Leadership Styles and the Challenges of Managing Human and Material Resources in Teacher Preparation Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper presents an exposé on leadership and leadership styles, the different categories and types of human and material resources that need skillful management in our teacher preparation institutions in Nigeria, and the effect of leadership styles on the management of these resources. It succinctly identified some of the challenges that can constrain leadership while faithfully trying to drive the vision and mission of the institution for productivity. As a way out, strategies and mechanisms for coping with these challenges were discussed. From the presentation, it was concluded that for a progressive and conducive academic environment to evolve, the leadership therein demands styles that promote intelligence, trustworthiness, humaneness, courage, and discipline.
Keywords: Leadership, Leadership Styles, Quality, Teacher Preparation, Challenges, Human and Material Resources Management, Nigeria.

Introduction

The role of higher education in any society is in the realm of social, cultural and economic development of such society. This emphasises access and quality; quality of education to be given or the standard to be aimed at in different fields.

Unfortunately, the current scenario within our academic environment; Colleges of Education not excluded, seems to be relatively constrained in fulfilling this goal. This could be confirmed where attempt is made to query the quality of service delivery, attitudes of the key stakeholders and partakers in the day to day running of the system and the quality of the products of the programme.

The question that should be immediately raised at this juncture is "what could be responsible for our academic environment's inability to help raise and maintain this standard and work towards the promotion of quality service delivery, particularly in the course of teacher preparation?

Answer to this question therefore becomes the concern of this paper. Specifically, the paper attempts to identify the major stakeholders in leadership positions in an academic environment like College of Education and carry out a conscious review of their styles of leadership in order to actually establish how they could better play their roles as leaders, while managing human and material resources in their respective and peculiar academic environment in order to promote quality service delivery.

Concerted effort is also made to identify some leadership challenges that are capable of constraining effective management of the human and material resources therein. Specific skills and suggestions on how to cope with such challenges are equally highlighted, with the ultimate goal of building more dynamic operations required for driving successful institutional vision and mission.

Conceptual Framework

An understanding of the concept of a leader is essential for a clearer perception of the concept of leadership. Wong (2007) describes a leader as "a person who influences a group towards the achievement of a goal". It involves person, people and purpose. A leader by this definition is therefore one who goes first and leads by example, so that others are motivated to follow him or her. To be a leader, a person must have a deep-rooted commitment to the goal that he will strive to achieve it, even if nobody follows him or her. Merriam-Webster (2020) also describes a leader as a person who has a commanding authority or influence.

Leadership according to Kevin Kruse (2013) is a "process of social influence, which maximises the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal. It involves a triangular relationship among the person, purpose and people. The very essence of leadership is for the leader to have the ability to visualise his/her goal

as an accomplished fact, that is, a thing already achieved. This goal can only be achieved when the leader realises that he alone cannot work towards its achievement, but only with the help of others.

According to Ololube (2013) leadership involves a type of responsibility aimed at achieving particular ends by applying the available resources (human and material) and ensuring a cohesive and coherent organization in the process. The basis of a good leadership is strong character and selfless devotion to an organization (Jenkins, 2013). From the perspective of employees, Abbasialiya (2010) observed that leadership is comprised of everything a leader does that affects the achievement of objectives and the well-being of employees and the organization.

Leadership therefore involves establishing a clear vision, sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly, providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision, coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stake holders.

It is however important to point out an essential observation which has to do with the fact that there is no one-size-fits all definition of leadership. Hence, if you ask Chief Executive Officers of different organisations to give a definition of leadership it is not impossible that one would get answers such as the following, highlighted by David Mielach (2012), which may be different or close to the earlier ones given in this paper:

- Leadership is inspiring others to pursue your vision within the parameters you set, to the extent that it becomes a shared effort, a shared vision, and a shared success. *Steve Zeitchik, CEO of Focal Point Strategies*
- Leadership is an act — a decision to take a stand, or step, in order to encourage, inspire or motivate others to move with you. *Kendra Coleman*
- Leadership is the ability to take an average team of individuals and transform them into superstars. The best leader is the one who inspires his workers to achieve greatness each and every day. *Jonas Falk, a chef and the CEO of OrganicLife*
- Leadership is actions committed by a person or group that produce an output or result. It simply helps people to get things done. It is not based on position in a hierarchy. *Robert Preziosi, Professor and past Chairman of Management at Nova South eastern University's Huizenga School of Business*
- Leadership is the ability to inspire motivation in others to move toward a desirable vision. *Josh Kuehler, President of Internal Consistency*
- Leadership is simply causing other people to do what the leaders want. *Bob Mason, retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel and founder of leadership firm- RLM Planning and Leadership*
- Leadership is employing your skills and knowledge, leveraged by your attitude to get the results you desire. *Philip Gafka, founder of leadership development firm Leap Associates*

These variations in the definition of leadership might be attributed to the various theories that have been propounded by scholars on the different styles used by leaders to manage their followers and the organizational resources. Lamb (2013) observed that these theories include:

- Situational theory which proposes that leaders choose the best course of action based upon situational conditions or circumstances;
- Transformational theory which focuses on leadership as the process by which a person engages with others and is able to create a connection that results in increased motivation and morality in both followers and leaders;
- Participative theory which suggests that the ideal leadership style is one that takes the input of others into account, with leaders encouraging participation and contributions from group members and helping group members to feel relevant and committed to the decision-making process; and
- Contingency theory which emphasises that no single leadership style is appropriate in all situations and that success depends solely on a number of variables which include, leadership style, quality of followers and situational features.

In summary, leadership is the art of leading others to deliberately create a result that wouldn't have happened otherwise. It is the ability to persuade others willingly to behave differently. It is the process, by which a person exerts influence over others, inspires, and directs their activities to achieve group or organizational goals using different styles as the leader prefers. The models of leadership as depicted by the theories are informed by specific styles or a combination of styles being employed by a leader.

Leadership styles
Leadership styles are the approaches used to motivate followers. Mehmood & Arif (2011) describe leadership style as the approach leaders use to deal with people in their teams. Donald Clack (2014) shares a similar opinion by describing leadership style as the "manner and approach of providing direction,

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implementing plans, and motivating people.

From Mahatma Gandhi and Winston Churchill, to Martin Luther King and Steve Jobs, there can be as many ways to lead people, as there are leaders. This is why different scholars have put forward varied but related explanations and frameworks on leadership styles. For instance, Mind Tools (2014) describes general leadership styles to include:

- ***Bureaucratic***: Here the leader follows rules vigorously and ensures that his/her people follow procedures precisely. It is a much less effective style in teams and organizations that rely on flexibility, creativity or innovation. Santrock (2007) however remarked that the drawback of this type of leadership is that it is ineffective in teams and organizations that rely on flexibility, creativity, or innovation.
- ***Charismatic***: This style involves the leader in inspiring and motivating his/her team members to perform and achieve organizational goals. Often called a transformational leadership style, charismatic leaders inspire eagerness in their teams and are energetic in motivating employees to move forward. The leader using this style would not want to believe that he/she can go wrong because he/she relies so much on his/her own charisma and ambitions. This a major disadvantage as such a leader places too much confidence in him/herself rather his/her employees.
- *Servant*: It involves leading simply by meeting the needs of the team. Here, the leader is a person without formal recognition as a leader. He leads by example with generosity and has high integrity. It can create high morale boosting among team members, although it is ill-suited to take quick decisions or meet tight deadlines.
- ***Transactional***: The style is premised on the idea that team members agree to obey their leader when they accept a job. It judges team members on performance, and the leader has a right to "punish" team members if their work doesn't meet an appropriate standard.

There is also the autocratic leadership style which is an extreme form of transactional leadership, where leaders have complete power over staff. Here, the staff and team members have little opportunity to make suggestions, even when such are likely to bring the best to the team or organization. Autocratic leadership has the advantage of incredible efficiency as it allows for quick decision and fast implementation of such decisions..

Goleman (2002) expanded these further by creating six leadership styles some of which are similar in focus to the ones given by Mind Tools (2014). These include:

- ***Coercive:*** The leader here expects and demands immediate compliance to his/her orders. He/she uses an approach that accomplishes tasks by ordering and dictating, even demeaning his/her followers at times. It is a "do what I say " style. It is capable of stifling followers, as their opinions are not sought before decisions are taken.

- ***Authoritative:*** The leader in this case establishes him/herself as being the expert in the organization; one who is visionary and forward-looking. He/she utilizes the followers or his team members to establish how they can by themselves get to the set target. This should not be confused with authoritarian leadership style, which incidentally is close to the coercive style.
- ***Affiliative:*** The style involves the leader in team building. He/she puts the followers first and makes them to have constant and regular feedback and praises when necessary. Where a leader uses the style, it is capable on the long run, of creating good team bonding and heightening team performance.
- ***Democratic:*** The style involves the leader in the art of making his followers decision makers. He/she acts as the chair for effective team decision as he/she encourages communication; listening to all opinions as a team. This style produces a work environment that employees can feel good about with heightened morale levels. It encourages creativity and promotes higher chances of job satisfaction among the members and productivity within the organisation.
- ***Pacesetting:*** This involves the leader in the setting of very high performance for standards for him/herself and the team as well as epitomising the behaviours they are seeking from other members of the team.
- ***Coaching:*** The leader adopting this style is concerned purely with helping others in their personal, and in their jo-related activities so that the set goal can be achieved. The leader helps team members to upskill and become successful in their development, working closely with, coaching, developing, and mentoring them to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to be successful. If it is well utilised, it is an effective style to develop a training or learning institution like ours.

Apart from all the highlighted leadership styles we could have other styles like:
- ♣ ***Paternalistic***: The leader here adopts a style that allows him/her to work with the followers by

acting as a father/mother figure and taking care of their subordinates as a parent would. In this style of leadership, the leader supplies complete concern for his followers or workers. In return, he receives the complete trust and loyalty of his/her people. Workers under this style of leader are expected to become totally committed to what the leader believes and will not strive off and work independently.

- ♣ *Laissez-faire*: It is a leadership style where all the rights and power to make decisions is fully given to the workers. The laissez-faire style is sometimes described as a "hands off" leadership style because the leader delegates the tasks to his/her followers while providing little or no direction to them. It is a kind of "let it be" style of leadership.
- ♣ *Transformational*: Here, the leader is not limited by his or her followers' perception. The main objective is to work to change or transform his or her followers and redirect their thinking. Leaders that follow the transformation style of leading **challenge** and **inspire** their followers with a sense of purpose and excitement. They also create a vision of what they aspire to be, and communicate this idea to others (their followers). This is very similar to the charismatic leadership style.

Research Questions

Having interacted with this variety of leadership styles, we need to pause here and raise some thought provoking questions, the answers to which will lead us to draw some conclusions on how well leaders in teacher preparation institutions, particularly Colleges of Education, have feared in the course of carrying out their leadership duties. These questions are:

1. Which of these style(s) is/are commonly used by leaders of teacher preparation institution like College of Education?
2. Have these leaders demonstrated clear readiness to combine some of these leadership styles to improve their present style(s) of leadership in managing human and material resources in their institutions?
3. What is the effect of leadership styles on the quality of the academic environment of a teacher training institution?
4. What are the leadership challenges in human and material resources management in teacher preparation institutions?

Methodology

A sample of sixty-two (62) administrators (Provosts) from sixty-two (62) Colleges of Education in Nigeria (24 from the North Central, 14 from the North West and 24 from the South West) were drawn from the list of all the Federal, State and Private Colleges of Education Nigeria. They were drawn to elicit their opinions about their style(s) of leadership when it comes to human and material resource management.

Data collected were collated analysed using simple percentages to answer the research questions earlier raised.

Findings

The commonly used leadership styles by Provosts of teacher preparation institutions like College of Education

A large percentage (78%) of the respondents were found to have expressed preference for the use of bureaucratic leadership style in the management of human and material resources in their respective position of leadership. Table 1 presents the pattern of commonly used leadership and these were found to include bureaucratic (78%), democratic (67%), transactional/transformational (58%) and charismatic (56%) leadership styles as shown in Table 1.

Leadership Style	Mostly Utilized	Sometimes Utilized	Never Utilized
Bureaucratic	78%	11%	11%
Charismatic	56%	24%	20%
Transactional/Transformational	58%	30%	12%
Authoritative/Coercive/Autocratic	34%	42%	24%
Democratic	67%	22%	11%
Servant	33%	40%	27%
Laissez-Faire	23%	9%	68%
Paternalistic	38%	44%	18%

Table 1: Leadership Styles Commonly used by Provosts

It was however discovered from the pattern of responses presented in Table 1 that there is a leadership style which a percentage as high as 68% claimed they have never utilized. This is probably because of the potential problems of the style which include, possible decrease in productivity and leadership passiveness resulting in avoidance of taking accountability for any misgivings.

Readiness of Provosts of Colleges of Education to combine leadership styles in human and material resources management

Responses provided by the subjects on the question pertaining to leaders' readiness to combine leadership styles in the management of human and material resources revealed that about 89% showed high degree of readiness. They expressed readiness to combine leadership styles depending on the situation they find themselves. Some of the styles they expressed readiness to combine include, bureaucratic, democratic, charismatic, transactional/transformational, paternalistic and servant leadership styles as the need arises.

As leaders, we must learn to combine leadership styles, even when it is obvious that it is a herculean task. It is only through this that we would be able to better manage our human and material resources in our academic environment. So a good leader uses combined leadership styles depending on what forces are involved between the leader and his/her followers in a situation.

Clark (2014) list some of the forces that influence the style to be used to include:
◦ Amount of time available.
◦ Are relationships based on respect and trust or on disrespect?
◦ Who has the information—the leader, the followers, or both?
◦ How well the employees are trained and how well the leader knows the task.
◦ Internal conflicts.
◦ Stress levels.
◦ Type of task, such as structured, unstructured, complicated, or simple.
◦ Laws or established procedures, such as training plans.

Effect of leadership styles on the quality of an academic environment

Majority of the respondents (83%) accept that leadership styles contribute significantly to the quality of an academic environment. For instance, they expressed the view that leaders using a democratic style of leadership build consensus through participation, also expect a higher level of excellence and self-direction in the human resources that are under their control. Likewise, the respondents exhibited a high degree of agreement (87%) with statements that present charismatic and paternalistic leadership styles as some of the styles that can help improve the followers' maintenance culture and attitude to work.

Leadership challenges in human and material resources management in an academic environment

The respondents expressed a high degree of positive perception to the identified challenges that are known to be constraining effective management of human and material resources in their Colleges. The pattern of such responses is presented in Table 2.

S/No.	Perceived Challenges by Leaders	% of Yes Responses	% of No Responses
1.	Inadequate finance	90`%	10%
2.	Political interference	95%	5%
3.	Poor maintenance culture of facilities	82%	18%
4.	Low level readiness for mentoring	96%	4%
5.	Relatively Poor academic culture	65%	29%
6.	Workforce's poor attitude to work	61%	31%

Table 2: Respondents Perception of Leadership Challenges

Inadequacy of fund for running our tertiary institutions in Nigeria, particularly in the State-owned ones had a 90% positive response. Leaders operating in any of such academic environments that aspire to be effective using a combination of styles, easily become constrained, especially with competing public service priorities. For instance, Ojudu (2012) observes that in Y2012, Nigeria voted less than 9% of her total budget on education. No matter how dynamic and charismatic a leader, where there is lack of the financial wherewithal and support from the proprietor, all efforts will be efforts in futility.

Similar positive responses were obtained for other challenges like Political interference (95%), low level readiness for mentoring (96%), and poor maintenance of facilities culture (82%). Unlike these challenges,

relatively poor academic culture and workforce's poor attitude to work were not perceived as challenges that are top rated (65% & 61% respectively) but they are still positively rated.

Recent experiences of governance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria have shown that politics has greatly influenced their governance structures. A large percentage of our Moderators/Visitors are known to now use appointment of tertiary institution managers e.g. Provosts, Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Chairmen of Governing Councils to compensate their party "faithfuls" and financiers. The after effect of this practice on leadership styles and the management of human and material resources in an academic environment are better imagined.

The 82% positive perception of poor maintenance culture is confirmation of what is happening across the nation's tertiary institutions. An average Nigerian is known to have non-challant attitude and care less about government property. Hence, sincere and forward--looking leaders would need to go extra miles to change this negative psyche of our people.

Furthermore, mentoring skills are not known to be something our leaders possess. Likewise, our young ones in our tertiary institutions do not seem to be ready to become mentees. They are on a fast track and this cannot promote good leadership succession plan, whereas, one of the qualities of good leadership is the ability to teach leadership to anyone with a desire to learn.

It is a common practice among workers in many organisations in the country to demonstrate a high degree of carefree posture to their primary responsibilities at work, and our academic environments are not an exception. This is probably the reason the respondents perceived the challenge as one of those constraining their leadership style. This is because good leaders can find it difficult to carry along a crop of followers with this kind of attitude in their academic environment.

Closely related to this is the challenge of poor academic culture which the respondents gave a 65% positive perception. Tertiary education teachers are usually expected to be creative individuals and experts in a particular field. They are generally also critical thinkers who should serve as good role models. This is part of what makes an academic culture, that is, a culture perpetuated mainly by example and peer support. A quick assessment of the academic culture of some of our academic environments in Nigeria will reveal that this is a common deficiency, particularly among the academic staff. This kind of culture cannot help the leaders in our academic environment to perform effectively for the institution to excel.

Recommendations

The vision and mission of any organisation are the major drivers of its operations for success. When leaders operating within such organisation are confronted by some of the challenges earlier rated by the respondents, they are not expected to get exasperated. Rather, they need to be proactive and explore a variety of coping mechanisms for ensuring that they are regularly in full control of their academic environment.

Hence, for the various levels of leadership in our academic environment to successfully operate in their interactions with the different categories and types of human and material resources, it is important to get ready (as advised by Daugherty & Williams, 2014) to:

- Tolerate frustration.
- Encourage participation.
- Regularly question themselves.
- Keep impulses under control.
- Win without exulting
- Lose without moping..
- Set realistic goals
- Acknowledge personal loyalties.
- Recognise contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence.
- Absorb risk taken by subordinates.
- Accept half-developed ideas.
- Make quick decisions when necessary.

- Listen effectively
- Move on after a mistake.
- Enjoy your work
- Demonstrate resilience – "Always view defeat as nothing more than the temporary postponement of success".
- Share power in decision-making.
- Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.
- Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion.

Furthermore, we need to explore a combination of some traits, particularly those characterised by

leadership styles found in Servant, Transformational, Affiliative, Democratic, and Pacesetting, to mention just but a few. These traits will involve our leaders in:

- Serving to change the status quo.
- Appealing to followers' values and sense of higher purpose.
- Raising followers motivation to exceed expectations by getting them to transcend self interest of the institution.
- Getting things done.
- Building relationships.
- Creating a "Can Do" environment.
- Teaching leadership to anyone with a desire to learn.
- Learning to serve first and then leading later.

So leadership challenges are better attended to where one believes in Kevin Kruse (2013) postulation on leadership, which goes thus;

I guess technically a leader could use social influence to just organize the efforts of others, but I think leadership is about maximizing the effort. It's not, *"Hey everyone, let's line up and get to the top of that hill someday." But rather, "Hey, see that hill? Let's see how fast we can get to the top…and I'll buy the first round for anyone who can beat me up there."*

As for the challenges relating to inadequate financing, leaders, especially at the top management level must be ready to be enterprising, prudent and exploratory. This could be by undertaking a series of reforms aimed at promoting consultancy thereby allowing the institution and staff members to earn extra money; persuading and attracting funding from donors and international development agencies.

Conclusion

This presentation has provided an exposé on leadership and leadership styles and the effect of leadership styles on the management of these resources. It succinctly identified some of the challenges that can constrain the leadership while faithfully trying to drive the vision and mission of the institution for productivity. As a way out, strategies and mechanisms for coping with these challenges were recommended.

From the presentation, we concluded that leadership therein demands styles that promote intelligence, trustworthiness, humaneness, courage, and discipline. This is strongly supported by Sun Tuz (2007) who observes that,

"Reliance on intelligence alone results in rebelliousness. Exercise of humaneness alone results in weakness. Fixation on trusts results in folly. Dependence on the strength of courage results in violence. Excessive discipline and sternness in command result in cruelty. When one has all five virtues together, each appropriate to its function, then one can be a leader". — Sun Tzu

Leadership in tertiary institutions like Colleges of Education will need to be seen first as a personal journey of exploration, then a rally of others. Leaders must be ready to maintain our credibility as leaders by making an acronym coined by Kouzes and Posner (2010) part of their way of life. This, they call DWYSYWD, that is, **"Do What You Say You Will Do".** For our tertiary institutions to be led by their leaders to provide qualitative service delivery, the poor maintenance culture must be replaced with one that promotes the ethics of repair, reuse and recycle.

Leaders of tertiary institutions must be ready to get involved in bridging the gap between theory and practice by exploring dominant and useful leadership styles for the purpose of building a solid basis in theory and practical application. They need to discover the most appropriate leadership style, or a combination of styles that will best enable their institution achieve results in terms of improving administrative performance, team-building, and enhanced individual and school innovation in teaching and learning.

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