

**PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON  
ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT AREA, LAGOS STATE**

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**Abstract:**

The study examined the perceived influence of Leadership Style on Organisational performance in Selected Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted using questionnaire as the major instrument. Purposive sampling method was employed to select 160 respondents from ten selected Local Governments Areas in Lagos State. Two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level, using chi-square and t-test. The findings showed that there is a significant relationship between Leadership style adopted and Organisational performance of the respondents. The result equally revealed a significant difference between workers' satisfaction and Leadership style if a set of expectation of an individual has not been meet. Based on the findings, it was suggested among other things that effective communication must flow from top level management and staff in the council should be very cordial. Also, the conditions of service in the council should be designed in such a way that it will encourage employees for enhanced Organisational performance. The management must recognize the fact that an Organisation is not only an economic and technical unit, but also a social unit.

**Key Words:** Leadership, Leadership Style, Organisation.

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## Introduction

For a longtime Leadership has attracted much interest worldwide. This is because Leadership which is found in groups with more than one person is central to our everyday lives in the public and private sector. We are constantly reminded that groups hardly function without effective Leadership performance. Research has shown that in the business world today, Leadership style is a key factor in every Organisation. Therefore Leadership is the process of influencing others to work willingly towards an Organisation's goal with confidence and keenness (Ogunbameru and Oribabor, 2003).

The main objectives of any firm is to ensure its survival and this can only be achieved through the coming together of people to work in realization of their objectives. Among these people there has to be some selected few who will lead the others and as such a leader tends to emerge alongside a style. Every Organisation needs to be skillful, identifying and resourceful in managing the environmental problems in which it operates (Nankervis, Compton and Baird, 2002). When taking to cognizance of this question that comes to mind is how valid and necessary do Organisation need a Leadership style to achieve its performance (Cole, 2005).

In order to do this, we need to look at the various styles of Leadership necessary as well as to examine some definition of leadership. According to Bankole, (2003) Leadership therefore can be said to occur when a person induces other people to work towards some pre-determined objectives. In essence, a leader is a person who inspires others to work towards a goal.

Bankole, (2003) stressed further that an effective leadership, which emerges when a leader or manager successfully manipulates other people to willingly and enthusiastically strive towards the accomplishment of set tasks or objectives.

As Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens, (2002) argued, disagreement about the definition of Leadership stems from the fact that it involves a complex interaction between the leader, followers and situation. This is evident as some researchers define Leadership in terms of personality and physical traits, while others believe Leadership is represented by a set of prescribed behaviours. There is however a common thread among the different definitions of leadership. The common thread is social influence.

The succinct definition of Leadership can therefore be elaborated, for the purpose of this study, to “a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach Organisational goals” (Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens, 2002).

Therefore, Leadership style refers specifically to the pattern of philosophies, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and assumptions an individual has about Leadership which influences how, a manager, actually behaves while managing people/subordinates (Mullins, 2007). More specifically, it is a set of expectation an individual has, as to how to use his Leadership position to involve himself and to involve other people in the achievement of target results.

In a nutshell, Leadership style is not a basket of tricks or skills. It is the quality, character and courage of the person who in the leader. It is a matter of ethics, moral compass, and willingness not be remain vulnerable. The more positive the Leadership style, the better the Organisational performance and vice versa is all that this research intended to examine in general and in Badagry Local Government area in particular.

Leadership is a very important Organisational concept with far-reaching implications for Organisational performances. The success or failure of any Organisation depends on the leader who is accountable for his activities to many constituencies. This is especially the case of politics with multiple interests. Leadership is the most talked about activity in any Organisation. This discourse focuses on how the style adopted by the political leader i.e the “Local Government chairmen” enhances the administrative and attitude of his employees and overall Organisational performance (Atkinson, 2004). A change in Leadership usually generates a lot of interest because Leadership is one of the most popular explanations for success or failure, performance of Organisations. History is often explained in terms of the action of leaders. When government or companies do well we attribute it to good Leadership those that fail are equally blamed on leaders. We seek to effect change in the office of the chief executive because we want to inject “new leadership” into the system; down the line four years later another same group advocate a new person of the same reason “new leadership”. It is acclaimed, when they loose, they are asked to resign by the same fans. The situation is no less so in schools often problems of low student achievement inadequate finding, inability to negotiate good condition of service of lecturers, are attributed to poor leadership. In short, there is a general belief that the Leadership can make a difference (Ajonbadi, 2002).

Scholars and researchers try to unravel the mystery of Leadership so that they can explain it to the understanding of all concerned parties. It is against this background, that this research work tends to X-ray the concern that engage the attention on some issues like the definition of leadership, process and right application of Leadership style and what distinguishes performing from nonperformance leaders. The leaders themselves are also interested in these issues so that they can perform better on their job from the vantage of knowledge (Ogundele, 2005).

### **Related Literature: An operational Definition of Concepts**

Heinz (1994) cited in Rosenboom (2001) described Leadership as the act or process of influencing people so they will share willing in achieving Organisational goals. Nwanchukwu (1998) argued that Leadership is a social influence process for the attainment of goals.

Cole (2005) define Leadership as a dynamic process whereby one man influences other to contribute voluntarily to the realization and attainment of the goals objectives, aspiration of values of the group that is representing the essence of Leadership is to help a group or an Organisation to attain sustainable development and growth.

Peretomode and Peretomode (2005) from his review of the literature identified some aspects of the definition of Leadership to include:

1. The ability to persuade others to work towards defined objectives enthusiastically, the human factor that keeps a group cohesive and motivate towards goals.
2. Interpersonal influence directed through the communication process, toward the attainment of goals;
3. Initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing or changing Organisation goals.
4. Influencing the actions behaviour, beliefs and goals of one being influenced.

From these, some element of Leadership can be identified for one thing Leadership is not an isolated activity but one that involves others followers or the leader. Leadership involves the use of influence as the distinct from forcible domination or coercions. The process of Leadership involves an unequal distribution of power among leaders and group members. The giving of directions for example flow from leader to the subordinates and not vice-versa. Leadership is a

process, which means that it is a continuous, ongoing activity directed toward the accomplishment of goals as its ultimate outcome.

Leadership is also defined as follow: “to show the way by going first,” to proceed; to guide by the hand; to direct, to conduct. Leadership the office of a leader or conduct those acting as leader of a particular Organisation any group; ability to lead (Wikipedia, 2009).

Tannebaum et al (1991) cited in Price, (2004) defined Leadership as “interpersonal influence exercise in a situation and directed through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specialized goal or goals”.

Koontz and O'Donnell (1972) defined Leadership as “influencing people to follow in the achievement of a common goal”. Hersey and Blanchard (2001), after an extensive review of the literature on Leadership offered their own definition thus:

Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goals, achievement in a given situation. From this definition, it follows that the Leadership process is a function of leader, the followers and other situational variable.  $L = f(l, f, s)$ .

Where:

L = Leadership

L = Leader

F = Followers

S = Situation

They observed that by inference, Leadership could be perceived as an act of influencing others towards achieving an end deserved by the leader. This type of situation could occur anywhere, be it in business, educational institutions, churches, mosque, hospital, political parties or even families. As Hersey and Blanchard (2001) observed.

Anytime an individual is attempting to influence the behaviour of someone else, that individual is the potential leader and the person subject to the influence attempt is the potential followers, no matter whether that person is the boss, colleague (associate) subordinate, friend, relative, or a group.

Leadership in the words of Agbonifoh, et al (2005) involves the process of accomplishing goals with and through people. A leader, in his attempt to achieve success must be people and task focused. The hall-mark of efficient and effective leader lies in the delicate balancing of task and human relation practice.

Sherlekar (2001) observed as follows:

Leaders are responsible of future leadership. They leaders are responsible of such things as sense of quality in the institution, of whether or not the institution is open to influence and change. Effective leaders encourage contrary options, an important source of vitality.

Imhanlahimhin (1999) cited in Wolf, (2008) defined Leadership in a formal Organisation (such as Local Government council) to refer to the behaviour pattern which the recognized leader of the group brings to bear on the members for the accomplishment of the cooperative objectives. This may be through encouragement, open decision making process, persuasion, influence, identification with group otherwise. It depends on the Leadership style situation.

From these definitions, it is quite clear that the function of Leadership is to induce or persuade, by any legitimate means, all subordinate or followers to contribute willingly to Organisational objectives in accordance with their maximum capacity. If senior and junior staff in a given Organisation could work willingly with zeal and confidences at all times, perhaps a leader (i.e. Local Government chairman) would not have been necessary.

It is difficult to have “self –starters” in an Organisation who are ready to work enthusiastically with high morale at their maximum capacity (Ogunbameru and Oribabor, 2003). A few may exist but sooner or later, they get corrupted by the lazy majority. It is against such well exposed background that the needs for a leader arise to control, direct and guide subordinates toward the achievement of the Organisational goals. Leadership is closely link or related to the principle of harmony of objectives. If leaders can induce subordinates to believe that their personal objectives in the Organisation are in harmony with those of the Organisation, the easier it become for them to direct the followers.

Based on the foregoing, this study sought to find out the perceived influence of leadership style on Organisational Performance in selected Local Government area, Lagos State, Nigeria.

## Research Hypotheses

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Leadership style adopted and Organisational performance.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workers' satisfaction and Leadership style.

**Research design:** The study adopted survey research design because the researcher did not intend to manipulate the independent variable.

**Participants:** A sample of 160 respondents from ten Organisations in ten selected Local Government was selected using purposive sampling method. The sample consists of 113 males and 47 females. The age range of the respondents is between 21 and 55 years. Their minimum qualification is GCE O/L or WAEC.

**Instrumentation:** A 12-item self-constructed questionnaire tagged: Leadership Style and perceived Organisational performance of Selected Local Government Workers (LSPOPSLGW) was used for the study. A copy of the questionnaire was given to experts in measurement and evaluation from Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos State, Nigeria. The instrument was pilot tested using test re-test method and reliability co-efficient of 0.82 was obtained. The instrument was formatted on four point response rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

**Procedure:** The copies of the questionnaire were administered personally by the researcher with the help of two experienced research assistants. Two hundred and ten (210) copies of the questionnaire were distributed but 183 copies were retrieved, out of which 160 copies representing 76.2 percent were found valid for analysis.

**Method of Data Analysis:** Data were analysed using simple percentage and frequency count for the demographic data of the respondents while inferential statistics of chi-square and t-test were used to test hypothesis one and hypothesis two respectively.

**Results:** Table 1 indicates the analysis of items 7, 8, 9 on the questionnaire to find out the relationship between Leadership Style and Organisational Performance of workers in the Selected Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Leadership style adopted and Organisational performance.

**Table1: Leadership Style and Organisational Performance of Local Government Workers.**

Items	SA		A		D		SD		Total
	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	
7	30	36.3	91	76	35	40.7	04	07	160
8	31	36.3	78	76	41	40.7	10	07	160
9	48	36.3	59	76	46	40.7	07	07	160
Total	109		228		122		21		480

The summary of the data analysed to test hypothesis one is presented in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Summary of Chi – Square on hypothesis one.**

Calculated Value (X <sup>2</sup> cal)	Critical Value (X <sup>2</sup> tab)	Degree of Freedom (df)	Level of significance
16.43	21.59	6	0.05

From the table above:

X<sup>2</sup> calculated value = 16.43

X<sup>2</sup> table = 21.59

Since the X<sup>2</sup>cal (16.43) is greater than X<sup>2</sup>tab (21.59) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected, which implies that there is a significant relationship between Leadership style and Organisational performance of workers in organisation in the Selected Local Government Area of Lagos State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between workers' satisfaction and Leadership Style.



**Table 3: A t – test comparison of the workers’ satisfaction and Leadership Style**

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	T	P
Workers get satisfied on their job with the present Leadership style adopted in their Local Government.	70	78.20	8.75	158	3.25	<0.05
Workers get work in their Local Government with high remuneration but without effective Leadership Style.	90	72.15	8.22			

As shown in the Table 3 above, there is a significant difference between workers’ satisfaction and Leadership Style. ( $t = 3.25$ ;  $df = 158$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

**Discussion of findings:** The findings of this study had shown that effective Leadership Style has influence on workers’ satisfaction in Local Government. This is so because the results of the two hypotheses tested in the study revealed that there is strong relationship between Leadership style and Organisational performance of workers in selected organization in the selected Local Government area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Also, it was also discovered that employees like to work in an Organisation with high remuneration but without effective leadership.

This means that virtually all public staff emphasize on money than their work. Employees were adequately represented where important decisions were taken. This statement was backed up with Imhanlahimhin (1999) cited in Wolf, (2008) explained that Leadership in a formal Organisation (such as Local Government council) to refer to the behaviour pattern which the recognized leader of the group brings to bear on the members for the accomplishment of the cooperative objectives.

Virtually all the respondents see leaders as an inspiration/ motivation towards their duty/job. It was at the same time discovered that power and decision making process was not concentrated in the hands of the leaders alone and according to Rosenbloom, (2001) he suggested that “power is the extent to which the formal rationality of an individual determines social actions within the social relation. There was significant relationship between effective Leadership style and Organisational performance. This was supported by Nwagwu et al, (2005) that Regardless of how the leader comes to his office, the effective leader is that leader who can meet the criteria of

success. Workers got satisfied on their job with the present Leadership style adopted by the Organisation.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The need for an effective Leadership style has been the point of emphasis throughout this study. From the findings, it is possible to conclude that effective Leadership style acts as a tool for achieving Organisational performance. It is very apparent that styles acts as a tool for achieving Organisational performance. It is very apparent that styles of Leadership are categorized under democratic style, autocratic style and laissez-faire style, with democratic style of Leadership being recognized as the most effective in most Organisations. This assumption holds because of the fact that workers enjoy leaders with good inter-personal relationships, leaders that delegate authority to subordinates and leaders who create an atmosphere that is conducive enough for the workers to participate in Organisational decision process.

Furthermore, in order to achieve corporate objective there is need to recognize the goals and objectives of the individual constituting the Organisation, otherwise, Organisational goals may not be easily achievement. Leadership role is an indispensable in every Organisation that needs to grow. The age we live in is a psychic age as distinct from a physical age. We live in psychic age which has decided to use Leadership as means of installing happiness on our earth so; Leadership has to possess several distinguishing characteristics that will equip it for the great welfare work.

It is worthwhile to conclude at the juncture that leaders are indispensable in Organisation like Local Governments in Lagos State otherwise; no one will exist to influence workers towards the attainment of Organisational target.

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