

Research Article

NEXUS BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AND PEACE EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Peace is a concept of societal friendship and harmony in the nonexistence of violence and hostility. Generally, peace is usually used to mean a lack of conflict. It is on this premise that this study examined the nexus between principals' leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. Descriptive research design of correlational type was used. Stratified and random sampling technique was employed to select 10 basic schools and 200 teachers'. The questionnaires titled "Principals' Leadership Styles and Peace Education Questionnaires (PLSPEQ)" were used to collect data from the respondents. Three research hypotheses were formulated and tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation method. The findings of the study revealed that there was significant relationship between principals' leadership styles and peace education in Ilorin West Local Government Area Secondary Schools, Kwara State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the principals should consistently evaluate their leadership styles to enhance peaceful coexistence and effective service delivery in schools. School authority should serve as an ambassador of peace education through school community relations, seminars, conferences and workshops on leadership training to be organized for school principals to monitor their administrative effectiveness.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Peace Education, Secondary Schools

Introduction

Peace education has been globally recognized due to increasing recourse to the use of violence in responding to conflict or disagreement among individuals, groups and communities (Günçavdı, 2020; Idowu & Bamidele, 2018; Jameel & Ahmad, 2020). The United Nations (2013) affirmed that peace building is a complex and long process requiring the establishment of a climate of tolerance and respect for the truth. It encompasses a wide range of political, development, humanitarian and human rights programmes and mechanism Therefore, it is

necessary to strengthen the foundations of peace building process through the inculcation of relevant skills, attitudes and knowledge for transforming stereotype, expanding spaces of understanding, living peacefully with one another and having a peaceful nation.

Peace education has brought in empowerment strategies which mainly aim to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills to prevent and manage conflict at intra/inter personal or intra/inter group levels (Enu, 2016; Svensson & Mahoney, 2020; Klein, 2019). Fisk (2006) stated that peace education encompasses development of ideologies, values, attitudes, standards and sensitivities to others and could be translated into such that they are moved to take action by new different approaches. Badrkhani (2020) opined that peace education is unique because it deals with relations between groups, not individuals". By and large, peace is a culture and a people's way of life, which can be promoted or propagated through education provision. Therefore, the whole essence of peace education is to promote the culture of non-violence or against the culture of violence in response to conflict between individuals and groups.

The need for improvement in educational leadership has become a top priority for school reform in Nigeria especially in the contemporary era when relevant stakeholders have questioned the efficacy of the system standard. The success or failure of secondary schools depends largely on leadership styles adopted by the institutions' heads. The principal is the academic and administrative leader of secondary schools, while teachers are expected to be the social workers, pace setters and modernizers that help structure the environment for effective teaching and learning. The monumental responsibilities of school heads in creating peaceful teaching and learning environment is globally acknowledged as critical basis for the realization of the institutions' goals. Thus, the roles of principals in implementing appropriate leadership styles in response to violence and chaos within the school system cannot be overemphasized. The realization of educational goals within the school setting depends on the inculcation of right attitude and behavioral pattern regarding culture of peace in the students who are potential leaders of tomorrow (Kendra, 2013). Fabunmi (2006) affirmed that maximum cooperation in the school system depends heavily on the effective leadership styles of school administrators. Macibi (2015) emphasized that peaceful coexistence cannot be actualized in schools without effective leadership styles.

Societies develop peace, cultures promote peace, religions uphold and cherish peace and individuals prosper in peace. Notwithstanding, it is truism that there could hardly be a society where total and absolute individual and societal peace exist (Dietrich, 2019). Moreover, what are contradictory to peace are chaos, instability, upheavals, violence and in extreme cases. But, this is not to suggest that peace simply means the absence of war. Peace could be viewed from the philosophical, sociological, political, religious aspects and even commonsense (Idowu & Bamidele, 2018). This study investigated principals' leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The growing culture of violence in Nigerian secondary school system has continued to negatively affect the teaching and learning environment. The common effects of this trend have led to poor academic performance, low staff productivity, tensions, broken social relationships, high incidents of students and staff turn-

over. It is evident that erosion of the core social values within communities and a lack of credible and responsible leaders within appropriate leadership styles to address these issues have drastically used the culture of violence that has become endemic in secondary schools in Nigeria (Abdulkadir, 2018). While perpetrators of these acts of violence cut across different generations, it is an established fact that young people continue to constitute the largest percentage of perpetrators (Adeyemi & Salawudeen, 2014). The effects of young people being key perpetrators of violence in schools have brought in the minimization of the value and respect for human life and this has further caused the loss of positive social values, such as respect, patriotism, dedication of duties, probity and brotherhood. It is, therefore, become imperative that measures are taken to revitalize social values with strong collaboration through the younger generation (Nwabuani & Okafor, 2015).

There is a loud cry among the people regarding the falling standard in education industry which is given more concern than satisfaction. Adeyemi (2006) stated that leadership style has been highly discussed among researchers. The controversy has to do with whether or not the style of leadership employed by the principal would help foster harmonious relationship in school, and imparting culture of peace among students. Momodu (2013) investigated mainstream peace education in secondary schools in Nigeria. Abdulkadir (2018) studied instructional leadership approaches to build the culture of peace through educational programmes. The unsatisfactory state of secondary education has been the focus of this research, especially on the issue of school leadership. The realization of educational goals within the school system depends on the inculcation of right attitudes and behavioral patterns about the culture of peace instilled in students who are potential leaders of tomorrow. To enhance optimal cooperation in the school system, the effective leadership styles of school administrators becomes imperative (Enu, 2016). Accordingly, principals are expected to generate and sustain high morale among teachers (Olowo, 2016). Thus, to the best knowledge of the researchers, none of the earlier studies focused on principals' leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State. This was the gap which the study filled.

Literature Review

Researchers have conducted many studies on principals' leadership styles as determinant of school effectiveness (Amini & Arya, 2019; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Millicient & Julius, 2019). For instance, Millicient and Julius (2019) conducted studies on the influence of principals' leadership styles on academic performance in secondary schools in Awendo, Kenya. A conceptual frame work was employed to show the interplay between the principals' leadership styles and students' academic performance. A descriptive research design of correlational type was employed in the study. The population of the study was comprised of 35 principals, 340 teachers and 1400 students. Saturated sampling technique was used to select 30 principals, while the remaining five were used for pilot study. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select 186 academic staff and 301 students from the sample institutions. A questionnaire titled "Principals Leadership Styles (PLSQ) and Students' Academic Performance (SAP)" was used to elicit vital information from the respondents. Also, interview schedules, document analysis and focus group discussion were employed for

the collection of relevant data. The study revealed that principals' leadership styles influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Awendo, Kenya.

Mullins (2013) affirmed that leadership is the behavior which initiates a new structure and interaction within social a system. Klein (2019) indicated that leadership involves two or more people, where one attempts to influence the other's behavior towards the accomplishment of goals. Mackatiani (2020) expressed the opinion that leadership is a position or ability to lead a group of people in an organization for the attainment of a set goal. Manga (2020) remarked that leadership involves guidance and directed activities of individuals in a given direction in order to achieve the goals of the organization. Rivas and Tarin (2017) defined leadership as a projected feeling from one individual (the leader) towards others (followers) for the purpose of realizing group objectives. In this regard, leadership could be seen as the process of influencing the activities of an organization toward the achievement of goal setting. A good manager is a good leader, but a good leader may not necessarily be an effective manager. Wereta (2019) affirmed that the central theme of leadership is getting things accomplished through people. Leadership therefore involves the achievement of an organization's goals through a process of influencing, directing and coordinating group activities towards the attainment of set goals or solution to a mutual problem. Leadership therefore involves the attainment of organizational goals through a process of influencing, directing and coordinating group activities towards the realization of set goals or solutions to a mutual problem. Therefore, leadership centralized on getting tasks accomplished by people.

Leadership style is the behavior a leader exhibits while guiding organization members in appropriate directions. It is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people. The first main study of leadership styles was conducted in 1939 by Kurt Lewin, who led a group of researchers to identify different styles of leadership. A leader is an individual who influence, directs, control and co-ordinates the behavior of others to achieve the organizational goals. Trubceac (2020) posited that a leader as an individual in the group given the task of directing and coordinate relevant group activities. The autocratic leaders reflect a narrow span of management, egocentric, greedy, desire to be flattered, feared and not respected. Telling style is used when leaders tell their employees what they want them done and how they want it accomplished, argue that end justifies the means, make his own decisions and announce to the subordinates to carry out the decisions without soliciting for their advices or opinions. The democratic, participative or consult style leadership style consists of the leader sharing the decision making abilities with the group members promoting the interest of the group through social equality. The leaders' actions are premised on openness, deliberation, trust, integrity, honesty, equality, mutual respect, sharing of ideas and encouragement of the people to feel about their involvement it boosts employee's morale as they contribute to decision making process. This type of leadership style is based on the thinking that no man is an island and that two good heads may be better than one. Kendra (2013) found that consult leadership style enhances effectiveness, productivity, better contribution form group members and increased group morale. This takes a passive and care free attitude towards the problems of the individual and the accomplishment of organizational objectives. This is where all the rights and power to make decisions are fully given to the workers or subordinates. The leadership has no hierarchy of education, no defined code of regulation; allow followers a high degree of autonomy and no way of determining whether someone is

right or wrong in the given capacity. Though in educational administration, few leaders delegate their role due to lack of drive, initiative and intuitiveness. It can however be effective when followers are highly skilled, experienced and educated.

The study conducted by Khan and Soomro (2020) concluded that leaders are expected to develop and sustain high morale among the teachers. It is vital for principals who are usually leaders of their schools to ensure that attainment of excellent education for all students for them to imbibe culture of peace so as to be needed in their society. However, despite the noble nature of national Philosophy on education and its laudable objectives towards ensuring effective human relationship, national consciousness and integration, secondary schools have failed in addressing and inculcating the fundamental norms and values for enhancing peaceful coexistence among the populace (Gupta, 2016). To curb the unfortunate scenario, there is need to advocate for effective leadership styles that inculcate functional peace education in secondary schools. Ezeoba (2012) established that education intersects with almost every sector and theme in peace building. This warrants critical examination of competencies, skills and resources required to ensure peace education in the institution. In the same vein, Olowo (2016) concluded that peace can be used to influence behaviour and actions of subordinates to achieve certain goals while the study of Enu (2016) affirmed that one of the major functions of the school principals is to direct and control the activities of the personnel, in order to achieve educational goals and objectives.

Theoretically, traits theory is premised on the fact that leaders are either born or made with certain qualities that make them excel in leadership roles and evolved around the mid-20th century precisely between 1930s and 1940s. The theory posited that leaders are either born or are made with certain qualities such as: intelligence, sense of responsibility, creativity, self-confidence and other values that make them excel in leadership roles (Kovach, 2018). Trait theories often identify particular personality or behavioral characteristics shared by leaders. The trait theory of leadership was based on the assumption that, there were certain personality characteristics that could predict success in leadership positions. It is believed that effective leaders possessed a set of inborn traits and ability that distinguished them from non-leaders. Although, no research demonstrated that this was the case, some people still believed that, there were certain innate traits and abilities that made an individual, a good leader and that certain traits could distinguish effective from ineffective leaders (Kibbe, 2019; Turner & Baker, 2018). In support of the foregoing, the study of Bonds and Freeman Jr (2020) revealed that some traits are associated with effective leaders in management situations.

Purpose of the Study

1. To find out the relationship between principals' leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.
2. To examine the relationship between democratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.
3. To investigate the relationship between autocratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria

Research Hypotheses

Ho: There is no significant relationship between the principals' leadership styles and peace education

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and peace education

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between autocratic style and peace education

Methodology

The research design used for this study was a descriptive survey design. Thus, the designed was considered appropriate for the study because it allowed the researcher to systematically gather respondents views on the relationship that exist between Principals leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 490 teachers in all 23 secondary schools in, Kwara state, Nigeria. Quota and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 200 teachers and 10 schools across the state using Krejcie and Morgan's table. The research instruments used for this study were structured questionnaires entitled "Principals' Leadership Styles and Peace Education Questionnaire (PLSAPEQ)" to gather relevant data for the study. Both content and face validity of the instruments were ascertained by experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instruments were ascertained using test-re-test method of reliability and reliability coefficients of 0.72 and 0.79, obtained for Principals' Leadership Styles and Peace Education Questionnaire respectively. The data gathered for the study were statistically analyzed using Pearson Product- Moment Correlation Statistics to answer the research purposes and hypotheses of the study.

Results

Hypotheses Testing

Ho: There is no significant relationship between principals' leadership style and peace education in Secondary Schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Relationship between Principals' Leadership Styles and Peace Education

Variables	No	\bar{X}	SD	D.F	Cal. Value	p-value	Decision
Principal Leadership Styles	197	10.92	- 1.89	198	.78	.000	Ho: rejected
Peace Education	197	3.05	0.385				

As shown in table 1, the cal. r-value of .78 is greater than the p-value of .000 at 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that, there was no significant relationship between principal leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools was hereby rejected. Thus, there was significant relationship between Principals' leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between principal democratic leadership style and peace education in Secondary Schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Relationship between Democratic Leadership Style and Peace Education

Variables	No	\bar{X}	SD	D.F	Cal. Value	p-value	Decision
Democratic Leadership Styles	197	5.43	-.067	198	.166	.000	Ho ₁ : rejected
Peace Education	197	2.38	0.490				

Table 2 revealed that the cal. r- value of .166 is greater than the p-value of .000 at 0.05 significance level. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that, there was no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools was hereby rejected. This implies that, there was significant relationship between democratic leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' autocratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Relationship between Autocratic Leadership Style and Peace Education

Variables	No	\bar{X}	SD	D.F	Cal. Value	p-value	Decision
Autocratic Leadership Styles	197	6.29	-.929	198	.422	.000	Ho ₂ : rejected
Peace Education	197	3.24	0.698				

Table 3 indicated that the cal. r. value of .422 is greater than the p-value of .000 at 0.05 significance level. Thus, the hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools is hereby rejected. Thus, there was significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The finding of the hypothesis 1 showed that there was significant relationship between Principals' leadership styles and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings agreed with the studies of Lawler (2013) that principal leadership style is a key factor in promoting peace education in that it influences the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, job fulfillment, absenteeism and turnover productivity. The study equally concurred in with Green (2015) which affirmed that principals' leadership behaviour is a fundamental determinant of peace education. In this regard, principals' leadership style is a pre-requisite for any schools to promote peace education and foster a kind of harmonious relationship. Therefore, school principals should imbibe good behaviour to their teachers so that they may become model and be of help to the students in both educational and socio-personal life pursuit. Leadership styles adopted by the administrative heads of secondary schools influenced harmonious relationship and peaceful co-existence in the teaching and learning environment.

The findings of hypothesis 2 showed that there was significant relationship between principals' democratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. Thus, Peace education in schools is to be assured, promoted and enhanced through promotion of shared values and involvement of

teachers, students and the community in the management of the schools. The findings corroborate the studies of Enu (2016) and Bass and Bass (2008) who established that democratic leaders solicit for subordinates input to enhance efficiency effective service delivery. Thus, the principals' disclosed openness in communication as sought for teachers' inputs create an environment where staff often exercised self-direction and commitment towards the actualization of the institutional goals. The findings are corroborated by Kendra (2013) studies which revealed that democratic leadership style enhances teachers' productivity, synergy and group morale. Also, Obilade (2009) asserted that, this leadership style encompasses on the notion that everyone, by the virtue of their human status, should play a part in the group's decisions. In addition, studies carried out by Akande (2018) and Omolayo (2000) found that democratic leadership style is one of the most effective and creates higher productivity, better contributions from group members and increased group morale. Democratic leadership style enhances cross fertilization of ideas, creativity in solving problems and group members are encouraged to share their thoughts and philosophies. Also, the current finding is synonymous with trait theory of leadership. The theory assumed that leaders are made with certain qualities such as sense of responsibility, intelligence, creativity and self-confidence to lead the subordinates in the organization (Kibbe, 2019; Kovach, 2018; Turner & Baker, 2018).

The findings of hypothesis 3 showed that there was significant relationship between principals' autocratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. Therefore, there was significant relationship between principals' autocratic leadership style and peace education in secondary schools in Secondary Schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. This was affirmed by James and Burns (2003) who indicated that having minimal abilities and capabilities need close supervision and direction to ensure peaceful co-existence in schools. Substantiating the outcome of these findings, Moore (2017) inculcated that autocratic leadership style calls for an authoritative approach where subordinates are not opportune to water down plans that might lead to discrepancies. In this vein, autocratic leadership style should seldom and cautiously be applied in the school system only to checkmate the excesses of teachers who may wish to abuse principal leniency. Bunmi (2017) expressed the opinion that autocratic leaders have absolute control over subordinates, which consequently result in high degree of absenteeism and staff turnover. However, it could remain effective for certain routine and unskilled jobs as the benefits of control may override the disadvantages. This assertion was corroborated by Mulder (2015) that autocratic leadership style ensures orderliness in behaviour, efficient time management and conformity to standards concerning integral parts of success in any educational establishment.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it turned out that principals' leadership styles are key determinants in achieving peace education in secondary schools. Thus, to produce an integrated citizen, who is well behaved and well-adjusted for the nation's development, peaceful co-existence in schools and fostering of harmonious relationship between effective teachers and students, the principals should respect the dignity and worth of the teachers by consulting staff in charge of staff welfare before making decisions.

Recommendations

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

1. Principals' should periodically evaluate their leadership styles to create harmony in schools and enhance effective service delivery.
2. Shared values and participation of teachers, students and the community in the day to day management of the schools should be given priority by school principals' to guarantee, promote and enhance peaceful coexistence.
3. Principals' should not restrict themselves to just one style of leadership, but rather have many varying styles depending upon the situation for the maintenance of harmonious relationship in schools.
4. Seminars, conferences and workshops on leadership training should be periodically organized for schools principals to update their administrative effectiveness.
5. Concerted efforts should be made to ensure effective school community relationship.

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