

## Research Article

# Contribution of Educational Managers' Leadership Styles towards Job Performance of Office Managers in Tertiary Institutions

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**Abstract:** The study was necessitated by the declining job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent educational managers' leadership styles contribute to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 664 office managers in all the public tertiary institutions in the area of the study. The entire population was used without sample size because the population was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire with five-point rating scale which contained 22-items in two clusters. The instrument was validated by three experts. A pilot test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and data collected were analyzed using Cronbach alpha to obtain reliability coefficient values of 0.92 and 0.94 with an overall coefficient value of 0.93. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

The findings revealed that transformational leadership styles of educational managers contribute to job performance of the office managers to a great extent while autocratic leadership styles contribute to a small extent. Gender did not significantly influence the respondents' mean ratings on the extent transformational and autocratic leadership styles of educational managers contribute to their job performance.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that transformational leadership style were adopted by educational managers which contributes positively to the job performance in their tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. It was therefore recommended among others, educational managers should adopt a transformational leadership style rather than autocratic leadership styles to enhance office managers' motivation consistently and efficiently; which will in turn generate higher quality performance on the office managers' part and boost educational performance.

**Keywords:** Educational managers, leadership styles, job performance, office managers.

## Introduction

Tertiary institutions are specially designed institutions where the curriculum experiences, transformative changes and the national values are expected to be learnt under the tutelage of teachers. Tertiary institutions are headed by VC, Rector and Provost who are assisted by a number of functionaries for its day-to-day administration. These functionaries are the Deputy VC, Deputy Rector, Deputy Provost, the Registrar, Bursar, Librarians, Directors of Academic Planning and Statistics, Deans of Faculty, Deans of Schools, Heads of Departments and Heads of Units, who are

charged with the general responsibility for matters relating to the administration of the institutions. They individually or collectively plan, direct, control, supervise, discipline, and evaluate the staff and programmes of the institutions. Therefore, the above terms are group of administrators who carried out the administrative functions of an institution.

According to Lucey (2015), administration is carried out not only by people with administration in their job title, but also Deans of schools, Heads of Departments, Supervisors and Foremen who carry out managerial functions at various levels in tertiary institutions. These officers in administrative positions often have educational managers assigned to them to assist and render office, technology and managerial functions. Educational managers are persons responsible for planning, organizing and overseeing the educational approaches and strategies as well as the development and resources of the curriculum for preschool, primary school, secondary school and tertiary institutions (Ezenwafor, 2011). Educational managers adopt different leadership styles in carrying out their daily functions, which contribute positively or negatively to the performance of the office managers.

An office manager is an executive assistant who possesses a mastery of office skills, demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility with or without supervision, exercises initiatives and judgment and makes decision within the scope of assigned authority (Ile and Oguejiofor, 2015). Ezenwafor (2011) noted that some of the functions of office managers in tertiary institutions cover production of different types of documents for the office, lecturers and students, proofreading the document for accuracy, disseminate, storing (traditionally or electronically) and retrieving stored documents when needed. These functions are also carried out by office managers in the institutions by relating well with all and sundry within and outside the institutions.

Office managers are individuals that provide a variety of secretarial, administrative and office support for their supervisors or the educational managers in an institution (Puriry, 2017). Akanbi (2011) observed the workload and up-sets for an executive continuously as it affect the performance of office managers. Akanbi noted the tend to throw up the feelings of frustration, insecurity, hostility, job dissatisfaction and subsequently leading to low morale and poor performance (such as slow responses to duties, late submission of finished assignments and low productivity). The efforts of office managers towards goal attainment are normally coordinated by educational managers.

The person at the helm of affairs is usually the leader. Thus, for office managers to perform their duties effectively, there must be holistic interactions between them and the leader in an institution. Kellerman (2014) defined leadership as a relationship process oriented to achieve some common goals. Owusu-Bempah (2014) noted that leadership is the capacity to create a compelling vision and translated vision into organizational realities. Therefore, effective coordination of educational managers depends to a great extent on the leadership styles they adopt.

Leadership style is viewed as the combination of traits, characteristics, skills and behaviours that leaders use when interacting with their subordinates (Jeremy, Melinde and Ciller, 2011). Therefore, educational managers are expected to adopt different leadership styles at different stages of the decision-making process. Thus, it follows that managerial activities and decisions should always depend on the situations at hand.

Educational managers' leadership styles may contribute positively or negatively on their office managers job performance because, according to Akanbi (2011), when the leadership style of management contributes positively on office managers' attitude to work, they find their work very interesting and enjoyable leading to optimal satisfying opportunities for self-fulfillment. Odigbo (2016) noted that, at least, six leadership styles are generally observed in management with one or two being dominant in an individual manager. The styles include autocratic leadership style, democratic/participatory leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style, transactional leadership style, charismatic leadership style and transformational leadership. This study will adopt the two leadership

styles identified by Dosunmu and Olusanya (2011), namely; autocratic and transformational leadership styles.

Autocratic leadership style enables the leader making all the decisions, wielding absolute power, assigning tasks to members of the group. The autocratic leadership style is one in which the educational manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible (Muhammad, Irfanullah, Qamar, Hafiz, Hamid and Latif, 2015). In this style, the educational manager does not support the office managers, nor are they allowed to come out with results. Office managers are expected to obey orders without any excuses or explanations. Akor (2014) noted that autocratic leadership is often best used in crises situation, when decisions must be made quickly and without dissent. The study of Longe (2014) revealed that autocratic leadership style are restrictive in nature with dominant approach before the change, which was inhibitive of optimum performance, while supportive and collaborative leadership modes characterized the post-acquisition era were more conducive to enhanced organizational performance. This leadership style could contribute negatively on office managers' job performance.

On the other hand, transformational leadership style is one in which an individual or a group of individuals engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers work together with high levels of motivation and morality. Where transformational leadership style is adopted by educational managers, their office managers feel trusted and admired which will enhanced their loyalty and respect to the leader. This behaviour has the potential to also motivate them to do more than is expected of them. According to Odigbo (2013), transformational leadership style is like the democratic leadership style because the two have the potential to inspire office managers to strive to accomplish clearly expressed visions of the educational managers. Obiwuru, Okwu and Nwankwere (2011) noted that, in transformational leadership style, the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty and respect towards the leader and are motivated to do more than what they are originally expected to do. This also helps to develop potentials for efficiency and the ability to take the risks, decisions and entertain new ideas for the good of an institution. According to Ceasar (2013), different leadership situations require different leadership styles. Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (2008) reported that no single leadership style works in every situation, thus, they viewed leadership in relation to specific situations and pointed out that different work situations elicit different leadership styles. Thus, job performance of office managers include executing defined duties, meeting deadlines, mastery of office skills, exercising judgments and making decisions within the set scope of authority (Machumu and Kaitila, 2014).

Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa and Nwankwere (2011) opined that some educational managers are extremely difficult and would usually carry the problems of the home front to the office as they lack strategic interventions of specific leadership styles to manage specific situations. A good educational manager will find himself or herself switching instinctively between leadership styles according to the people and work situations they deal with. In the same vein, a good leadership style can gain office managers commitment to work and elicit good behaviours towards increased productivity. Conversely, a bad leadership style constitutes unwholesome working environment and a poor relationship between the leader and the office manager resulting in poor performance and low productivity (Bhargava and Anbazhagan, 2013). The subjects for this study are male and female office managers in tertiary institutions owned by state and federal government. These factors could influence their ratings on the extent educational managers leadership styles contribute to their job performance. Gender is a factor that could come to focus in the context of leadership and performance of organizations. Gender refers to the male and female office managers in tertiary institutions. Musa (2018) revealed that there was significant relationship between transformational leadership and staff performance in the college based on gender. Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah (2014) noted that male and female differ in their behaviour in many ways. Considering that educational managers' leadership styles contribute positive or negative to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria, they adopted not

the same in manners, personalities and, leadership styles and they are not equally endowed. Therefore, it is essential to ascertain the contribution of educational managers' leadership styles towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Educational institutions need effective leaders or managers to stimulate optimum performance of all employees especially office managers. The situation seem not to be so in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria as educational managers are not the same in manners, personalities and leadership styles and they are not equally endowed. While some are easily satisfied and cooperative, others do not appreciate that creating a conducive work environment immensely assist office managers to perform their duties creditably by avoiding errors and tension in the work place. The current issue in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria that motivate this study is that might observation showed that most of the educational managers are not leading to expectation. The implications are that when these problems occur, the office managers are sure to receive deadly bullets of words, provocative and slanderous bashings from their educational managers which makes the office managers seen not performing their duties as well required. The problem of this study was to ascertain the different leadership styles of educational managers that elicit feelings that contribute or hinder the job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent educational managers' leadership styles contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the extent:

- 1) Autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.
- 2) Transformational leadership style of educational managers' contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) To what extent does autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria?
- 2) To what extent does transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) Male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute towards their job performance.
- 2) Male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute towards their job performance.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 664 office managers in four public owned tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. No sample size was used for the study. A 22-item structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was structured on a five-point rating scale with response categories as very great extent (VGE) – 5 points, great extent (GE) – 4 points, moderate extent (ME) – 3 points, small extent (SE) – 2 points and very small extent (VSE) -1 point. The questionnaire was validated by three experts-two in the field of business education and one expert in measurement and evaluation, all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A pilot test was used to establish

the reliability of the instrument by administering it to twenty office managers selected from University of Nigeria Nsukka, Enugu State who were not included in the study population.

Data collected were analysed using Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency of the instruments which obtained reliability coefficients values of 0.92 and 0.94 for clusters B1 and B2 respectively with an overall coefficient value of 0.93. Copies of the questionnaire instruments were administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of two research assistants who were briefed on how to administer the instrument. On the spot completion method was used but those who could not meet up were revisited on agreement by the researcher or assistant for retrieval. In addition, the researcher or assistant used phone calls to remind the respondents of the appointments. The exercise lasted for one week. This procedure facilitated careful completion of the instrument and a high response rate. Out of the 664 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 632 copies (representing 95 percent) were retrieved with an attrition rate of 32 copies representing 5 percent. The successfully retrieved copies of the questionnaire were used for data analysis.

Data collection for research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The mean value was used to answer the research questions while the standard deviation was used to determine the closeness of the respondents' mean ratings. In testing hypothesis, t-test was used to test the null hypotheses.

A decision rule were based on a mean rating between 4.50-5.00 were regarded as very great extent, an item with mean rating of 3.50-4.49 was considered as great extent and an item with 2.50-3.49 were regarded as moderate extent. Furthermore, items with mean rating of 1.50-2.49 and 0.50-1.49 to small extent and very small extent respectively. In testing the null hypotheses, where the calculated p-value was less than the table value at level of significance (0.05), it means that there was significant difference and the hypothesis was rejected. Conversely, where the calculated p-value was equal to or greater than the table value at level of significance (0.05), it means that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was not rejected.

## **Results**

### **Research Question 1**

To what extent does autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 1. Mean ratings of respondents on extent autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria (N = 632)**

S/N	Aspects of autocratic style of leadership of educational managers to job performance of office managers	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	Denying office managers freedom to express their views	2.30	0.40	Small Extent
2	Not welcoming questions or ideas from office managers in matters related to institution's affairs	2.20	0.49	Small Extent
3	Refusing to allow office managers participate in the decision-making process	2.10	0.46	Small Extent
4	Taking vital decisions affecting office managers without consulting them	2.40	0.33	Small Extent
5	Offering very little or no opportunities for office managers to make suggestions that could be in the interest of the institution	1.40	0.53	Very Small Extent

6	Disallowing office managers to demonstrate initiative and creativity in their work performance	2.24	0.44	Small Extent
7	Using threats and coercion as major means of getting office managers perform their duties	2.20	0.50	Small Extent
8	Assuming the responsibility of deciding the standards of performance to be attained thereby over stressing office managers	1.40	0.54	Very Small Extent
9	Blocking interpersonal relationship with office managers	2.30	0.41	Small Extent
10	Firing office managers without fair hearing	1.46	0.51	Very Small Extent
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.00</b>		<b>Small Extent</b>

The data in Table 1 shows that items number 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9 have mean ratings ranging from 2.10 to 2.40 as aspects of autocratic style of leadership and were rated to a small extent, while the remaining items number 5, 8 and 10 were rated very small extent and have mean ratings from 1.40 to 1.46 each respectively. The standard deviation of 0.33 to 0.54 showed that respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings which indicate homogeneity. The cluster mean score of 2.00 indicate that autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to a small extent to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### Research Question 2

To what extent does transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute towards job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 2. Mean ratings of respondents on extent transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria (N = 632)**

S/N	Aspects of a transformational style of leadership of educational managers to job performance of office managers	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	Providing office managers with comfortable physical working environment	4.20	0.48	Great Extent
2	Building office managers' capacity for competitive advantage	4.40	0.43	Great Extent
3	Acknowledging office managers' efforts in achieving goals	4.40	4.44	Great Extent
4	Inspiring office managers to strive to accomplish manager's clearly expressed vision	3.49	0.57	Moderate Extent
5	Spending time to teach and coach office managers	4.32	0.32	Great Extent
6	Keeping the ego of office managers on check and encourages in them self-management	4.13	0.36	Great Extent
7	Inculcating high moral and ethical values in office managers	4.50	0.31	Very Great Extent
8	Addressing individual office managers' needs and desires	4.50	0.30	Very Great Extent
9	Assisting employees in developing their skills and strengths	3.58	0.50	Great Extent

10	Welcoming creativity and innovations from office managers	3.54	0.52	Great Extent
11	Allowing office managers use their initiative in performing tasks	3.55	0.53	Great Extent
12	Supporting office managers to in-service training to enhance their competencies	4.39	0.48	Great Extent
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>4.08</b>		<b>Great Extent</b>

The data in Table 2 shows that almost all the items were rated great extent except items number 7 and 8 which was rated very great extent and have mean ratings ranging of 4.50 each as extent transformational style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria and remaining one item number 24 was rated to a moderate extent with mean ratings of 3.49. The standard deviation of 0.41 to 0.53 showed that respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings which indicate homogeneity. The cluster mean score of 4.08 indicate that transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute to a great extent to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

## Test of Hypotheses

### Hypothesis 1

Male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute towards their job performance.

**Table 3. Summary of t-test on the mean ratings of male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria on the extent autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to their job performance (N=632)**

Gender of Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\alpha$	Df	t-cal	p-val	Remark
Male	184	2.13	0.11	0.05	630	0.83	0.14	Not Significant
Female	448	2.15	0.13					
Source: Field Study, 2021.								

Table 3 indicates that the calculated t-value is 0.83 at 630 degree of freedom and 0.14 p-value. Since the p-value of 0.14 is greater than the alpha value (0.05), it means that male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to their job performance. The null hypothesis was, therefore accepted.

### Hypothesis 2

Male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute towards their job performance.

**Table 4. Summary of t-test on the mean ratings of male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria on the extent transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute to their job performance (N=632)**

educational managers contribute to their job performance (N=652)								
Gender of Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\alpha$	Df	t-cal	p-val	Remark
Male	184	3.32	0.09	0.05	630	-1.23	0.11	Not Significant
Female	448	3.28	0.10					
Source: Field Study, 2021.								

Table 4 indicates that the calculated t-value is -1.23 at 630 degree of freedom and 0.11 p-value. Since the p-value of 0.11 is greater than the alpha value (0.05), it means that male and female office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute to their job performance. The null hypothesis was, therefore accepted.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Findings of the first research question revealed that autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria to a small extent. This finding is in line with Akor (2014) who noted that autocratic leadership is often best used in crises situation, when decisions must be made quickly and without dissent. This was in disagreement with Longe (2014) who noted that autocratic leadership style are restrictive in nature with dominant approach before the change, which was inhibitive of optimum performance, while supportive and collaborative leadership modes characterized the post-acquisition era were more conducive to enhanced organizational performance.

The test of the first hypothesis revealed that the mean ratings of male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria do not differ significantly on the extent autocratic leadership style of educational managers contribute to their job performance. This finding disagrees with Yahaya, Osman, Mohammed, Gibrilla and Issah (2014) who reported that male and female differ in their behaviour in many ways.

Findings of the second research question revealed that transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute to job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria to a great extent. This finding is in line with Obiwuru, Okwu and Nwankwere (2011) who noted that, in transformational leadership style, the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty and respect towards the leader and are motivated to do more than what they are originally expected to do.

The test of the second hypothesis revealed that the mean ratings of male and female office managers in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria do not differ significantly on the extent transformational leadership style of educational managers contribute to their job performance. This is in disagreement with Musa (2018) who revealed that there was significant relationship between transformational leadership and staff performance in the college based on gender.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that transformational leadership style was adopted by educational managers which contribute positively to the job performance of office managers in their tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. It was also concluded that the educational managers' leadership styles enhance job performance of office managers in tertiary institutions.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) The educational managers should encourage office managers to work hard and challenge themselves with roles which utilize their full potential, talent and creativity. This would align to office managers to the organizational vision and make them more confident and eager to perform the allocated tasks.
- 2) Educational managers should adopt a transformational leadership style rather than autocratic leadership styles to enhance office managers' motivation consistently and efficiently; which will in turn generate higher quality performance on the office managers' part and boost educational performance.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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