

## **CREATING AWARENESS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH EFFECTIVE STAFF MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE**

By

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### **Abstract**

*The thematic trust of the study was Creating awareness of transformational leadership through effective staff management in secondary schools in Rivers state. It is a descriptive study. The population consisted of seven thousand six hundred and nineteen (7,619) teachers of government owned senior secondary schools in Rivers state. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw a sample size of two hundred and thirty six ( 236) teachers. Instrument for data collection was a 20- itemed structured questionnaire, ' Creating Awareness of Transformational Leadership through Effective Staff Management Questionnaire (CATLESMQ), with a reliability index of 0.86. Data was analysed using the mean and rank order while the z-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study include creating a climate of trust and confidence, encouraging team work spirit among staff adhering to work ethics as stipulated, among others. The study made some suggestions which include that school administrators should create a climate of trust and confidence where staff are seen as colleagues and partners in progress, promote team spirit among staff place challenges that encourage staff development, among others.*

**Keywords:** Awareness, Transformational Leadership, Effective Staff Management, Secondary Schools

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### **Introduction**

Leadership is a crucial factor in the life and times of any system, society or organization. It is the key and backbone to the progress, success (even failure), impact and sustenance of any system. It largely contributes to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of any organization, including the secondary school. Leadership is a part of management that involves two or more persons whereby one influences the other(s) to willingly and enthusiastically work towards the attainment of the organization's goal(s). The leader or head of a secondary school is the principal. He is also seen as an administrator and manager as his key tasks are those factors that involve leading the school to achieve the set goals and objectives as well as maintenance of a cordial and productive relationship with staff. The overall climate of the school rests solely on his shoulders.

Successful leadership in schools entails developing and managing people as well as managing change and innovations in the teaching-learning process. Leaders need to match a given situation with the

appropriate leadership style to ensure effectiveness in the school organization. Leadership in schools, especially the secondary schools, has not embraced the new paradigm in leadership which is the transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership means leaders' ability to change followers. In its simplest form, it is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to perform well and achieve the goals of the organization. Murphy and Dodge (2004) in Okonkwo (2011) said that transformational leadership is the leaders' ability to motivate followers to rise above their goals for greater good of their organization. In the same line of thought, Osisioma (2012) referred to it as a leadership that has the ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve their vision and are able to carry the staff along in the realization of the vision of the organization. This description received the support of Meyer and Slechta (2002) in Onuselogu (2012) that it is a leadership that provides inspiring change and empowering followers to achieve greater heights to improve themselves and to improve organizational process. It fosters engagement of employees in organizational objectives (Stone, Rusell & Peterson, 2004).

It is a leadership dimension that is built upon four critical components that make transformational leadership forward-moving, contemporary and ageless. These components which have been extolled by various scholars (Meyer & Slecheta, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2000; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Avolio & Bass, 2002; Anyamele, 2004; Osisioma, 2012; etc.) are popularly referred to as the 4I's of transformational leadership and succinctly summarized in Ohia and Chuu-Uzomah (2015: 189-190) as follows:

- i. **Idealized Influence:** Here, the leaders build trust and respect in the followers by exhibiting high standard of ethical and moral conduct, sharing risks with followers and considering the needs of others as priority. They use power judiciously to move members towards accomplishing the mission and vision of the organization.
- ii. **Inspirational Motivation:** Whereby the leader motivates and inspires the followers by displaying enthusiasm and optimism; seeing no task as insurmountable and promoting team spirit to achieve school goals.
- iii. **Intellectual Stimulation:** Where leaders encourage followers to be innovative and proactive by reframing problems and approaching old situations in new ways, designing new procedures and programmes to foster learning and encouraging critical thinking, and
- iv. **Individual Consideration:** Where leaders carry staff along by giving empathy and support to staff, acting as mentors, paying attention to each individual's needs for achievement and growth; and placing challenges before the followers.

As a leadership dimension that promotes, sustains, inspires, motivates and supports the workforce, it is important that principals move up to transformational leadership to achieve effective administration and quality educational output. These are the ultimate gains of an effectively managed staff under transformational leadership.

The staff considered in this study are the teachers. They are the largest most important input in the school organization besides the students (Fadipe, 2003). They are the pivot of any educational system. They translate and interpret government educational policies and issues to the students. They have their attributes, abilities, talents, influence, experience, expertise and quality which enable them to be resourceful and productive in the school organization.

Effective staff management involves harnessing and skillfully manipulating the totality of these possessions to achieve educational goals as well as making the staff achieve their life goals. The onus of staff management in secondary school lies with the principal who incidentally is the human resources manager (Igwe, 2006). Staff management is an aspect of resource management in the school organization that has to do with the effective handling and control of members of the organization to ensure quality administration and educational output. It has become more interactional than ever before so as to match pace with the

dynamic and progressive outlook of the secondary school level in particular (Obasi & Asodike, 2007). In other words, the modern staff management considers what is right for the organization as well as what is good and beneficial for individual employees. To achieve this successfully, the leader chooses the leadership dimension that will ensure cooperation, participation and commitment of the staff. Adopting the individualized consideration (IC) component of the transformational leadership by the principals, ensures that this is achieved.

Similarly, Edem (2006) opined that the principal can also achieve effective staff management through;

- i. making the teachers share in policy decision-making;
- ii. procuring sufficient working tool for them;
- iii. assigning them reasonable teaching load;
- iv. assisting them to improve their teaching skills;
- v. being attentive to their material and social problems.

Poor educational output starts with poorly motivated and non-committed teachers who have no interest in performing their jobs. The numerous problems permeating the secondary school system such as indiscipline, poor reading habits, examination malpractice, cultism, persistent poor academic performance of students in both internal and external examinations are all evidence of how well the teachers are performing their jobs (Ajayi & Oguntoye, 2003). As the leader, the principal owes it as a duty to modify the attitude of the staff and motivate them to put in their best.

In addition, staff motivation through incentives has the capacity to increase staff morale, raise productivity, inspire staff loyalty and drive performance effectiveness (Obasi & Asodike, 2007). Incentives, which Mathis and Jackson (2001) defined as compensation that rewards an employee for efforts beyond normal performance expectations can be financial or non-financial. When the salary is poor, financial incentive is effective whereas non-financial incentive is most useful when the salary is buoyant. Such non-financial incentives include giving small interest-free loan scheme, job enlargement and job rotation which involves changing and giving them administrative jobs periodically.

Team-building is another means of staff management. It entails making staff work or carry out jobs like a family, encouraging each other in several ways to ensure that the set goal is achieved. It involves carrying each other along willingly and enthusiastically to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in achieving determined goals. This can be done by consultation which makes staff more cohesive and united, promoting loyalty and togetherness (Obasi & Asodike, 2007).

Vision-sharing is a component of transformational leadership which can be used to achieve staff management. Barnett and McCornick (2003) asserted that vision-sharing could arouse teachers to be more committed and motivated to their jobs. The management and staff jointly establish means and priorities to achieve the school vision including transforming personal values of staff to support the visions and goals of the school. With vision clearly stated and shared, Northouse (2004) confirmed that the leadership will ultimately pave way for effective management of staff to achieve predetermined goals. The shared understanding of how to achieve the school goals instills a greater sense of commitment, legitimacy and belongingness in the teachers. Participative decision-making is among the ways of effective management of staff whereby teachers are involved in school decisions and other decisions affecting them. This, in the submissions of Obasi (2004), and Nnabuo, Okorie, Agabi and Igwe (2005) can be achieved through staff meetings, delegations of duty and staff orientation among others.

The need for staff development and empowerment is an aspect of staff management that deserves attention. Staff development is a means whereby staff (teachers) needs are identified, systematically harmonized and carried out to meet the changes and demands in education (Chuu-Uzomah, 2016). The principals are included in this, for it is only trained and developed leaders that know and appreciate

developing and empowering others (Obasi & Asodike, 2007). There is need to continuously train the teachers through teacher education such as sandwich programme and conferences, etc., and keep them updated with the latest teaching methods, skills and learning practices. With the present knowledge-based society where a large volume of knowledge is generated due to technological advancement, nothing less can be desirable for a teacher who must remain relevant and productive in the teaching profession.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, leadership in schools, especially the secondary school, has remained tied to the traditional dimensions of autocratic, democratic and *liaisezz-faire* or at best contingent leadership. These styles of leadership have outlived their usefulness in modern leadership and fast losing their grip at producing the desired quality administration through every aspect of school management especially staff management.

It has therefore become very imperative to introduce a leadership dimension, the transformational leadership, and create its awareness through effective staff management to showcase the effectiveness of this paradigm shift. In other words, what prompted the study was to ascertain how effective staff management can be used to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Aim and Objective of the Study**

The aim of the study was to create awareness of transformational leadership through effective staff management in secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objective of the study was to examine the ways in which effective staff management can be used to create awareness of the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Research Question**

In what ways can effective staff management be used to create awareness for the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the ways effective staff management can be used to create awareness for the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Methodology**

The study was done using the descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of seven thousand six hundred and nineteen (7,619) teachers of government owned senior secondary schools in Rivers State (Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, 2017).

The stratified random sampling technique was used to obtain a sample size of two hundred and thirty-six (236) teachers made up of 25% of two hundred and seventy-six (276) teachers from rural areas and 25% of six hundred and sixty-seven (667) female teachers drawn from both urban and rural senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A 20 – item questionnaire titled, “Creating Awareness of Transformational Leadership through Effective Staff Management Questionnaire” (CATLESMQ) was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire had two sections. Section A was used to collect the demographic data while section B was used to collect answers to the research variables. The instrument was modeled after the 4-point modified Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. Instrument was validated by subjecting it to the able scrutiny of experts in educational management. Their inputs ensured that the instrument was valid enough for the study. Reliability of instrument yielded an index of 0.86 using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Methods. Data were analyzed using the mean, and rank order to answer the research question. Criterion mean of 2.50

was used to reject (if below) or accept (if 2.50 and above). The z-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results and Discussion

### Research Question

In what ways can staff management be used to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State?

**Table 1: Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and rank order scores of teachers in urban and rural senior secondary schools on ways staff management can be used to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State**

S/N	Items	Urban school teachers n=167	Rural school teachers N=69	Mean set	Rank order	Decision
	<b>Ways of using staff management to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary school in Rivers State include;</b>	<b>(<math>\bar{x}_1</math>)</b>	<b>(<math>\bar{x}_2</math>)</b>	<b><math>\left(\frac{\bar{x}_1 + \bar{x}_2}{2}\right)</math></b>		
1.	By creating a climate of trust and confidence.	3.60	3.71	3.66	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
2.	By adhering to work ethics.	3.60	3.70	3.65	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
3.	By transforming personal values of staff to support the visions and goals of the school.	3.34	2.78	3.06	14 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
4.	By promoting team work spirit among staff.	3.60	3.70	3.65	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
5.	By making staff go extra mile to achieve result.	2.73	2.74	2.74	18 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
6.	By placing challenges before staff for staff development.	2.72	2.87	2.80	17 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
7.	By encouraging shared decision-making practices with the staff.	3.02	3.04	3.03	15 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
8.	By assigning teachers reasonable teaching load.	3.13	3.39	3.26	12 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
9.	By encouraging staff to be innovative.	3.60	3.71	3.66	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
10.	By making teaching facilities available.	3.60	3.70	3.65	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
11.	By leaders acting as role models.	3.90	3.91	3.91	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
12.	By the use of reward system to encourage staff to work smart.	3.60	3.58	3.59	8 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
13.	By sharing the vision of the school with staff.	3.50	3.48	3.49	9 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
14.	By compromising with staff discipline.	1.80	1.84	1.82	18 <sup>th</sup>	Disagreed
15.	By providing safe and healthy work environment.	3.80	3.84	3.82	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agreed
16.	By being autocratic.	1.43	1.38	1.41	19 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
17.	By allowing staff behave the way they like.	1.43	1.38	1.41	19 <sup>th</sup>	Disagreed
18.	By encouraging staff development programmes.	3.43	3.38	3.41	11 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
19.	By inspiring staff loyalty through inspirational motivation.	3.20	3.14	3.17	13 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
20.	By involving teachers in a well-defined mechanism that makes work a way of life.	3.50	3.48	3.49	9 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>3.13</b>		

The data from the table above shows the ways of using staff management to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State. A cursory look shows that teachers in both urban and rural secondary schools agreed that compromising with staff discipline (item 14), being autocratic and allowing staff behave the way they like (items 16 and 17) are not among the ways of creating awareness of transformational leadership through staff management as these items scored below the criterion mean of 2.50.

The respondents agreed to the rest of the items on the table as ways of using staff management to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.



## Test of Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of teachers in urban and rural secondary schools on the use of staff management to create awareness for the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Table 2: z-test analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on ways of using staff management to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.**

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean <math>\bar{x}</math></i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>Z-Cal</i>	<i>Z-Critical</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1.	Urban Teachers	167	3.13	1.48				
2	Rural teachers	69	3.14	1.49	2.34	0.031	$\pm 1.96$	Accept Ho

Table 2 shows that calculated z-value of 0.031 is less than the critical z-value of  $\pm 1.96$  at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that; there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers in urban and rural secondary schools on the use of staff management to create awareness for the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State is therefore accepted.

In other words, both categories of respondents (teachers) are of the opinion that staff management can be used as an avenue to create awareness of the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.

## Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the ways of using the management of staff to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools include; creating a climate of trust and confidence, adhering to work ethics as stipulated, transforming personal values of staff to support the visions and goals of the school, providing team work spirit among staff and making staff go extra mile to achieve result.

In addition, placing challenges before staff for staff development, encouraging shared decision-making practices with the staff, assigning teachers reasonable teaching load as well as encouraging staff to be innovative are among the ways of using staff management to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools. These findings are in tandem with the findings made by Ebong and Kaegon (2008) which revealed that school principals are now, more than ever before, involving staff in decision-making communication network and feedback in school administration. Ozaralli (2003) in a study recommended shared decision-making with the staff as a means of recognition of teachers' intellectual powers. When this happens, they become more participative, creative, innovative and satisfied.

Furthermore, the study revealed that leaders acting as role models, the use of reward system to encourage staff to work smart and sharing the vision of the school with staff are among the ways of using staff management to create awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools. This is why it is said that transformational leadership redesigns perceptions and values, changes the expectations and aspirations of both leaders and the led. It is a leadership process that is in a state of flux. In line with the findings of this study, Osisioma (2012) asserted that transformational leadership style is a key technique to ensuring the achievement of group goals and ultimately job satisfaction. This in turn arouses teachers to be more committed and motivated in their job which is a good way of staff management, creating an enhanced school performance. Anyamele (2004) also confirmed that it is a leadership that arouses the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both the leaders and the led.

Lastly, the findings of the study showed that providing safe and healthy work environment, encouraging staff development programmes, inspiring staff loyalty through inspirational motivation by the leaders and involving teachers in a well-defined mechanism that makes work a way of life, are also ways of creating awareness of transformational leadership in secondary schools. Mathis and Jackson (2001) agreed that administrators are obliged to provide staff with safe and healthy work environment as well as ensuring

that staff are safety conscious. This is important because it is only a healthy teacher that can impart knowledge as well as carry out other assigned school duties and responsibilities. In his study, Nwabueze (2010) acknowledged that staff development assists the workforce of an organization such as the school to acquire relevant, desirable and expertise knowledge, ideas, skills and competencies that enable them perform effectively and efficiently towards achieving the school goals. This, in the main, is the stand-point of transformational leadership that makes it the most preferred dimension of leadership.

Result from the test of hypothesis on the use of staff management to create awareness for the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools showed that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of teachers in rural and urban areas on the issue. This means that they all agreed that staff management can be used to create awareness for the adoption of transformational leadership in secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the purpose and findings of this study, it is obvious that effective management of staff following the ways outlined in the study, will place the secondary school organization on the path of adopting transformational leadership; a leadership dimension that not only creates a climate of trust and confidence between the leader and the led, but also encourages innovative practices, amongst staff, shared decision-making with the staff, sharing the vision of the school with the staff among others. The ultimate benefit is improved quality secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. School administrators should create a climate of trust and confidence where the staff are seen as colleagues and partners in progress for the benefit of the school organization.
- ii. School administrators (principals) are expected to transform personal values of staff so that they support the visions and goals of the school. Individual values and visions should be congruent with those of the school organization.
- iii. By their operational routine, principals should promote team spirit among staff, placing challenges that encourage staff development, and assisting the staff to work smart and put in their best. They should avoid autocratic administration.
- iv. School administrators should not compromise with staff discipline. Erring staff should be disciplined appropriately and hardworking staff encouraged and rewarded.
- v. The principal has a duty of care; to assign teachers reasonable working load, making teaching facilities available, rewarding staff appropriately and providing safe and healthy work environment.
- vi. Principals are called upon to encourage shared decision-making practices with the staff. This enables them to appreciate the responsibilities and challenges of leadership, giving rise to a situation where the leaders and followers help each other to advance to higher level of morale and motivation.

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