

Perceived Influence of School Principals' Leadership Style on Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceived influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The research design adopted in the study was a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was twenty-five thousand, one hundred and two (25,182), which comprised one hundred and five (105) principals and twenty-five thousand, seventy-seven (25,077) students from the entire thirty-five (35) public secondary schools in Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The sample size of the study was six hundred (690) respondents, which consisted of six hundred (600) students and ninety (90) principals. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Perceived Influence of school principals' leadership style on students' academic performance questionnaire (PISISAPQ)". The scale is presented as follows: Very high extent = 5 points, high extent = 4 points, moderate extent (3), and low extent = 2 points, and very low extent = 1 point, respectively. The instrument was validated by experts and the reliability coefficient index was 0.73, 0.69, and 0.75, respectively, which were obtained through Cronbach Alpha reliability. The data collected was analyzed using Mean Score and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions, while a z-test was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings, it was concluded that principals' leadership styles influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools, particularly in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Therefore, it was recommended among that principals should ensure that any leadership styles they would want to adopt should have a direct academic improvement in schools.

Key Words: *leadership styles, autocratic, participatory, laissez-faire academic performance*

Introduction

In Nigeria, secondary school management is the responsibility of the school leader, otherwise referred to as the Principal. The principal is usually an academic staff member who has grown through the ranks before his/her appointment. As a seasoned academic who must have performed some leadership tasks as a class student, subject head, and student adviser, he/she is expected to exhibit good leadership traits that should attract good followership. Studies have proven that the

principal dictates the tune of the school, the school activities revolve around him/her, and thus, he/she can make or mar a school (Abdulrasheed & Bello 2015; Adeyemi 2011; Nosike & Oguzor 2011; Koko 2010). It is therefore advocated that good leadership qualities will enable the principal to achieve success in managing the school. There is also the argument that some secondary school principals lack leadership skills. Aina, in Abdulrasheed and Bello (2015), argued that lack of leadership competencies in some principals results in low quality of instruction, indiscipline among staff and students, and low morale among staff and students. According to Aina, cited in Abdulrasheed and Bello (2015), different styles of leadership produce different outcomes. The question then is which leadership style influences students' performance negatively or positively. Literature contends that an effective head demonstrates leadership that creates confidence, inspires others, objectively evaluates the qualities and contributions of staff, and takes difficult decisions.

Although it is obvious that no two leaders are the same and no two leaders will adopt the same way of doing things to achieve results, leadership theorists have identified some leadership styles that can be applied in school leadership. Such styles are the autocratic style, the participatory style, the laissez-faire style, the transactional style, and the contingency style.

The academic performance of a student can be measured in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. The intellect of a student can be measured through test scores as well as the position he/she has within and outside the school environment. Some factors that affect students' academic performance, if looked into, will make our students better at learning, and their academic achievements will increase, as well as their intellect.

Performance is a measure of a learner's cognitive development after instruction. Performance can also be defined as a measure of behaviors that relate to the development of the cognitive domain. Poopola (2010), cited in Obeka and Shehu (2017), defined academic performance as an expression used to present students' scholastic standing and which is a function of various factors such as method of teaching, teachers' qualifications, students' home background, school environment, attitude, and interest, among others. Chadau cited in Obeka and Shehu (2017) views academic performance as what students are able to gain on the senior secondary certificate examination after completion of senior secondary school instruction. Performance involves learning in action with learned materials (Nwamae & Kayii, 2018; Azuka, 2012). Musa, cited in Abdublahi (2017), defined performance as the quality of results produced by students as reflected in the quality of their examination scores. Performance in mathematics is a measure of a learner's cognitive development in mathematics after instruction. Performance and retention are related. Generally, learning is said to have taken place when the learners are able to memorize what has been taught, store lessons in their memory, and be able to recall the lesson when required in the future (Azuka, 2012). Nwamae and Kayii (2018) also investigated the leadership styles employed by principals that would motivate teachers in public secondary schools in the Port Harcourt Local Government Area. The main objective of the study is to investigate the influence of leadership styles on teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Port Harcourt local government, Kano state. To accomplish this purpose, the study employed a descriptive design. The study was carried out in twenty secondary schools in the Port Harcourt

local government. A total of 200 individuals have participated in the study. Among them, 180 teachers were included as a sample through a simple random sampling technique, especially the lottery method. Additionally, 20 Port Harcourt secondary school principals were included through an available sampling technique. A questionnaire and an interview were the main instruments of data collection. Principal leadership styles and teachers' job performance were identified as the independent variables and as the dependent variables. The principal leadership styles were described using the questionnaires on communication, decision-making, and delegation of duties. While lesson planning, assessing students, and being involved in co-curricular activities were to determine the teachers' performance within the schools, The analysis of the quantitative data was carried out by using frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation, ANOVA, and Pearson correlation. The findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between styles and teachers' job performance ($r = 0.980$). The relationship is significant ($sign = 0.000$ at the 0.05 level). The findings revealed that the independent variables (participatory were the most practiced leadership styles in Port Harcourt local government secondary schools). It was therefore recommended that the principals of Port Harcourt secondary schools should have a mixture of autocratic and participatory styles of leadership. Teachers' ideas and teaching should be considered in decision making about the training criteria in their leadership in order to enhance better performance among teachers.

Uthman, Don, and Kasim (2013) carried out research titled "Leadership Styles of Principals and Teachers of Nigerian Unity Schools". The study was carried out in seven selected unity schools, all located in the north-eastern part of Nigeria. The study used Multifactor questionnaire 5x, School Level Environment Questionnaire (SLEQ), and School Improvement Questionnaire (SIQ) with a Likert-scale that involved the use of 800 questionnaires, of which 790 were returned and 760 were found valid for data analysis. Participants were drawn from a wide range of disciplines across the sampled schools. The establishment and operation of these schools relied on a transformational leadership methodology by principals that facilitates acts of initiative, innovation, vision, and courage through group interaction rather than through designated hierarchical roles. The research used a quantitative approach. The study found that the transformational leadership approach is effective in overcoming problems associated with lack of involvement of teachers in the building of a fruitful environment capable of bringing good school achievement through cultivating the habit of a transformational leader. The principals of unity schools enabled teachers and other stakeholders to engage in peer-led professional learning, collaborative curriculum and pedagogical development, and to facilitate wider institutional change (school achievement). The paper demonstrates that the transformational leadership model for high school achievement reported here is effective in building capacity for both teachers and students via the involvement of teachers in building the environment. The model is flexible enough for a variety of institutional settings and hence recommends the use of teachers in secondary schools' leadership.

The work of Uthman, Don, and Kasim (2013) was on the "Leadership Styles of Principals and Teachers of Nigerian Unity Schools," but the current study focused on public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Okoroji, Anyanwu, and Ukpere (2014) examined the effect of school principals on the teaching and learning process. The population comprises the academic staff of selected secondary schools in the Owerri North Local Government Area (LGA). The academic staff members selected include junior and senior staff members, as well as male and female staff. Sixty-six teachers, who constitute the population of academic staff of a selected secondary school, make up the sample for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was used for sample selection. A self-structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The method of data analysis used in this research is ANOVA statistics. Based on the summary of the findings, gender influences the leadership style used in the classroom teaching and learning process to a high extent. The result also reveals that the majority of secondary school teachers in Owerri North used participatory leadership styles more than other types of leadership styles. Having listed some of the findings of the research work, it is necessary to make a recommendation. Both male and female teachers should be exposed to constant and relevant seminars and workshops on their principal's leadership style and the specific principal leadership behaviors that enhance teachers' job satisfaction. The research was guided by these three questions: how do U.S. teachers perceive principals' leadership styles; what are the different leadership styles principals use; and what determines goodness and fit between a principal's leadership style and teacher job satisfaction? The Best Interpretive Qualitative Method was used to develop four core themes and twelve subthemes. The sample population consisted of teachers, which also included multiple educational disciplines within that population. Evidence for my claims comes from interviewing twelve teachers at four schools and using the basic interpretive method of analysis. Interview results showed principals with positive and collaborative styles create a positive environment in schools. Teachers talked more about different styles based on their relationships with the teachers and principal, and also about their expectations of what a principal should be, not specifically about what their principal's main leadership style may have been. Teachers generally expected principals to know about all aspects of their school while still giving teachers autonomy and freedom to make good decisions in classrooms. Teachers wanted a strong leader who could make clear and consistent decisions while earnestly considering all opinions involved. They also wanted a person with high moral character and someone whose integrity and intellect they respected.

The ultimate goal of secondary education is to develop an individual's mental capacity and character for higher education and useful living within society. There is a growing concern about the realization of secondary school objectives due to the belief that principals are given little attention to supervision of instructional activities and due to a lack of competence, leading to poor effectiveness and efficiency. Students' results in external examinations have been marred by irregularities emanating from the poor leadership styles exhibited by secondary school principals in Rivers State, such that students had to register for the Senior School Certificate Examination and General Certificate Examination over and over in order for them to have at least 5 credits. Despite the fact that public secondary schools in Rivers State have qualified school principals using various management styles in their respective schools, the students' academic performance in these schools has persistently been below average over the last five years, according to Brown and Amie-Ogan (2019). The performance index has steadily remained below the conventionally perceived average mean of 6.000 points (grade C) over the last 5 years,

averaging 5.340 (grade C-) for the 2007–2011 period. Port Harcourt Metropolis would have been expected to perform better given that nearly all its secondary school teachers were either Bachelor of Education graduates or holders of Diplomas in Education and that the schools were reported to have adequate educational and educational support resources, having passed the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria examination, which is a pre-requisite for teaching in Rivers State. Though performance is determined by many factors, leadership style plays a very significant role in its quality. Studies by scholars and researchers such as Ibrahim and Orodho (2014) have established that principals' leadership styles have a significant input on student academic performance on national examinations. Nonetheless, some of these studies done on the effect of leadership styles on students' senior secondary certificate (SSCE) performance give differing results, and very few are in agreement on their findings. This study was concerned about the possible effects of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis, Rivers State, Nigeria, against the backdrop of the perennial dismal performance over the years. The poor performances of students could be attributed to ineffective principals' leadership styles in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The problem of the present study is to investigate the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in the Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Therefore, this study aimed was to examine the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The study specifically intends to:

1. Investigate the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
2. Determine the extent principals' participatory leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
3. Ascertain the extent principals' laissezfaire leadership style influences influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?
2. To what extent does principals' participatory leadership style influences e students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?
3. To what extent does principals' laissez faire leadership style influences influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals' and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and students on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Methodology

The design adopted in the study was a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey design was appropriate for this study because it helped the researcher to access information concerning the current situation in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State as regards to the influence of school principals' leadership style on academic performance (Akpomi, Kayii, & Nwile, 2021). The population of the study was Twenty-five thousand, one hundred and two (25,182), which comprised one hundred and five (105) principals, and twenty-five thousand, seventy-seven (25,077) students from the entire thirty-five (35) public secondary schools in Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The one hundred and five (105) principals consisted of one (1) main or general principal, one (1) vice principal for administration, and one (1) vice principal for academic. The sample size of the study was six hundred (690) respondents which consisted of six-hundred (600) students and ninety (90) principals. The ninety (90) principals consisted of one (1) main or general principal, one (1) vice principal for administration, and one (1) vice principal for academic from 30 schools. The study adopted the stratified random sampling techniques. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select fifteen (15) schools from each of the two (2) Local Government Area in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State, making a total of thirty (30) of Thirty-Five (35) Public senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Furthermore, the stratified random sampling technique was adopted to choose Twenty (20) students and three (3) principals from each of the twenty (20) selected Public Senior Secondary schools. A self-structured questionnaire designed in a four point rating scale of (VHE) = 5 points, high extent (HE) =4 points, Moderate Extent (3) low extent (LE) = 2 points and very low extent (VLE) = 1point respectively. To validate the instrument, the questionnaire was given to three experts who extensively carried out face and content validity relating to the appropriateness of the content of the questionnaire used for the study. A reliability index of 0.73, 0.69 and 0.75 respectively, were obtained through the Cronbach Alpha method of its measure stability. Descriptive statistics were used to answer each of the research questions, and the most suitable statistical tool; Independent samples t-Test was applied in testing each of the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The research design adopted in the study was a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey design was appropriate for this study because it helped the researcher to access information concerning the current situation in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State as regards to the influence of school principals' leadership styles on academic performance (Akpomi, Kayii, & Nwile, 2021; Nwikina & Nwile, 2015). The population of the study was twenty-five thousand, one hundred and two (25,182), which comprised one hundred and five (105) principals and twenty-five thousand, seventy-seven (25,077) students from the entire thirty-five (35) public secondary schools in Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. One (1) main or general principal, one (1) vice principal for administration, and one (1) vice principal for academics comprised the one hundred and five (105) principals. The sample size of the study was six hundred (690) respondents, which consisted of six hundred (600) students and ninety (90) principals. The ninety (90) principals consisted of one (1) main or general principal, one (1) vice principal for administration, and one (1) vice principal for academics from 30 schools. The study adopted stratified random sampling techniques. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select fifteen (15) schools from each of the two (2) local government areas in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State, making a total of thirty (30) out of thirty-five (35) public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Furthermore, the stratified random sampling technique was adopted to choose twenty (20) students and three (3) principals from each of the twenty (20) selected public senior secondary schools. A self-structured questionnaire was designed on a four point rating scale of (VHE) = 5 points, high extent (HE) = 4 points, moderate extent (3), low extent (LE) = 2 points, and very low extent (VLE) = 1 point, respectively. To validate the instrument, the questionnaire was given to three experts who carried out extensive face and content validity tests relating to the appropriateness of the content of the questionnaire used for the study. The Cronbach Alpha method of measuring stability yielded reliability indices of 0.73, 0.69, and 0.75, respectively. Descriptive statistics were used to answer each of the research questions, and the most suitable statistical tool, the Independent Samples t-Test, was applied in testing each of the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1: To what extent does principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

S / N	Statement	Principals (N=90)		Decision	Students (N=583)		Decision
		Mean	SD		Mean	SD	
1	Decisions regarding students' commitment to their studies are made solely by the principal which impact on students' academic results	3.05	.90	High Extent	3.03	.90	High Extent

2	The principal gives directives and expect conformance without fail from the students which often leads to low class attendance and poor results	3.28	.64	High Extent	3.28	.64	High Extent
3	Students that disobey orders from principals perform poorly most at times	3.28	.78	High Extent	3.22	.85	High Extent
4	Principal often visit classroom to supervise student enhances their seriousness for learning	3.35	.92	High Extent	3.27	.86	High Extent
5	Most often, use of power by principals results in students absconding from classes and therefore do not take their studies serious.	3.28	.78	High Extent	3.18	.65	High Extent
6	Scores for students are high under a principal whose directives are sacrosanct.	3.35	.91	High Extent	3.27	.95	High Extent
Grand mean		3.31	0.81	High Extent	3.21	0.81	High Extent

Table 1 above showed that result on extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result shows that extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with mean scores of 3.05/.904 for male and 3.03/.901; 3.28/.640 and for male 3.28/.640, 3.28/.84 for male and 3.22/.846 for female, 3.35/.784 for male and 3.27/.861, and 3.28/.784 for male and 3.18/.651 for female, for questionnaire items 1-6 respectively. This implies that to a high extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

Research Question 2: To what extent does principals' participatory leadership style influences e students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

S/N	Statement	Principals (N=90)		Decision	Students (N=583)		Decision
		Mean	SD		Mean	SD	
1	Poor performance results from situations where the principal do not allow for contribution of ideas from	3.23	.92	High Extent	3.08	.96	High Extent

	the students on certain decision making.						
2	Lack of interest often comes from instances were students have no freedom to make choice of times and subject to study	3.30	.92	High Extent	3.20	.92	High Extent
3	The principal and the students discuss strategic plans before implementation.	3.15	.97	High Extent	3.03	.99	High Extent
4	When principal makes the students feel a sense of belonging in the school, they study very well and perform better.	3.25	1.08	High Extent	3.20	.97	High Extent
5	When students partake in teaching and learning activities, its helped the students to perform their core responsibilities effectively and efficiently.	3.35	.95	High Extent	3.27	.95	High Extent
6	When principal support learning and processes, it allows the students to perform excellently.	3.05	.90	High Extent	3.03	.90	High Extent
	Grand mean	3.22	0.97	High Extent	3.16	0.94	High Extent

Table 2 showed the result for the extent principals' participatory leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis of Rivers State. The result shows that principals' participatory leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with mean scores 3.23/.920 for male and 3.08/.962 for female, 3.30/.939 for male and 3.20/.935 for female, 3.15/.95 for male and 3.03/.991 for female, 3.25/1.080 for male and 3.20/.971 for female, and 3.35/.949 for male and 3.27/.954 for female respectively for questionnaire items 1-6. This implies that, to a high extent, principals' participatory leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

Research Question 3: To what extent does principals' laissez faire leadership style influences influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

S/N	Statement	Principals (N=90)	Decision	Students (N=583)	Decision
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		Mean	SD		Mean	SD	
1	You are of the assertion that the level of freedom and liberty given to students by the principal for academic performance is high in your school.	2.97	.86	Low Extent	3.03	.76	High Extent
2	Students are allowed to make decision on every matter always which affect their academic performance	3.10	.87	High Extent	3.08	.89	High Extent
3	The principal does not dictate the actions and inactions of the students in order to make them perform maximally.	2.87	1.07	Low Extent	2.83	1.04	Low Extent
4	The freedom given to students by the principal to take action and decisions independently helped them to perform their job professionally.	2.85	1.09	Low Extent	2.88	.98	Low Extent
5	The principal allows students to study according to their desire without supervision and this influence their academic performance	3.13	.79	High Extent	3.03	.90	High Extent
6	You believe that the improvement in academic performance by the students is because of principals' style of leadership.	3.18	.93	High Extent	3.05	.96	High Extent
	Grand mean	3.02	0.76	High Extent	3.98	0.92	High Extent

The result on Table 3 above shows mean and standard deviation of respondents on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with the mean scores 2.97/.862 for male and 3.03/.758 for female, 3.10/.871 for male and 3.08/.889 for female, 2.87/1.067 for male and 2.83/1.044 for female, 2.85/1.099 for male, and 2.88/.976 for female, 3.13/.791 for male and 3.03/.901 for female. This implies that, to a high extent, principals' laissez faire leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

The hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 4: z-Test Analysis on the significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z-calc	z-crit.	LS	Decision
Principals	90	3.31	0.81	671	0.775	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Students	583	3.21	0.81					

The result on the Table 4.above showed the z-Test Analysis on the significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result showed that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with a z-calculated value of 0.775 which was less than the z-critical value of ± 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, with a degree of freedom of 671 Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypotheses accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 5: z-Test Analysis on the significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z-calc	z-crit.	LS	Decision
Principals	90	3.22	0.97	671	1.02	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Students	583	3.16	0.94					

The result on the Table 5 above showed the z-Test Analysis on the significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result showed that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with a z-calculated value of 1.02 which was less than the z-critical value of ± 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, with a degree of freedom of 671 Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypotheses accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant

difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent laissez faire leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 6: z-Test Analysis on the significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z-calc	z-crit.	LS	Decision
Principals	90	3.02	0.76	671	0.62	±1.96	0.05	Accepted
Students	583	2.98	0.92					

The result on the Table 4.8 above showed the z-Test Analysis on the significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result showed that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with a z-calculated value of 0.62 which was less than the z-critical value of ±1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, with a degree of freedom of 671 Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypotheses accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' laissez faire leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Discussion

Table 1 above showed that result on extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result shows that extent principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. While, the corresponding result for hypothesis 1, the result on the Table 4, above showed that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

However, in the findings of Obama (2016) who examined the effects of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homabay County, Kenya, established that school principals utilize diverse leadership behaviour, some pointing to the more participatory and transactional styles while others skewed towards the more autocratic and laissez-faire types. The use of diverse leadership behaviour notwithstanding, it was evident that most principals were deficient in the types of leadership behaviour that support the creation

of a conducive learning environment and support to teachers necessary for effective teaching and the expected enhance, and that there was no statistically significant relationship between principals' leadership styles and students' academic performance.

On the extent to which principals' participatory leadership style influences e students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State, the result Table 2 showed that principals' participatory leadership style influences students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis two result on the Table 4.7 above showed that there is no significant difference between the scores of principals and students on the extent principals' participatory leadership style influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. In line with findings of this study, Philip (2016) indicated that, the types of leadership style used in selected secondary used in secondary school was participatory and encourage relationship among the teachers. It concluded that there was positive impact of participatory leadership style of school heads that dominates the area on the academic performance in selected secondary Arusha City Council.

On the extent to which principals' laissez faire leadership style influences influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State, the result on Table.3 above showed that principals' laissez faire leadership style influenced Students' academic performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

In a study examining the effectiveness of laissez-faire and the degree of employee's productivity in the public banking sector, Yahuza and Hassan (2017) found that it is highly and positively correlated with extra effort, effectiveness and satisfaction. Further study conducted indicated relationship between laissez faire leadership style and productivity by teacher co-coordinators. There were non-significant leadership perceptions of vocational education leaders and teacher co-coordinators.

Nwamae and Kayii (2018) established that head-teachers who use the laissez faire leadership style fail to follow up delegated tasks, consequently performance declines. Everything is left in the mercy of their subordinates. Some of whom may lack the necessary skills and competence to execute the work. Others may simply not like to do the work unless they are supervised. It is not the best leadership style to use in the school's organization because complete delegation without follow-up mechanisms may create performance problems, which are likely to affect the school's effectiveness. This is in agreement with Abdullah (2009) in his study of laissez-faire leadership shows that it is associated with the highest rate of truancy and delinquency and with the slowest modifications in performance which leads to unproductive attitudes and disempowerment of subordinates. In other words, it leads to low job performance among the principals and teachers.

This result is line with the findings of the Philip (2016) who investigated the impact of leadership styles on academic performance in selected secondary school in Arusha City Council, Tanzania, Munich, GRIN Verlag. The findings indicated that, there is significance relationship between

leadership style and the academic performance. The findings further indicated that, the types of leadership style used in selected secondary used in secondary school was participatory and encourage relationship among the teachers, The study discovered that teachers are involved in decision making. There was positive impact of participatory leadership style of school heads that dominates the area on the academic performance in selected secondary Arusha City Council. In the light of this study it is recommended that the authorities are responsible for making educational policies and design to provide training and development programmes to head of schools to serve as reference policy decision on leadership.

Conclusion

The school principals and their leadership styles have been studied and the study revealed that many leadership styles, attributes and certain qualities are lacking in many of our senior secondary schools principals which creates effective leadership styles, competent, instructional leadership styles and supervisory role positively influence students' academic performance in senior secondary schools; particularly in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The study showed a significant difference in this research

Recommendations

Considering the finding of this study, it was recommended that:

1. The Rivers State Government through the Ministry of Education should therefore develop long-term strategies to train the principals on leadership styles, in order to increase their level of experience and expertise in headship. As this will heighten the organizational responsibility and career development of principals in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
2. In as much as principals need to be trained on leadership and leadership, they also need to be developed to update their knowledge on leadership styles and how it affects the productive competence of students.
3. Since there is a positive perception of the relationship between principals' leadership styles and students' academic performance, Government should endeavour to put structures in place that will sustain this positive results.

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