
SCHOOL MANAGERS' LEADERSHIP TRAITS AND STUDENT FACTORS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Current global events have necessitated innovations, effectiveness and efficiency in the educational sector. This desire has culminated in the urge to improve the outcome of senior secondary schools. This has further developed the need to carry out researches by educational management as a department and educational administrators as professionals. The paper therefore examined another dimension of leadership traits in the context of achievement of student factors. The study reviewed different literature as they relate to the leadership peculiarities of school managers in order to clearly define the independent variable. It reviewed another dimension of leadership traits in the context of achievement of student factors. The study considered leadership characteristics of not only the principal who is the school head as is the norm. Oftentimes, in order to study indicators of student factors which can shape the lives of the students and make them individuals who are worthy in character and learning, leadership attributes of the principal who is the accounting officer of the school are commonly analysed. In view of the fact that there are other circumstances which can influence student factors either positively or negatively, the study included leadership characteristics of vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects as they affect student factors. The student factors which are discussed in this study are: punctuality, regularity and discipline. The study examined conceptually, the impact of school managers' leadership traits on senior secondary school students. It was observed that an improvement could occur among this population when the traits are put in place.

Key words: Leadership traits, school managers, student factors, senior secondary students

Introduction

The education system is a complex entity that needs multifaceted dimensions for its intervention (Mitala, Mooreb & Llewellyn, 2014). Current global events have necessitated innovations, effectiveness and efficiency in the educational sector which has increased the propensity to improve the outcome of senior secondary schools particularly in Nigeria. Also, the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) focused on the education system by ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (Global Education Cooperation Mechanism, 2023). To achieve the SDG in Nigerian education system, there is need to put into consideration all the important factors that could influence the success of the education system. These factors could be grouped into student, family, teacher, school, school management, environmental, peer influence factors, among others (Tomul, Onder & Taslidere, 2021). According to Ullah and Almani (2022), these factors are indispensable for enhancing the performance of student and the education system.

It is also important to understand the existing relationship between or among these influencing factors for the success of the education system (Yunus, Osman & Ishak, 2011; Haider & Hussain, 2014). For example, Sohn (2018) and Karunakaran, Jusoh and Chinna (2019) revealed that family factors such as parenting style, parental expectations and aspirations, home rules and parental supervision, parents' attitudes towards children activities, among others could pose significant effect on student related factors. School management factors may also pose significant effect on students' related factors (Silva, 2020). Also, Machibya (2017) and Kemenanabo (2019) revealed that school management factors could also pose significant influence on students' related factors.

A major focus of this review is the influence of school management factors on students' related factors. The justification for this focus is hinged on the fact that Machibya (2017) revealed that students' related variables in secondary schools was mainly influenced by school management factors which include poor planning, organising, and controlling by school management leading to poor supervision in school activities. Students' related factors, as deployed in this review are punctuality, regularity and discipline of students. Punctuality, regularity and discipline are fundamental attributes of student learning and have significant effect on school life by regulating and accelerating academic work efficiency (Singh, 2023).

Punctuality is the propensity to arrive, do something, or happen at the expected or the correct time and not being late. It is a major ingredient of modern life and progress (Basu & Weibull, 2002). Hence, Thierry (2018) revealed that, it is a key condition to succeed in life. Regularity refers to the quality of being stable and predictable (Apu, 2020) and it's so paramount because students may likely succeed in academic and their career endeavour when they are regular in school (Pascopella 2007). Discipline could implies being in accordance with a system of governance and tends to be used for the regulation of behavior (Thierry, 2018). Hence, the lack of discipline could lead to unregulated behavior which could affect students' success (Thierry, 2018). Putting into consideration the three students factors deployed in this review, which include punctuality, regularity and discipline, it could be deduced that these three factors are major ingredients of students success in life.

Also, school managers as used in this review include the principals, vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects. The justification of the school managers as a major variable of this review is hinged on adapting the Agent-Based Model by Mitala et al. (2014), which proposes that people or classes of people with different attributes such as the principal, teacher, reformer, school partner, and certain students perhaps, the head prefects, among others are major agents of the education system, and could pose significant effect on students related factors. Some students could have larger or smaller spheres of influence than

other students hence, they may be popular or may be leaders, which could also influence other students.

Meanwhile, Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018) noted that school managers are individuals who have the responsibilities to lead, influence, direct, make decision that could influence the performance of the teachers, students, among others towards the attainment of the school and educational objectives. Manager mobilizes, guides and coordinates the work activities of the human resources which also include the students thereby continuing improving the quality of teaching and learning. Therefore, leadership factor becomes germane in order to achieve success among school managers.

Drawing from the Collegial Model of Educational Management by Bush (2011), which focuses on policy determination and formulation, decision making processes, and sharing of organizational power among some or all of the members of the organization considered to influence the achievement of organizational objectives, leadership styles is very vital to school management. Leadership implies the process of social influence, that tends to maximize the efforts of others to achieve set goals (Kruse, 2013). The Collegial model is linked with three leadership styles such as the transformational, participative and distributed leadership styles (Bush, 2011).

The transformational leadership focuses on commitments and competences of members such that conceptualizes that a higher level of commitments from members to the school couple with greater capacities for goal attainment contribute to the students' and school productivity in the long run (Ghasemy & Hussin, 2014). According to Leithwood (1994), the transformational leadership in education sector premised on eight dimensions such as school vision building, setting of school objectives, provision of intellectual stimulation, offering of individualized patronage, modeling of best practices and core organizational values, display of high performance anticipations, productive culture creation within schools and encouraging participation in school decision making process by developing required structures. All these are very paramount to school managers' leadership effectiveness.

Also, participative leadership implies the opportunities for the members to be engaged in the decision making process within the organization (Leithwood et al., 1999; Hoyle & Wallace, 2005). Participative leadership is premised on three principles which include the increase in school efficiency, democratic principles to justify members' participation in decision making processes and the availability of leadership to legal stakeholders (Bush, 2011). The distributed leadership has been a major focal point of scholars over decades (Gronn, 2010) because it is one of the most significant approaches within the context of educational leadership (Harris, 2010). Distributed leadership was detached from the positional authority and its deployment focuses on the competencies and skills of members. To this end, distributed leadership focuses on seeking and utilization of expertise wherever it exists in the organization regardless of the positions of the skilled members (Harris, 2003). In educational institutions, such as in senior secondary schools, distributed Leadership is a collaborative working model with individuals trusting and respecting each other's contribution particularly among the most efficient individuals, accepting leadership in their areas of expertise and also requiring the resources that could support and enable a collaborative environment.

Drawing emphasis from the Collegial Model of Educational Management by Bush (2011), this review study focuses on examining the leadership styles of school managers such as the principals, vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects and further

inspects their influence on students' related factors which are punctuality, regularity and discipline towards achieving an enhanced educational system. Therefore, this review study examines school managers' leadership traits and student factors of senior secondary schools.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this review article is to examine school managers' leadership traits and student factors of senior secondary schools.

Research Question

- i. How do school managers' leadership traits influence student punctuality of senior secondary schools?
- ii. How do school managers' leadership traits influence student regularity of senior secondary schools?
- iii. How do school managers' leadership traits influence student discipline of senior secondary schools?

Literature review

Kemenanabo (2019) examined the perceived influence of some management factors on students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State using a sample size 2, 286 with 1,207 male and 1,079 female teachers which represents a 30% of the population selected through a stratified random sampling technique but only 2,172 respondents eventually completed the study. Data for the study were collected using the questionnaire and information obtained were subjected to analysis using the mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were subjected to test using the Z-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study revealed that management factors such as the payment of staff, provision of physical facilities, staff motivation, among others posed significant influence on students' output. Thus, revealing the significance of school management factors on students.

Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018) examined the role of the school manager in current public education, and information were obtained through the use of interview guide hence, it was a qualitative study. The study revealed that school managers are faced with several social issues which has led to the irregularity of resources, the lack of motivation for students which could also include the aspect of motivating students to be punctual, regular in school and class attendant and discipline towards enhancing the performance of students and the educational system. Juxtaposing the findings of Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018) and Kemenanabo (2019), it could be deduced that school managers such as the principals, vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects could influence students' related factors such as punctuality, regularity and discipline in the educational system.

Adegunju, Ola-Alani & Agubos (2019) examined factors responsible for students' lateness to school as expressed by Nigerian teachers in elementary schools using a descriptive survey and a sample of 200 Nigerian teachers in elementary schools were selected. Information was collected through the use of questionnaire, and information obtained was subjected to analysis using the descriptive and inferential statistics. Their result revealed that the students' lateness to school which in this study could be synonymous to punctuality, regularity and discipline are prevalence among students. The high level of prevalence could be used to support the findings of Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018) and Kemenanabo (2019) as presented above revealing the absence of effective school managers leadership styles in schools.

Frances, Denis and Kaggwa (2015) examined school heads' leadership traits and learners' academic attainment among high schools in Uganda focusing on 12 secondary schools in Kampala Metropolitan City. The findings of their study revealed that situational

leader is the most appropriate school leadership trait to account for improved students output which could also relate to punctuality, regularity and discipline among students. This was followed by the democratic trait, laissez faire management trait, and then the autocratic school head. Also, school heads that operate a democratic leadership style tend to reasonably influence students output which could also relate to punctuality, regularity and discipline among students.

However, autocratic trait school head posed a negative effect on students output which could also relate to punctuality, regularity and discipline. The findings of Frances et al (2015) could help to explain the reason for the low prevalence of punctuality, regularity and discipline among students, and also the findings of Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018) and Kemenanabo (2019) that effective school managers leadership styles and traits possessed by school heads such as the principals, vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects, could affect students punctuality, regularity and discipline in the school.

Juxtaposing the findings of Frances et al. (2015); Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018); Kemenanabo (2019); Adegunju et al. (2019), the relational effect of school managers and their leadership traits on students' related outcomes such as the prevalence of punctuality, regularity and discipline has been outlined. However, not much is known and understood about the extent to which these relational effects occur and the need to update the findings with respect to this study. Therefore, this study deploys a systematic review to examine school managers' leadership traits and student factors of senior secondary schools. In addition, school managers was conceptualised as the principals, vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects while student factors, as used in this review study are punctuality, regularity and discipline.

Methodology

A systematic review method was used to achieve the objective of this article, and internet resources were sourced and put together to drive the objectives of this study. Also, the Information resources used in the review article span between the periods of 2000 and 2020. This range of years of publication was done to articulate the necessary development in school management leadership traits and how they might influence students' factors of senior secondary schools.

Search engines such as Google scholar, Semantic Scholar, and RefSeek were used to retrieve materials needed for the review and the search output yielded several results but very few (only five articles) were selected to fit in this study due to limited studies directly addressing the focus of this study. Information obtained were subjected to content analysis following relevant themes of the research questions and relevant information obtained were subjected to analysis using a systematic review approach of relevant articles and information to achieve the major objectives of the study. Results were presented with respect to the research question of the study. The articles selected include the works of Njami and Bula (2018); Ezeugbor & Thompson (2018); Taylor (2019); Superville (2020); Delpont, van Jaarsveld and Challens (2021); Grissom, Egalite and Lindsay (2021); and Effendi, Bafadal, Degeng and Arifin (2021).

Results

The results and discussion section is divided into three, based on the research questions of the study.

School Managers' Leadership Traits and students punctuality

Superville (2020) examine the strong connection between effective principals and student attendance, and found that effective principals could play a major role in reducing student

absenteeism hence, on punctuality of students. This could be done by creating a school culture that values attendance and punctuality of students. Also, the findings of Superville (2020) revealed that the principals who made significant increase in reducing students' absenteeism were not necessarily the principals who made significant impact on students' test score gains revealing that effective leadership could be multidimensional in nature and practice. This implies that effective leadership poses significant effect on not only ensuring the punctuality of students but also on other aspect of the school system.

Delport, van Jaarsveld and Challens (2021) examined the personality and self-leadership of school principals as determinants of school performance putting into consideration variables such as leadership style of the principal, motivation, and support in this regard to capture the personality and self-leadership of school principals in their study. Their study deployed a qualitative approach and a phenomenological investigation hence semi-structured interviews were adopted to elicit information from the respondents of the study using eight principals (six male and two female) selected from eight schools. The result of Delport et al (2021) revealed that principals' personality do not affect school is performing or underperforming hence, may not pose effect on punctuality of students but leadership pattern does pose significant effect revealing that the leadership trait of school managers could be very germane in affecting students punctuality which could also be classified as a variable of student and school performance.

Grissom, Egalite and Lindsay (2021) examined how principals could affect students and the schools through a systematic synthesis of two decades of research findings and revealed that impact of an effective principal is stronger and broader, making it difficult to envision. Their findings revealed that the principal's effects on the students could be largely indirect, because, it tends to come in good measure through the teachers, with the principals influencing the teacher and development towards affecting the student output such as punctuality of students to school and class. Furthermore, effective principals carry out four important behaviors which are engaging in "high-leverage" instructional activities, such as teacher evaluation and feedback; establishing a productive climate; building collaboration and professional learning communities; and managing personnel and resources strategically which in this study caters for the students punctuality. In addition, the findings of Grissom et al (2021) noted that these behaviors of principals could rest on three skills which are people skills, organizational skills, and instructional skills. This revealed that for a school manager to be effective, he or she needs to deploy the people skills, school skills, and instructional skills to inform punctuality in the students through the teachers.

School Managers' Leadership Traits and students' regularity

Ezeugbor & Thompson (2018) examined an analysis of principals' leadership roles for secondary schools improvement in Anambra state, Nigeria using a descriptive survey design and a sample size of 258 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Information was obtained through the use of questionnaire and subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that principals do not play students' personnel services roles for secondary schools improvement in Anambra State by not; providing counseling services, ensuring adequate security for safety of students, embarking on community sensitization to increase students' enrollment, and providing adequate furniture in the classroom. Therefore, this could affect the regularity of students in the senior secondary school.

Effendi, Bafadal, Degeng and Arifin (2021) investigated the role of principal's transformational leadership for strengthening student character in Indonesia through qualitative method using a case study design. Data was obtained through the use of

questionnaire and subjected to analysis using a modified analytic analysis method. The findings of Effendi et al. (2021) revealed that school managers' transformational leadership role is germane to shaping student character, which by extension could also imply students discipline towards decreasing moral decadence among senior school students.

School Managers' Leadership Traits and students discipline

Njami and Bula (2018) did an assessment of principals' leadership styles on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya, using a descriptive research design. A multistage sampling technique was used to select a sample of 119 respondents, while information was obtained using a closed-ended questionnaire and data obtained were subjected to analysis by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Their result revealed that transformational principal leadership style, transactional principal leadership style, democratic principal leadership style and autocratic principal leadership style pose significant effect on students' discipline. However, the school managers' transformational style of leadership was more effective to affect students' discipline than other forms of leadership styles. This further revealed that leadership styles of school management are very paramount in achieving discipline in senior secondary school students towards achieving an enhanced performance of the students and also the school system in the long run. However, it deems it fit to reveal that the use of the leadership styles could be a function of the situation on ground to address by the school managers. Hence, the leadership traits that could be deployed and used in one situation could be very different at other times.

Taylor (2019) examined administrative involvement with student discipline and teacher's morale in Mississippi schools, through the deployment of quantitative study. The findings of Taylor (2019) revealed that three dimensions of teacher's morale which are rapport with principal, satisfaction with teaching, and teacher's load, were that major criteria that directly relate to administrative involvement with student's discipline. The findings reveal that teachers could be the middle personnel that the leadership of school managers could be used to influence students' disciplines.

Effendi, Bafadal, Degeng and Arifin (2021) investigated the role of principal's transformational leadership for strengthening students' character in Indonesia through qualitative method using a case study design. Data obtained were subjected to analysis using a modified analytic analysis method. The findings of Effendi et al. (2021) revealed the need to shapen students' character as an anticipatory step to decrease moral distortions among senior school students and that school managers' transformational leadership role is an effective way to optimize the implementation of character education strengthening programs in schools which could also involve the students' discipline.

Discussion

The effect of school managers' leadership traits on students' factors of senior secondary schools was examined in the systematic review paper. The findings revealed that school managers' leadership traits could pose significant influence on student factors which are punctuality regularity and discipline of senior secondary schools. This concurs with the findings of Frances et al. (2015); Machibya (2017); Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018); Kemenanabo (2019); Adegunju et al. (2019); that students' related variables such as punctuality, regularity and discipline in the senior secondary schools was mainly influenced by school management factors.

Also, the findings of this study revealed that transformational leadership trait was the most effective to influence the punctuality, regularity and discipline of senior secondary school students. This justifies the collegial model of Bush (2011) that the transformational

leadership focuses on higher level of commitments and competences of the school human resources possessing greater capacities for educational goal attainment through students and school productivity as affirmed by Ghasemy & Hussin (2014).

However, this relational influence can only be possible through the teachers hence, making the teachers a middle man for the effective leadership of the school managers towards enhancing student punctuality, regularity and discipline in senior secondary schools. This justifies the assertion of Mitala et al. (2014) that the education system is complex hence, needs a multidimensional intervention such as to attain the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) which focused on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all as stated by Global Education Cooperation Mechanism (2023) which in this study refers to both the direct and indirect relational effect of school managers through the teachers on students factors. This supports the work of Nascimento and Chiusoli (2018) that school managers are responsibilities to lead, influence, direct, make decision that influence the performance of the teachers, students, among others towards the attainment of the school and educational objectives.

Also, drawing from the work of Singh (2023), that punctuality, regularity and discipline of students are fundamental attributes of student learning and do pose significant effect on school life through the regulation and acceleration of students' academic work efficiency, it is germane to draw attention to the school manager factors as antidote to students punctuality, regularity and discipline towards enhancing the inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study used a systematic review to examine school managers' leadership traits and student factors of senior secondary schools and focuses on the principals, vice-principals, Heads of Departments, and even school prefects as the school managers while students' factors used for the study include student punctuality, regularity and discipline. In conclusion, the findings of the systematic review revealed that school managers' leadership traits could pose significant influence on student factors which are punctuality regularity and discipline of senior secondary schools. The transformational leadership trait was the most effective to influence the punctuality, regularity and discipline of senior secondary school students. However, this relational influence can only be possible through the teachers hence, making the teachers a middle man for the effective leadership of the school managers towards enhancing student's punctuality, regularity and discipline in senior secondary schools. The study recommended that:

- i. School managers' leadership should deploy the best leadership traits that could influence senior secondary students' punctuality with respect to the situation on ground.
- ii. School managers' leadership should deploy the best leadership traits that could influence senior secondary students' regularity with respect to the situation on ground.
- iii. School managers' leadership should deploy the best leadership traits that could influence senior secondary students' discipline with respect to the situation on ground.
- iv. Also, school managers should see the teachers as an important tool to deploy helping them achieve an enhanced student punctuality, regularity and discipline in the senior secondary schools.

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