. The instruments for data collection were a 30 items Leadership Style Questionnaire (LSQ) and 40 items School Climate Questionnaire (SCQ). Both questionnaires were developed by the researcher. Data collected using these instruments were analysed using SPSS and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was the statistical tool used to determine the relationship between the variables under study while t-test analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed a very high, significant and positive relationship between principal's leadership style and school climate in Katsina state Technical Colleges. This means that the principal's leadership style goes with positive school climate. It was concluded based on this finding that principal's leadership style improves the physical, social,affective and academic school climates. It was recommended that: (1) Workshops and seminars should be organised by Katsina State Science and Technical Education Board to create awareness among the principals in Katsina state Technical Colleges on the impact of their leadership style on their school climates; and (2) The findings of this study should be used as a yardstick for promoting or rewarding the performance of the principals in Katsina State Technical Colleges.

Keywords: Principal's Leadership Style; School Climate; & Technical Colleges.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership style plays a dominant role in the outcome of any organized effort aimed at a particular goal or a set of goals. It is the genius of leadership style that mobilises human and material resources and creates the necessary climate for productivity. As a matter of fact, studies have shown that leadership accounts for most of the outcomes observable in organisations (Babalola,Ayeni, Adedeji, Suleman, & Arikewuyo, 2006). Leadership style may also be of particular importance in educational administration because of the perceived far-reaching effects it may have on the accomplishment of school programmes, objectives and attainment of educational goals. At the head of leadership in Technical Colleges in Nigeria is the principal, who administers the school with other teaching and non-teaching staff.

Accordingly, in Technical Colleges principals are regarded as the chief executive of the school. This is because they are responsible for all that happens in the school. (Kelley, Thornton, and Daugherty, 2005) found that the most important aspect to maintaining a successful educational environment is effective leadership. A large aspect of that leadership is the principal‘s ability to create and maintain a positive school climate.

Therefore, as the Chief Executive, the principal assigns duties to those who could perform the duties, though all responsibilities still reside in him as the accounting officer. It is in this regard that Babalola et tal, (2006) views principalship as involving the control of human and material resources of the school. The position of the principal in Technical Colleges is so germane to the extent that the school cannot exist without that position. The principal is the supervisor, manager, and school climate developer and change facilitator.

A significant challenge for principals today is to identify the situations of the school, such as school climate, the likely direct effects on students and the type of leadership behaviour the principal should employ. School climate reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. (Fultz, 2011) stated that principals could create a school climate that improves the productivity of both staff and students and that the leadership style of the principal can foster or restrict teacher effectiveness. School climate is evident in the feelings and attitudes about a school expressed by students, teachers, staff and parent - the way students and staff “feel” about being at school each day. (Betty and Adrienne, 2004) defines school climate in terms of four aspects of the school environment. The first, which is the physical environment, is said to be welcoming and conducive to teaching and learning. The second aspect, which is the social environment,involves communication and interaction. The third aspect is the affective environmentthat promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem among teachers and students. The last but not the least, which is academic environment**,** has been agued to have effect on learning and self-fulfilment of students such as those in Technical Colleges.

Technical colleges in Nigeria are responsible for the production of lower and middle level manpower. These institutions of learning produce craftsmen and master craftsmen at advance craft level (post-secondary level). Therefore, the courses offered at the technical colleges lead to the award of National Technical certificate (NTC) and advance National Technical Certificate (ANTC) (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2013). The students on the completion of their programmes according to FRN (2013) are opened to three options: (1) Secure employment either at the end of the whole course or after completing one or more modules of employment skills; (2) Set up individual business and become self-employed or be able to employ others; or (3) Pursue further education in advance craft/technical institutions such as Polytechnics, Colleges of Education (Technical) and Universities. It was further explained that the curriculum programmes of Technical Colleges are grouped into related trades. These includes: computer trades, mechanical trades, building trades, wood trades, hospitality trades, textile trades, printing trades, beauty culture trades, business trades and electrical and electronic trades. In an organization like the Nigerian Technical Colleges therefore, the climate as perceived by those who work in it may determines to a large extent their level of contribution and the degree of attainment of its set goals and objectives.

It has been observed by educationist in Nigeria such as (Philipa, 2006) that education system at all levels is riddled with series of problems of school climate. These include poor academic performance of students, cheating in examination, and poor attitude of teachers to teaching. Technical Colleges are not exempted from these management problems that go on unabated in schools. The school principals are partly blamed for non-performance of their duties and their failure to exhibit appropriate leadership behaviours to solve these perennial problems besieging educational system. This cannot be unconnected with the fact that in recent years, teacher leadership has become the centre of educational research for improving educational practices (Ibukun,Oyewole and Abe 2011). (Edgers and Kritsonis, 2006) stated that daily interpersonal interactions of a principal are necessary to garner trust and support from teachers.

This opinion is predicated on the understanding that whatever is the output of an individual in an organization depends on those factors that encourage him/her to put in his/her best. Therefore, positive interactive behavior, motivation and communication, which are all characteristics of good principal's leadership style, could further accelerate the accomplishment of educational goals in Technical Colleges. Outside the school system, a study by (Maninger & Powell, 2007) has shown that Positive climates display warmth, belonging and collegiality. This type of atmosphere promotes a safe, trusting and meaningful environment that encourages academic and personal growth and development. All these are achieved as a result of effective principalship. However, this assertion is not certain in Nigerian Technical Colleges. Hence, this study sought to determine the relationship between principal's leadership style and the school climate in Katsina state Technical Colleges.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between Principal's leadership style and school climate in technical colleges in Katsina State.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that this study sought to answer is:

Q: What is the relationship between Principal's leadership style and school climate in Technical Colleges in Katsina State?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Principal's leadership style and school climate in Technical Colleges in Katsina State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational research design. According to (Nasir,2005), correlational design can be used to determine the relationship between two variables under study. The design is therefore considered appropriate as this present study sought to investigate the relationship between principal's leadership style and school climate in Katsina state technical colleges. The area for the study was Katsina State which is located in North-West, Nigeria. All the six technical colleges from the state were used for the study. The population for the study was 3886 subjects. This consisted of 3080 students, 800 teachers and 6 principals.

Stratified random sampling in accordance with the three senatorial districts of the state was used to select a sample of 354 students, 266 teachers and 3 principals totalling 623 subjects for the study. The list of technical colleges and the senatorial district where they are located are as follows:

1. Government Technical College Mashi; Katsina Senatorial District
2. Government Technical College Funtua; Funtua Senatorial District
3. Government Technical College Ingawa; Daura Senatorial District

The instruments for data collection were Leadership Style Questionnaire (LSQ) and School Climate Questionnaire (SCQ). Both questionnaires were developed and used in this study by the researcher. The LSQ has 30 items developed to measure the leadership style adopted by the principals. The principals and the teacher in their respective schools provided answer to this questionnaire. The SCQ on the other hand contained 40 items that were used to measure the four aspects of school climate (Betty & Adrienne, 2004). These included the physical, social,affective and academic school climates**.** All the subjects responded to this questionnaire (principals, teacher and their students). Both questionnaires have 5 points response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). These response options weighted 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for SA, A, U, D and SD. The instruments were face and content validated by 2 lecturers from Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina and 1 lecturer from Educational Foundation Programme of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. A pilot study was carried out on 30 subjects from three Technical Colleges in Kaduna state which are outside the main study area but with the same school characteristics. Cronbach Alpha was used to calculate the reliability coefficience of the instruments which yielded an index of 0.76 and 0.82 for the LSQ and SCQ respectively. The instruments were administered by the researcher and three research assistants and 100% return rate was achieved.

Data collected were analysed using SPSS package. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was the statistical tool used to determine the relationship between the variables under study. T-test analysis was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The use of t-test was considered appropriate in this study in accordance with (Fraenkel and Wallen 2003) opinion that t-test can be used to determine whether a correlation coefficient calculated on a sample data is significant. Furthermore, for the purpose of interpretation of the correlation coefficient (r) between the variables under study, Nasir (2005), suggested that an 'r' value within the range of ±.00 to ± .20 shows a very low relationship; that of ±.21 to±.40 shows a slight relationship; that of ±.41 to ± .60 show a fairly high relationship and that of ±.61 to±1.00 shows a very high relationship. This criterion for the interpretation of 'r' values was used in the present study.

RESULTS

Research Question: What is the relationship between principal's leadership style and school climate in Technical Colleges in Katsina state?

Table 1: Relationship between Principal's Leadership Style and School Climate

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	R
PLS	269	4.31	1.32	
SC	623	3.23	1.43	0.62

Significance level = 0.05

Key: N = Number of respondents, $\bar{X}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, r = Correlation coefficient, PLS = Principal's Leadership Style, SC = School Climate.

The data presented in Table 1 reveal Principal's Leadership mean score of 4.31and School Climate mean score of 3.23 among the respondents. A standard deviation of 1.32 for PLS and 1.43for SC was also obtained. This standard deviation result obtained implies that the responses of the subjects on both PLS and SC are tightly clustered around the means. A correlation coefficient (r) of 0.62 was obtained. This result indicated a very high positive relationship between Principal's Leadership Style and School Climate in Katsina state Technical Colleges.

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between Principal's leadership style and school climate in Technical Colleges in Katsina State

Table 2: t-test Analysis on the Relationship between Principal's Leadership Style and School Climate

	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
PLS	23.31	890	.001	3.12	2.92	3.11
SC			.001	2.11	1.37	2.10

Level of significance = 0.05

Key: Key: N = Number of respondents, $\bar{X}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, r = Correlation coefficient, PLS = Principal's Leadership Style, SC = School Climate, df = Degree of Freedom.

The data presented in Table 2 shows the result of t-test analysis on the research hypothesis. With t at 23.31 and significant at 0.001, which is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Principal's leadership style and school climate in Technical Colleges in Katsina State is rejected. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between Principal's leadership style and school climate in Technical Colleges in Katsina State is upheld.

DISCUSSION

Result emerging from Table 1 indicated a very high positive relationship between Principal's Leadership Style and School Climate in Katsina state Technical Colleges. This means that enhanced principal's leadership style goes with positive Technical College climate. The t-test analysis result shown in Table 2 also indicated that this relationship between principal's leadership style and school climate is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. The finding of

this study is not surprising as it is in consonance with the findings of (Maninger & Powell,2007)that leadership style has positive impact on organizational climate. This is an important factor that influences perception and performance of both teachers and students in attaining the goals of Technical Colleges. The possible explanation to this finding is that, principal's leadership style which involves the control of human and material resources in the Technical Colleges is so relevant to the extent that the school cannot exist without that position. This finding establish or supported the fact that the principal is the supervisor, manager, school climate developer and change facilitator which also concur with the opinion of (Fultz, 2011).

CONCLUSION

One of the most important issues of concern today is for principals to identify the situations of the school, such as school climate, the likely direct effects on students and the leadership style they employ. School climate reflects the physical, social,affective and academic aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. This study determined the relationship between the principals' leadership style and school climates in Katsina state Technical Colleges. Findings revealed a very high, significant and positive relationship. This means that the principal's leadership style goes with school's climate. It can be concluded based on this finding therefore that principal's leadership style improves the physical, social,affective and academic school climates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hence, the following recommendations were made:

1. Workshops and seminars should be organised by Katsina State Science and Technical Education Board to create awareness among the principals in Katsina state Technical Colleges on the impact of their leadership style on their school climates;
2. The findings of this study of very high, significant and positive relationship between the principal's leadership style and school climates should be used as yardstick in promoting or rewarding the performance of the principals in Katsina State Technical Colleges.

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