

# Leadership Style as Correlate of Management Decision Making in School Administration

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DOI: 10.56201/jpslr.v8.no1.2022.pg14.20

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## **Abstract**

*Leadership influences the decision making process and set the goals for an organization. In educational management, the teachers and school heads provide the leadership and direction essential to the smooth day-today running of the school. Both leadership and management are essential for effective and successful school administration. The decision's school leaders make affect students, parents, teachers in the school and the larger society. Thus, since wrong decisions can bring consequences in an organization or institution, it becomes necessary to explore leadership styles and management of decision making that can guarantee the best results for all stakeholders in the workplace. The paper recommended among others, that democratic leadership style should be adopted by management in decision making because it is most likely to guarantee industrial peace and institutional harmony as well as goal attainment.*

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## **Introduction**

The utilization of human and material resources of educational institutes and sustaining their existence depend on an effective decision making, management and strategic leadership that is compatible with the changing conditions of the world. Schools are organized to meet needs of the information age of the 21st century and to identify, select and educate students who have leadership potential. One of the basic aspects that sees to the effective organization and management of schools IS the school administrator. Sustainable leadership is of particular importance for schools, and educational institutions.

The success or failure of an organization is determined by the strength and weakness of its administration because most organizational decisions have its implementation and execution by the kind of leadership style adopted by its manager. or administrator. The current global upsurge towards the acquisition of quality sector on the education has created anxiety in the hearts of stakeholders in the education sector on the types of leadership styles which school administrations should adopt for effective and efficient implementation of national curriculum which would pave way for high educational output (Igwe, 2017). Leadership styles could be seen as the leader's choice of ways of planning, leading, controlling, staffing and organizing resources in attainment of set goals. School as a formal organization consists

of large numbers of people whose opinions, ideas and attitudes, interest and experience differ in various ways and dimensions.

Thus, there is need for a dynamic administrator who is knowledgeable in human resource management and educational inputs for meeting both academic, psychological, socio-economic and personal needs of stakeholders in education and school environment.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is very essential for influencing and co-ordinating the behaviours of workers to achieve organizational goals. It is a function of some given personality attributes which is based on notion that on individual's behavior is partly the product of his personality. Robbins (cited in Alfred, and George 2015:35) see leadership as "the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of a vision or set of goals.

Leadership might also be interpreted in simple terms such as getting people to follow or getting people to do things willingly or interpreted more specifically for examples as the use of authority in decision making. It is fundamental in the success of any group and organization. According to Oku (2013), leadership can be interpreted as an attribute of an office or position, as characteristics of a person and a category of actual behavior. As an attribute of an office, teachers have legitimate power over their students just in the same way principals and school heads have formal authority over the teachers. Furthermore, at the classroom level, the teachers leadership influence lies in his duty in making the students obey and compel them to do things that would make the teaching and learning environment conducive for the achievement of instructional objectives.

Ivancivich (1994) identifies a number of sources of power which can be utilized by the teacher in the exercise of his classroom management functions. These include: (a) Reward power (b) Coercive power (c) Expert power (d) Referent power (e) Legitimate power.

Reward power is applied to reward desirable behavior, check lateness and absenteeism among the students. Coercive power is the opposite of reward power and is also known as punishment. It is used by the teacher when the student exhibits undesirable behavior. Expert power lies in the professional knowledge and experience of the subject matter. It is usually exhibited in lesson presentation. Referent power refers to the personal characteristics of the teacher which interests or attracts him to the students. It is upon this attraction that teacher-student relationship is built. Legitimate power is exercised by the teacher by virtue of his position as a school administrator and a disciplinarian.

According to Ubec (2017), the ability of the teacher to blend these powers as situations demand determines his leadership style.

**Leadership Style:** Leadership style could be seen as the leader's choice of ways of planning, leading, controlling, staffing and organizing resources in attainment of set goals. Leadership styles are seen as the characteristic behaviours which a leader exhibits in the performance of his role. These characteristic behaviours are solidly informed by values, attitudes, norms and orientation.

Every organization whether formal or informal has an administrator who stands to run the affairs of it. It could be a church, mosque, business venture, charity home, school, etc. School as a formal organization is headed by different educational administrators at different levels

for different purposes. Mgbachi defined leadership as the consistent behavior patterns of a leader as perceived by those around him. Every leader has a peculiar way he handles the people who work for his organization. This style does not refer to the way the leader thinks or behaves but how those around him perceive his behaviour.

**Democratic Leadership Style:** This is a joint decision making approach to the attainment of set goals. This implies that workers are allowed to participate in decision making. The leader also allows two way channel of communication where he will give proper information to staff on what is happening and also give workers the opportunity to give their feedback. This kind of leadership style gives room for staff innovation and development. It is relationship or workers-oriented and ensure team building and cooperation, accommodate respect for diverse views or opinions of group members and fosters employee-employer relationship. It is important to note that this style of leadership is useful when there is significant number of inexperienced employees in the organization, and little time to handle issues or when it is becoming very expensive to run.

**Autocratic Leadership Style:** This is also known as authoritarian approach to decision making. Here, the leader does not allow or give room for workers input, views about their needs and interest. Hence the leader focuses on one way downwards communication.

The leader makes decision alone and gives order or instruction to its followers to carry out. He mainly makes use of threat and punishment to compel staff or workers to work hard. This leadership style is sometimes effective when: There are existence of untrained staff, when all other styles have been applied, there is existence of limited time to make a decision, and when the power of a leader is being challenged by subordinates.

**Laissez Faire Leadership Style:** Another name for this leadership style is liberal or hands off style. This is where the leaders gives his employees much freedom to make decisions and implement the decisions without much direction or guidance. Here, leaders rely on subordinates to individually determine the objective of their activities, the means to achieve them as well as the implementation process. This style of leadership is necessary when there is much preference of high skilled, experienced and knowledgeable staff to handle a particular issue, if not it will give room to bribery, corruption, unethical behavior and moral delinquency etc. (Jonathan and Olukayode 2022).

**Transactional Leadership Style:** Transactional leadership style involves leaders that do routine jobs who lead within the rules and regulations of the organization with emphasis on positive and negative reinforcement in realization of goals. Transactional leaders motivate followers through exchange, for example, accomplished work in exchange for rewards or preference. This leadership style gives room for mastery and competence (Jonathan etal, 2022). It leads to stability rather than change in an organization.

**Transformational Leadership Style:** This is an opposite of transactional style. This is a leadership style that involves the ability to bring changes in organization by creating vision and showing how to execute such a vision that will bring a position change in organization. Here the leader has the ability to recognize the need for change, to created a vision, to guide that change and to execute the change effectively (Griffin and Moorhead cited in Alfred etal 2015:43). It involves inspiring followers to commit to a shared vision that provides meaning to their work and causing them to focus on the collective good more than just their own short-term self interest and to perform beyond expectation of result. The aim of transformational

leadership style is to transform people and the organization.

**Management:** Management means accomplishment of responsibility in the pursuit of organizational goals, efficiently and effectively by integrating the work of people through planning, organizing, leading and controlling organizations resources. Management involves decision making, planning, organizing and coordinating activities of group or different structures. It can also refer to the seniority structure of staff members within an organization. Management can also be viewed as human action, including design, to facilitate the production of useful outcomes from a system.

School Management involves planning, organizing and directing activities in a school, effectively utilizing human and material resource In order to accomplish the school's objectives. The purpose or need for management in all organization including schools is to ensure the coordination of the activities in an organization and make sure all staff or employees are working together toward the accomplishment of the organizations goals.

**Decision-Making:** Decision making is a process that guides actions, based on the beliefs, values and previous experiences of individual. It is said to be a process of conscious and purposeful selection of one solution from a set of other alternatives for solving a problem. Decision-making can be defined as the process of selecting a right and effective course of action from two or more alternatives for the purpose of achieving a desired result. It is a leadership skill that managers to assess a situation and determine how the organization may proceed successfully. A decision is an act of choice where in an executive forms a conclusion about what must be done in a given situation. A decision represents behavior chosen from a number of alternatives. Decision making is sine qua non to education administration because a school like a formal organization is basically a decision making environment.

**School Administration:** School is defined as a place where children are taught or trained to have a certain skill, type of behavior or way of thinking. On the other hand, administration is an all-round harmonization and utilization of available human, fiscal, material, time resource in the most effective and efficient means in order to achieve personal or corporate goals and objectives. It is a series of predetermine actions geared towards ensuring adequate involvement of stake holders in realization of common goals.

School administration is all about planning, directing, organizing and controlling human or material resource in educational setting. It involves the management of all school operations, from creating a safe learning environment to managing the school budget. The success or failure of an organization is determined by the strength and weakness of its administration because most organizational decisions have its implementation and execution by the kind of leadership style adopted by its administrators (Jonathan etal 2012).

School administrators are the professionals who as a whole carry out these different administrative tasks that keep a school running smoothly. School as a formal organization is headed by different educational administrators at different levels for different purposes.

### **Relationship between Leadership Style and School Management**

Leadership and management have a close relationship which makes it very difficult to separate. The success of a manager depends on good leadership and the success of a leader depends on effective management to execute such vision or make such vision to come into realization. This is because leadership is one of the integral elements of management. The

success of every organization needs both effective leadership and management. Managers use leadership abilities to guide their team members and improve their organizations and in many cases leadership may require managers to make decisions that affect employees.

A school like any other organization needs leadership to sustain its continuous existence. For school managers to be effective and successful need effective leadership. Leaders create vision, strategies and broader plans while managers are there to put resources in place to achieve organizational goals. So without effective leadership, management will never be a success.

School management in conjunction with effective leadership style in conjunction with management can keep the school properly aligned with its environment. While administration involves delegating responsibilities and exerting authority, leadership provides direction to check the company's goals and motivating the employees to achieve them. Furthermore, leadership as a process connotes the ability of a leader to assert influence and authority over a group of people to achieve a predetermined common goal. Decision making in school management involves a certain amount of deliberation and social actions in order to choose from a number of options when faced with a problem. Therefore, if the school organization lacks a leader who processes appropriate leadership behavior or style, it may jeopardize their ability of the organization to achieve common desired goals.

### **Application of Leadership Style for Effective School Administration**

The understanding and application of leadership style by educational administrators will enable them to adequately utilize and adopt expected leadership styles for holistic and productive management of their institutions. Making decisions and supervision of subordinates who make decisions beneath the superior are two important tasks of leadership. This is because a well crafted decision helps an organization to move in the right direction and systematizing how these decisions are made can ensure that those choices made are the best for the organization.

Autocratic leadership style is used when leaders tell their employees what they want done and how they want it accomplished. This leadership style is often time effective when driving towards matters that need urgent action and results. According to Igwe (2017), this style of leadership results in the group members reacting aggressively and uninterestingly to the authority in the work environment. It is suggested that autocratic style should be rarely used by educational managers as this might bring about dispute and conflicting interest of parties involved of which in the long run would affect the overall achievement of goals.

Application of democratic leadership style involves stakeholders in the decision making or planning process in determining what, how, who, when, and for whom of everything. It is participatory by its constant calls for meetings; mutual benefits of all teachers and recognition of students' interests, better decisions are made. According to Ogunsawo (cited in Jonathan etal 2022) the democratic leadership style provides climate of sense of unity in pursuit of set goals. It is a sign of strength rather than weakness in an organization.

On the other hand, application of laissez-faire leadership style of management is best suitable for those who are self-motivated and are capable of working with experienced, educated, and highly skilled employees. It assumes that people are innately motivated, naturally like to work and therefore there should be no rules since everybody has an inborn sense of

responsibility. However, this style of leadership may result in indiscipline due to non-enforcement of rules and regulations in a school leading to poor performance.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Leadership is an indispensable factor for the realization of organizational goal. School as an organization can realize its goals through efficient and effective management school administrators and good leadership style. Since decision making is an integral part of leadership, it implies therefore that what leadership is to an organization, decision making is to leadership.

It is often said that excellent leaders go with their gut to make decisions. They are able to trust themselves and their expertise and won't get stuck in the cycle of over-thinking. The more a leader knows about subject matters or issues, the more experienced and reliable the intuition will be. Therefore, school administrators must endeavour to invest in personal and professional development. To improve decision making in school management, there is also need for school administrators to adopt and practice all the leadership styles when the need and circumstances arise.

With respect to classroom management decision making and school administration, studies have shown that transformational leadership has a direct impact on teachers performance, especially when teacher willfully take steps to improve their classroom practice (studyonline.ecu.edu.au 2019). Findings also show that transformational leadership increases teachers' job satisfaction and strengthens their commitment to professional growth. However, this paper is advocating for democratic style of leadership because experience suggests that it is one of the best and most preferred among effective school leadership practices. Democratic leadership encourages conversation among peers about a problem, and from teamwork and collegial approach, a consensus solution to organizational problem is found.

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