

Assessment of Leadership Role of Principals of Technical College in The North –East Political Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study was embarked upon, for the purpose of assessment of leadership role of Technical Colleges in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. In carrying out the study, four research questions were formulated. The questionnaire was the only instrument used for data collection. Principals of fifteen (15) Technical Colleges in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria and Technical Teachers were chosen as the population of the study. There was no sampling for study, since according to research experts, the population is sizeable for the study and could be studied in its entirety. The results of the data collected and analyzed, showed that the principals of Technical Colleges in the study areas, need to exercise authority in administration of staff and students to ensure optimum use of human resources in school organization.

Keywords —leadership role, principals, Technical Colleges,

INTRODUCTION

Every organization, whether formal, or informal need an administrative machinery for it to function effectively. The administration will coordinate the human and material resource available in the organization in order to achieve the purpose for which it was established. In order words, the success of any organization depends to a larger extent on the ability of the administrator to perform administrative and leadership roles. This is applicable to every organization include schools such as technical colleges

Technical colleges in Nigeria were established to train youths in craft course so as to enable them acquire practical skills for gaining and sustaining employment. They were established to provide training, leading to the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge, competencies, abilities and attitudes necessary for the selection, entering and progressing in a technical career. Technical colleges provide vocational education which according to the National Policy on Education is that form of education which is obtainable in the technical colleges, equivalent to the senior secondary education but designed to prepare individuals to acquire practical skills, basic and scientific knowledge and attitude required as men and technicians at sub-professional level. The goal of vocational education, as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (1998) includes:

Provision of trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;

Provision of the technical knowledge, and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, Commercial, and economic development;

To give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.

To achieve the laudable goals of vocational education in the technical colleges, it is imperative that there should be effective leadership. Leaderships have been defined by different scholars in different ways:

According to Holy Miskel [1], He states that leadership is any contribution to the establishment and attainment of group purpose.

Leadership is a set of behaviours used to help people align their collective direction to execute strategic plans, to continually renew an organization [2].

Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence and guide followers or members of organisation, society or team [3].

Leadership is essentially a continuous process of influencing behaviour, which may be considered in context of mutual relations between a leader and his followers.

There are three types of leadership styles. These are; democratic, autocratic and laissez faire leadership styles [4]

. In democratic leadership, members' views are considered before decisions are taken while in autocratic leadership; one man takes decisions, without necessarily considering the members' opinions or suggestions. In laissez-faire leadership styles, the leader is not seriously committed to the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Forsome times now, the performance of most principals of technical colleges in North-East zone of Nigeria has been dwindling. The principals, as leaders of schools do not perform the duties and responsibilities expected to them with disciplined and dedicated minds [5]. These account for the incessant strike actions, truancy and absenteeism by teachers and students in schools. The NABTEB Chief Examiners report [6], revealed that the poor performance of principals of technical colleges is largely responsible, among other factors for massive failure of technical college students in their final year examination. It was also reported that principals of technical colleges in the North-East zone perform their duties as if they are on part time appointment, visiting their duty posts once or twice in a week sometimes, ending up attending to only one or two functions [7]. Since the performance of principals and teachers do affect the quality of the products of the school system, it follows that if teachers and principals are unproductive, the students will not be well equipped with skills and abilities for the world of work. Consequently, which needed improvement?

III. RESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data as well as the finding. The analysis is based on the data obtained from the questionnaire administered. The findings are presented according to the research questions as follows:

A. RESEARCH QUESTION 1

How does the principal exercises authority in the administration of staff and students?
To answer this research question, items numbers 1 - 17 from the questionnaire are used

TABLE 1:MEAN RESPONSE AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS ON PRINCIPAL'S AUTHORITY OVER STAFF AND STUDENTS

S/No	ITEMS	X	SD	REMARKS
1.	Maintaining discipline in the school administration	4.23	0.97	Agree
2.	Take the lead in working for good salaries and working condition for the staff	4.00	8.83	Agree
3.	Give staff members the opportunity to grow and advance through in-service training	3.78	1.14	Agree
4.	Widen the participation of staff and students in policy making	3.93	1,15	Agree
5.	Carrying out the provisions of the school laws and the state	3.70	1.20	Agree
6.	Checks performance of duties that are delegated	3.55	120	Agree
7.	Provides teachers with necessary resources for teaching innovation and adaption	2.86	1.43	Disagree
8.	Checking staff and students school attendance records	4.29	0.85	Agree
9.	Disciplining teachers for nonperformance in instructional duties	3.60	1.08	Agree
10.	Encouraging teachers to study new approaches to instructional improvement	3.95	1.15	Agree
11.	Scrutinizing teachers lesson preparation	3.56	1.26	Agree
12.	Scrutinizing students assignments and advising on their adequacy and quality	3.90	1.15	Agree
13.	Encouraging, supporting, and obtaining result of research findings.	3.90	0.96	Agree
14.	Helping teachers in evaluation processes.	3.80	1.11	Agree
15.	Informing parents of their students learning progress in school	4.05	1.12	Agree
16.	Consulting students as to now their learning problems and home background	3.98	0.98	Agree
17.	Attending to other administrative chores required by other level of school management	3.60	1.08	Agree

The result presented in table 2: above shows that the mean responses of the groups of sixteen items of this research question are above the cut-off point of 3.50 mean and the response of item 7 of this research question is below the cut-off point of 3.50 mean. This revealed that the respondent disagreed that principal provides teachers with the necessary resources for teaching innovation and adaption. These respondents strongly agreed ($X = 4.29$ $SD = 0.85$, and $X = 4.24$, $SD = 0.97$). That checking staff, students school attendance records and maintaining discipline in school administration. Except in item 7 where the respondents strongly disagreed that principal provides teachers with the necessary resources for teaching innovation and adaptation ($X = 2.86$, $SD = 1.43$).

B. RESEARCH QUESTION 2

How does the principal perform the role of accountability and record keeping in the administration of technical college?
To answer this research question, items numbers 18 - 27 from the research questionnaire were used.

TABLE 2: MEAN RESPONSES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S AND TEACHER ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECORDS KEEPING.

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	REMARKS
1.	Planning and seeking fund for school improvement	4.04	0.89	Agree
2.	Scrutinizing the school financial records	3.60	1.08	Agree
3.	Preparing school financial report	4.32	1.29	Agree
4.	Keeping and scrutinizing other financial school records	4.82	0.47	Agree
5.	Preparing and administering school budget	4.02	0.75	Agree
6.	Plans the budget and prepares salary schedule	3.55	1.13	Agree
7.	Furnishing government officials with reasonable accurate records	4.56	0.73	Agree
8.	Establishes proper accounting procedures in the school administration	4.55	0.77	Agree
9.	Recording the academic progress of the students	3.99	0.94	Agree
10.	Provides for competent, periodic review of all financial records	3.76	1.16	Agree

The result presented in table 3 above shows that the mean responses and standard deviations of the group on the items of this research question are above the cut-off point 3.50. This revealed that the respondents agreed all the ten items on accountability and records keeping of the principal are necessary in school administration and management. Keeping and scrutinizing other school records ($X = 4.82$, $SD = 0.47$). Furnishing government officials with reasonably accurate records of the school ($X = 4.56$, $SD = 0.73$). Establishing proper accounting procedures ($X = 4.55$, $SD = 0.77$). Planning and seeking of fund for school improvement. ($X = 4.40$, $SD = 0.89$), preparing school financial report for the improvement of school administration ($X = 4.32$, $SD = 1.29$), administering and planning of school budget ($X = 4.02$, $SD = 0.75$) recording the academic progress of the students ($X = 3.76$, $SD = 1.16$), scrutinizing all school financial records ($X = 3.60$, $SD = 1.08$), plan the budget and prepare salary schedules ($X = 3.55$, $SD = 1.13$).

C. RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What are the methods the principal adopts in decision making in relation to staff and student matters? To answer this research question, items numbers 28 - 36 from the questionnaire were used.

The table below shows the mean responses and standard deviation on the assessment of the leadership role of principals of technical colleges. It also contains remarks on the respondent's opinion to the items

TABLE 3: MEAN RESPONSES AND STANDARD DEVIATION ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF PRINCIPALS OF TECHNICAL COLLEGES.

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	REMARKS
1.	Involve both staff and students in school decision making	4.04	0.89	Agree
2.	Encourage committee work where teachers and students work together as equal members of a team	3.58	1.05	Agree
3.	Only genuine student clubs and association should be registered in the school	4.00	1.06	Agree
4.	Organizing and executing extra-cultural, activities in line with the existing college policies	4.31	1.29	Agree
5.	Consulting with PTA, community leaders and higher level of school management on issues requiring their attention	3.91	0.96	Agree
6.	Get parents involved in the work of the school	3.71	1.91	Agree
7.	Keeping channel of communication open by which teachers and students can make suggestion for the improvement of the school administration	3.85	1.14	Agree
8.	Make the members of staff aware of the process of interaction for effective administration	3.84	1.18	Agree
9.	Make decisions appropriate at the school level for better efficiency	3.76	1.16	Agree

The table 3 above shows that the respondents agreed more homogenous. The mean responses of the group on the items of this research questions are above the cut-off point of 3.50 mean. This revealed that the respondents agreed that there is need for the assessment of the leadership role of principals of technical colleges in the north-east zone. The respondents mostly agreed that principals and teachers of technical colleges must be able to involve both staff and students in school decision making process (X = 4.21, SD = 1.29) organizing and executing extra-curricular activities in line with college policies (X = 4.40, SD = 0.89), only genuine student clubs and associations should be registered in the school (X = 4.00, SD = 0.93), consulting with PTA, community leaders and higher level of school management on issues requiring their attentions (X = 3.85, SD = 1.14), makes the members of staff aware of the process of interaction for effective administration (X = 3.84, SD = 1.18), makes decision appropriate at school level for better efficiency. (X = 3.74, SD = 1.16). Encourage committee work where teachers and students work together as equal members of a team, (X = 3.58, SD = 1.05).

D. RESEARCH QUESTION 4

What are the ways the principal uses in goal setting and goal attainment?

To answer this research question, items numbers 37 - 41 from the questionnaire were used.

The table below shows the mean responses and stand deviations on the assessment of the leader role of principals of technical colleges in the north-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It also contains a remark on the respondent's opinion to the items.

TABLE 4: MEAN RESPONSES AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS GOAL SETTING, AND GOAL ATTAINMENT

S/No	ITEMS	X	SD	REMARKS
1.	Encourage revision of goal or procedures in areas which the group decides progress is unsatisfactory	4.16	0.93	Agree
2.	Determine the goal and objectives to be achieved by your subjects	3.75	1.20	Agree
3.	Keeping the staff informed of policy changes originating outside the unit that will affect them.	4.09	1.04	Agree
4.	Listen to the opinions and proposal of all staff members	3.83	1.22	Agree
5.	Share the determination of goals and method of operation to achieve the desired goals	3.81	1.11	Agree
6.	Determine and assess the philosophy behind the new school system	3.86	1.10	Agree

The result presented in table 5 above shows that the mean responses of the respondents on all the items of this research questions are above the cut-off-point of 3.50 mean. This revealed that, the respondents agreed that principals, and teachers need the methods of goal setting and attainment in their day-to-day school administration to be able to encourage revision of goals or procedures in areas in which the group decided progress is unsatisfactory (X = 4.16, SD = 0.93), keeping the staff informed of policy changes originating outside the unit that will affect them, (x = 4.09, SD = 1.04). Determine and assess the philosophy behind the new school system (X = 3.86, SD = 1.10), listen to the opinions of all staff members (x = 3.83, SD = 1.22), share the determination of goals and methods of operation to achieved by your subjects, (x = 3.75, SD = 1.20).

HYPOTHESIS 1

H₀: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the ways the principals exercise authority over staff and students.

TABLE 4: T-TEST COMPARISON OF MEAN RESPONSE OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS ON THE WAYS PRINCIPALS EXERCISE AUTHORITY OVER STAFF AND STUDENTS

S/N	X ₁	X ₂	SD ₁	SD ₂	t-cal	t-cal	Remarks
1.	3.93	3.84	1.03	0.90	2.23	1.98	S
2.	3.80	4.04	0.77	0.88	2.21	1.98	s
3.	3.26	3.91	1.28	1.00	0.64	1.98	NS
4.	3.47	4.02	1.24	1.05	0.96	1.98	NS
5.	3.87	3.70	1.36	1.04	2.24	1.98	S
6.	3.53	3.63	1.60	1.25	2.15	1.98	S
7.	2.47	2.91	1.55	1.62	0.34	1.98	NS
8.	4.40	4.29	0.74	0.95	2.50	1.98	S
9.	3.27	3.67	1.22	0.93	2.25	1.98	S
10.	3.87	3.97	1.36	1.04	1.21	1.98	NS
11.	3.67	3.56	0.88	1.29	2.28	1.98	S
12.	4.27	4.01	1.23	0.96	1.50	1.98	NS
13.	3.40	4.04	1.07	0.92	0.25	1.98	NS
14.	4.00	3.70	0.88	1.15	2.27	1.98	S
15.	3.20	4.00	0.99	0.98	2.42	1.98	S
16.	4.33	3.89	0.89	1.06	2.57	1.98	S
17.	2.80	3.71	1.08	0.97	2.21	1.98	S

S = significant, NS = Not Significant, $df = 118$, $n_1:105$, $n_2 = 15$, $t\text{-tab} = 118 (0.05) = 1.98$. The result in the table 6 below shows the opinions of the respondents (principals and teachers) on the leadership role of principals of Technical Colleges in the north-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It can be seen that, based on the data presented t-calculated values of six items (i.e. 3, 4, 7, 10, 12 and 13) were less than the table values, while items (i.e. 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 17) were above the table values, therefore the null hypothesis were upheld for each of the eleven items, while the null hypothesis for the remaining six items were rejected.

HYPOTHESIS II

H_2 : there is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the methods adopted by the principals in decision making.

The result in table 7 shows the opinions of the respondents (principal teachers) on the methods adopted by the principals in decision making. The opinions of the respondents did not differ on items 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, and 35, except on items 32, 34 and 36. As a result, the null hypothesis was accepted. Since the t- calculated was higher than the t-table value. But rejected in items 32, 34 and 36 because the t-calculated values 32 (0.00), 34 (1.10), 36 (0.47) respectively were less than t-table values (1.98) as shown on the table above. This shows the differences in the opinions of the respondents about the methods adopted by the principals in decision- making process.

TABLE 6: T-TEST COMPARISON OF MEAN RESPONSES OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS ON THE METHODS ADOPTED BY THE PRINCIPALS IN DECISION MAKING.

S/N	X ₁	X ₂	SD ₁	SD ₂	t-cal	t-cal	Remarks
1.	4.05	4.13	0.86	0.92	2.09	1.98	S
2.	3.89	3.40	1.04	1.06	2.06	1.98	S
3.	4.11	3.67	0.88	1.26	2.25	1.98	S
4.	3.80	3.90	1.32	0.92	2.39	1.98	S
5.	3.88	4.13	1.05	1.46	0.00	1.98	NS
6.	3.63	3.53	1.18	1.46	2.32	1.98	S
7.	4.37	3.47	0.82	1.13	1.10	1.98	NS
8	3.83	3.87	1.10	1.25	2.21	1.98	S
9.	3.74	3.47	1.06	1.23	0.47	1.98	NS

III.FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based on the data presented and analyzed the following findings are presented in the same order in which the research questions and hypotheses were arranged. Listed below were the findings of the study which is in the consonance with the leadership role of principals of technical college administration.

- i.** Maintaining discipline in the school administration
- ii.** Informing parents of their students learning progress in school.
- iii.** Encouraging teachers to study new approaches to instructional improvement in school.
- iv.** Disciplining teachers for non-performance in instructional duties.
- v.** Checks staff and student’s attendance school records.
- vi.** Plans and seeks funds for school improvement.
- vii.** Prepares and administers school budget.
- viii.** Furnishes, the government official, with a reasonably, accurate record.
- ix.** Consulting with Parents Teachers Association(P. T.A), community leaders and levels of school management on issues requiring their attentions.
- x.** Keeping channels of communication open by which teachers and students can make suggestion for the improvement of the administration.
- xi.** Provide for competent, periodic review of all financial records.
- xii.** Listen to the opinion and proposals of all staff members.

FINDINGS ON THE HYPOTHESIS 1 & 2

The findings from the hypotheses tested revealed that: There was no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the ways the principal exercise authority over staff and students. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of the principals and teachers on the methods adopted by the principal in decision- making.

IV.DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This study was designed to bring out some leadership role performances of principals of technical colleges in the north-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. This led to the formulation of four research questions, which this study was seeking to find answers to. The instrument used for the study consisted of 42 questionnaire items. The first section consisted of 17 questionnaire items.

The results obtained on table 1 showed that the mean score of the items ranges from 2.86 to 4.29. The respondents responses revealed, that the respondents agreed that, maintaining discipline in school administration, takes the lead in working for good salaries and working condition for the staff, give staff members the opportunity to grow and advance through in-service training, widen the participation of staff and students in policy making, carry out the provisions of the school law and the state, checks performance on duties that are delegated, provide teachers with necessary resources for teaching innovation and adaptation. These findings were in consonance with the opinions of Olaitan, Edem, and Okeke [8, 9, 10], among others that are in agreement with the above factors which aid technical colleges administration.

The findings in table 1 revealed that the respondents agreed on the accountability and record keeping of the principal in school administration, planning, and seeking funds for school improvement, scrutinizing school financial records, preparing and administering school budget, establishes proper accounting procedures in the school administration, provide for competent periodic review of all financial records, these findings were in consonance with the opinions of Agabi and Odeh [11, 12], among others who remarked that planning the budget and prepares salary schedules, furnishing government officials with a reasonably accurate records would enhance the administrative skills of the school administrators.

The findings in table 2 revealed that the respondents agreed on all the items on the methods adopted by the principal in decision -making. Consulting with P.T.A. community leaders and higher level of school management on issues requiring their attention, organizing and executing extra-curricular activities in line with the existing college - policies, encourage committee work when teachers and students work together as equal members of a team.

These findings are in the consonance with the opinions of Nwankwo, et al [13, 14, 15], among others who remarked that for the purpose of proper school administration, the school principal must involve both staff and students in school decision making process.

The findings in table 3 revealed that, all the respondents agreed on the items on the ways the principals use in goal setting, and goal attainment, the ways include: encourage revision of goal or procedure in areas which the group decides progress is unsatisfactory, determine the goals and objectives to be achieved by your subjects, keeping the staff informed of policy changes originating outside the unit that will affect them, listen to the opinions and proposal of all staff members, share the determination of goals and method of operation to achieve the desired goals, determine and assess the philosophy behind the new school system.

The above findings are in agreement with the opinions of Kayode et al [16, 17, 18 19], among others who remarked that there should be proper setting of goals and attainment of goals of the organization such as technical college. Human resources such as staff and students will acquire skill that will qualify them for higher responsibility needed for effective performance.

HYPOTHESIS1 & 2 T-test significance was used to test the first hypothesis on the way the principal exercises authority over staff and students.

In table 6, the calculated t-value all the 6 items were less than the t-table of 1.98. This showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of responses of principals and teachers in the north-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted or upheld.

A t-test of significance was used to test the second hypothesis on the methods adopted by the principals in the decision-making. In table 7, the calculated t-values, 3 out of the 9 items were less than t-table of 1.98. This showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of responses of principals and teachers in the north-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted or upheld.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES USED

To fulfill these objectives, four research questions were formulated, for which answers were sought and collected from a population of one hundred and twenty respondents (principals and technical teachers) whose institutions or technical colleges used for the study. The instrument used for the gathering of information is the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was administered to principals and teachers in the north-east geopolitical zone of the Nigeria. The data collected were analyzed using frequency distribution and mean statistics. The mean was employed to determine or answer the research questions, while the Cronbach Alpha reliability test was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Based on the data collected, the following principal findings were made:

- i.** Only genuine student clubs and associations should be registered in the school.
- ii.** Keeping channels of communication open by which teachers and students can make suggestion for the improvement of the school administration.
- iii.** Make the members of the staff aware of the process of interaction for effective school administration.
- iv.** Make decisions appropriate at the school level for better efficiency.
- v.** Encourage committee work where teachers and students work together as equal members of a team.
- vi.** Establish proper accounting procedures in the school administration.
- vii.** Planning and seeking funds for school improvement.
- viii.** Furnishing government officials with reasonably, accurate records.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study have implications for the principals, teachers, students and governments of the north-east. To the principals this study will enable them in the north-east zone to be aware of their leadership roles and hence improve upon their performance. The principals having been aware of their lapses in school administration will devise other better means of performing leadership roles which will be beneficial to them and the school system as a whole.

The study will help the teachers to discover their limits of authority as well as their limits of involvement in decision making in school. As they involve in decision making in the school administration their roles as teachers in decision making process is vital in the sense that they will contribute to the school administration in the areas of students' discipline and effectiveness.

The students will benefit from the findings of this study as they will be exposed to how the quality of leadership of the school affects their performance in their final year examination. As principals and teachers are committed to their duties, the students will benefit maximally, when there is ideal school administration.

Lastly, the state governments of the north-east zone benefit also from the findings of this study as they will know how the leadership roles of principals in terms of accountability and accurate record keeping and hence reduces the incidence of financial mismanagement in schools.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made: It can be concluded at this stage that there is need for the assessment of leadership role of principals of technical colleges in the north-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria, so as to solve the problem of mass failures of students in their final year examination.

Based on the findings of the study also, it can be concluded that there is need for the principals in the north-east zone to exercise authority in the administration of staff and students so as to enhance the productivity of both staff and students.

It was also discovered from the findings of this study that principals in the north-east zone need to have accurate records keeping and accountability in the administration of schools, this will enable them guard against financial mismanagement.

Lastly, it was also found out from the findings of this study that principals in the north-east zone need to have proper decision making process in school administration. They also need some specific ways that can help them in goal setting and goal attainment in their leadership role performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the bases of the findings made, and the conclusion drawn from the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i.** There should be a concerted effort by government to retain and encourage principals and teachers in improving their condition of services and by paying their entitlements as and when due.
- ii.** Only Technical Education Teachers who have experiences should be made the principals in Technical Colleges set up.
- iii.** The principals of technical colleges should be transparent and judicious in spending the money meant for the funding of technical colleges.
- iv.** Federal and state governments should allocate and make available adequate funds to the technical institutions that will help in updating the technical knowledge and skills of our technology educators, inspectors and administrators.

- v. The federal and state governments should assist in the area of manpower training of principals and teachers through in-service or on-the-job training. This helps to solve the problem of unskilled administrators, which some schools experience in this present day school administration.

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