

The Impact of Leadership Style on Employee Commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Employees play a crucial role in the day to day transactions of an organization, which can only be carried out when the employees are duly committed to their workplace. Employee commitment to an organization can also be achieved when there is an acceptable form of leadership style. A situation whereby these factors are not in existence in an organization, there is every tendency that such organization will begin to encounter a gradual phase of turnover or extinction. It is against this situation that this study deems it fit to investigate the impact of leadership style (LS) on employee commitment (EC) of Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria. Inferential research design was adopted. Population consists of 74 employees. These 74 employees served as the sample size for this study. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted as the sampling technique for this study as well. The reliability coefficient for each of the variable ranged from 0.75. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that Leadership Style significant influence on Employee Commitment (Adj. $R^2 = 0.001$; $p = 0.338$). In light of this, the study recommended that management of Ministry of Education in Niger, Nigeria have got to promote to a large extent a transformational and transactional leadership styles in their organization. This will go a long way in reducing high level of turnover among employees in organizations which will in turn enhance commitment of employees.

Keywords: Employee commitment, Leadership style, Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership

Word counts: 237

Introduction

Employee commitment is the level of enthusiasm an employee has towards the tasks assigned at a workplace. It is the feeling of responsibility that a person has towards the goals, mission, and

vision of an organization. Employees who are engaged in their work and committed to their organizations give the institution where she works a crucial competitive advantage which will lead to high productivity. Commitment has been identified as an important human factor that is a major determinant of job effectiveness and intrinsic motivation which helps to stimulate employees to perform actions for achieving the desired results (Agyare, Yuhui, Mensah, Aidoo & Ansah 2018). Employee commitment has become increasingly topical in workplace environment which has resulted in challenges of attracting and retaining high-quality employees, and sustaining employee morale, motivation and performance. It is one of the most fundamental concepts that have been explored in relation to workforce motivation and productivity.

The commitment of employees in every organization is at the heart of human resources management (HRM) practice, the achievement of organizational goals and the success of many organizations. Lack of employee commitment results from a negative psychosomatic consequence that can accrue when individuals perceive poor congruence between themselves and their work environment which can result in turnover and attrition (Ahluwalia, 2017). While the ability to attract, retain and develop competent employees is important for all organizations, it is amplified for employees due to their bad attitude towards work which results from poor or less supervision compared to private sector, the complexity and ambiguity of work, the global demand for and shortages of quality employees, the aging workforce and the high costs associated with replacing competent employee (Ahmad, Bibi & Majid, 2017). Though employees are the most priceless assets of an organization, they are also the backbone of an organization, since highly committed employees play an important role in the success of any civil service, management seeking competitive advantage need to understand the organizational commitment of employees to their organization and the factors associated with such commitment.

Understanding the commitment of employees to an organization is important in the context of the tendency for employees to have a strong orientation and commitment to the occupation or profession rather than to the organization. In any event, the organizational and professional commitment of employees may not necessarily be incompatible. Commitment to their profession has been positively associated with intrinsic motivation to engage in work, and with greater administrative productivity. The commitment of employees to their workplace has, historically, had three distinguishable, yet related dimensions referred to as affective, normative and

continuance commitment (Alsiewi & Agil, 2019). These three factors will be used to measure employee commitment in by consider how it could be influenced by leadership of management in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria.

Leadership style is a leader's method of providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people. Leadership definitions keep evolving as scholars try to simplify the definition to enable people to understand the concept easily and to make it less complicated and more practical in daily business. For centuries, leadership studies have been obsessed with leaders, and with identifying the characteristics required for effective leadership. Even though it is clearly stated that it is difficult to give leadership a single definition, people keep exploring this area of study. It shows that there is no stopping point for leadership study and it has become an essential element in an organization. Leadership is a process of encouraging and helping others to do something of their own volition, neither because it is required nor because of the fear of consequences of non-compliance (Jones, 2002). Leadership is thus a process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically towards objectives. It is the human factor that binds a group together and motivates it toward goals transforming the group's potential into reality. Leadership has many definitions but no real consensus; essentially it is a relationship through which one person influences the behavior or actions of other people.

In everyday speech, leadership and management are used interchangeably. Management is about developing, planning and controlling organizational resources while leadership is about the aligning of people to the expected outcomes of the vision. In order to lead, one must be able to manage and hence the two are closely related (Rai & Sinha, 2018). Leaders use their influence factor to draw people towards achieving goals and to maximize the results in the organization. The influence factor does not mean that the leader has power over the followers and controls or directs them to the goals the leaders want to achieve; rather it is the leader's own actions that affect the followers' behavior and actions. Generally, followers will emulate the leader's acts and behaviours thus leading to the achievement of the desired goals. Leadership style is defined as the pattern of behaviors that leaders display during their work with and through others. Leadership style is the pattern of interactions between leaders and subordinates. Leadership style can be interpreted as leadership behavior with two obviously independent dimensions: task (transformational leadership) and interpersonal (transactional leadership) (Burns 2017).

Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate the impact of leadership style on employee commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theory and Hypothesis Development

Transformational – Transactional Leadership Theory

The leadership process is built on the leader and subordinates' mutual help to one another for motivation and morale, according to Burn's Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 2017). This theory is based on an ethical and moral value system that defines leadership as the process of empowering subordinates and managing change in an organization by altering the qualities, conduct, and role model status of a leader. Burns characterized transformational leadership as the use of power for the greater good, with a focus on ethical leadership values. It is based on a leader's attitude, attributes and abilities to lead by example and influence subordinates. Leaders who use this technique do not believe in micro - management and instead build a trusting environment for their employees, allowing them to take ownership of the decisions they make in the roles they are assigned. Employees are encouraged to be creative and come up with unique solutions to issues or problems under this management style. Leaders-in-waiting is also provided training, organizations that aim to implement new and sophisticated technologies in order to improve staff and process efficiency, save cost and time, and increase production and profit should seek out a transformational leadership strategy. In order for new technology to be embraced, executives must be employee-centric in terms of inspiring, training and improving morale.

A transforming leader, according to Burns, raises followers' awareness of desired outcomes and the process to achieve them; motivates followers to look beyond their own interest by prioritizing the team, organization and society; and shift followers' level of need from lower to higher, from safety and security to achievement. Transformational leaders motivate their subordinates to collaborate on common goals by changing their attitudes, expectations, and so on. Burns also mentioned some noteworthy findings from his transformational leadership research, claiming that the transformation approach benefits both leaders and subordinates. If transformational

leadership is on the right track, both leaders and subordinates will benefit from each other's progress, through increasing morale and motivation to achieve a common goal.

According to Burns' thesis, transformational leaders employ the transformational leadership style to empower their subordinates, train and develop subordinates to maximize their skills, and create cultural change in addition to establishing a long-term vision. Bass built on Burns' research by including the psychological aspect of leadership in his concept. Burns' transformational leadership philosophy is based on the following principles: It is usually preferable to work as a team for a shared or common purpose for greater outcomes and performance than to work as individuals. A leader with high morals encourages others to a big extent, causing others to follow him/her with excitement.

Transactional leadership occurs when "one person takes the initiative in making contact with others to exchange valuable commodities". This type of leadership is best described as "exchange politics", in which a prominent figure, for example, exchanges jobs for votes. The strategy is outcome-oriented, adheres to an organization's current structure, and evaluates performance using the organization's current structure, and evaluates performance using the organization's incentives and punishments system. Transactional leaders have official power and obligations in an organization. This type of leader is in charge of maintaining order by monitoring individual performance and facilitating group performance, they set expectations for their personnel based on pre-determined criteria; performance reviews are the most common technique for reviewing employee performance. Transactional or managerial, supervisors work best with employees who understand their responsibilities and are motivated by the reward-penalty system.

Transactional leadership is typically associated with two characteristics. Leadership is viewed as a productive and efficient relationship between the leader and the followers in the first conditional reward. The organization with which these followers are associated rewards them with bonuses, merits or acknowledgment when they reach specified milestones, the benefits of this dependent reward are entirely decided by the agreement of the leader and followers. Exception management is the second trait of transactional leaders; this can be accomplished in a variety of active and passive methods. Active leaders are always looking for ways to increase employee performance

while passive management assesses only after the task is completed and problems are reported after they have occurred.

The research on transformational and transactional leadership and organizational commitment is based on the evidence that leadership influencing variables such as the external environment, motivation and human needs can have an impact on employee organization commitment. Transformational leadership theory recognizes the importance of leaders in motivating followers to make sacrifices, commit to business goals, and achieve more than expected. The satisfying of the following three requirements is claimed to be the foundation of transformational leadership philosophy: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Four characteristics of transformative leadership are charisma, motivation, thoughtfulness and stimulation. Since transformational leaders showcase charisma that inspires followers, engage in inspiring communication that energizes followers, show regard for followers' needs and cultivate independent thinking; their actions may have an impact on organizational commitment.

Transformational leadership has a positive impact on employees' tendency to participate in altruistic pro-organizational conduct. It also has the potential to alter employee attitudes of trust, admiration, respect, loyalty and motivation. Employee self-efficacy, self-determination and commitment have all been linked to transformational leadership. The full range of leadership introduces four elements of transformational leadership: Individualized Consideration is the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower and listens to the follower's concerns and needs. The leader gives empathy and support, keeps communication open and places challenges before the followers which also encompasses the need for respect and celebrates the individual contribution that each follower can make to the team. The followers have a will and aspirations for self-development and have intrinsic motivation for their tasks. Intellectual Stimulation is the degree to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks and solicits followers' ideas. Leaders with this style stimulate and encourage creativity in their followers, they nurture and develop people who think independently. For such a leader, learning is a value and unexpected situations are seen as opportunities to learn, the followers ask questions, think deeply about things and figure out better ways to execute their tasks. Inspirational Motivation – the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers, they challenge followers with high standards, communicate

optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Followers need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act, the visionary aspects of leadership are supported by communication skills that make the vision understandable, precise, powerful and engaging. The followers are willing to invest more effort in their tasks, they are encouraged and optimistic about the future and believe in their abilities. Idealized Influence Provides a role model for high ethical behavior, instills pride, gains respect and trust.

As a development tool, transformational leadership has spread already in all sectors of western societies, including governmental organizations. The reward or consequence exchange that is tied to performance is the emphasis of transactional leadership theory. Transactional leadership employs external motivators to encourage employees to commit to the company's goals, they use instrumental compliance; subordinates accept the direction of the leader so that they receive rewards or avoid punishment, for influencing their subordinates. Transactional leaders use contingent rewards for motivating followers, in the initial concept of transactional leadership, there were two components namely, contingent rewards and passive management by exception. Bass, Avolio & Alto (1990) expanded the conception of transactional leadership to include three components; they were contingent rewards, active and passive management by exception. Contingent rewards refer to leaders' behaviors that focus on clarifying roles and task requirements and providing followers with material and psychological rewards contingent on the fulfillment of contractual obligations. Management by exception (Active) refers to the active vigilance of a leader whose goal is to ensure that standards are met. Management by exception (Passive) refers to leaders only intervening after non-compliance has occurred or when mistakes have already happened.

Without a doubt, transactional leadership has a place in academia, the transactional method is easy to understand and use for administrative employees. The benefits of transactional leadership are very contingent on the circumstances; these benefits will not be realized in all institutional settings. There are some clear advantages where it can be advantageous, but there are also some drawbacks. It encourages productivity; it provides a clear and easy-to-understand structure; it rewards individuals who are self-motivated and follow instructions; its benefits tend to be realized quickly when achieving short-term goals; workers have clearly defined rewards and penalties; it encourages productivity; it provides a clear and easy-to-understand structure; and it is great for

work environments where structure and systems must be replicated. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, has some disadvantages: it does not work well in flexible work environments; it only rewards employees with perks or money; no other real motivators are used; it does not reward individuals who take personal initiative; it can be perceived as limiting and impersonal; employee creativity is limited or non-existent; the structures can be very rigid; and it does not reward individuals who take personal initiative.

This concept was born out of a need to characterize a leader's power strategy in relation to the organization values and objectives. By infusing moral principles and ethics into leadership, Bush (2020) transforms the concept of a general leader of power into a Transformational leader of power and purpose. In contrast to egoistic leadership, it was a people-centered strategy. According to Bush (2020), leadership is a distinct identity and a component of the management concept, and Secretaries must ensure that a relevant and effective leadership style is implemented in accordance with management. Furthermore, Burns changed people's conceptions of leadership as a philosophy rather than a skill by advancing the concept of a leader to lead. With the help of theory, the essential difference between a leader and a manager can be better understood, individuals are encouraged to optimize their efforts in order to maximize their accomplishments in this leadership style. The ability of transformational leaders to set a vision and motivate team members to pursue it by clearly explaining it is the heart of this. Recent researchers, like Bass, have re-interpreted and updated this theory by adding the psychological concept of leadership into a number of key leadership attributes. In view of the above discussion, this hypothesis was formulated;

H₁: leadership style significantly impact employee commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria

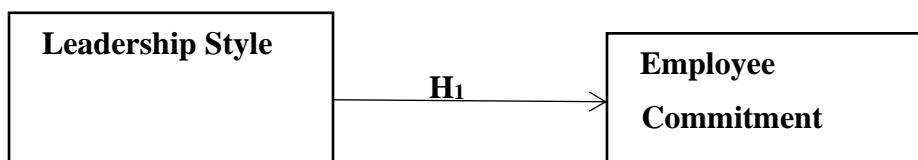


Fig.1: Source: Researcher, 2024

Leadership Style and Employee Commitment

Previous research has devoted a great deal of attention to the relationship between leadership behaviour and organizational commitment. They have shown that organizational commitment is greater for employees whose leaders encourage their participation in decision-making, who treat them with consideration, fairness and who are supportive of them (Bass, Avolio & Alto, 1990). A scholar indicated supervision as one of the critical organizational factors that can influence employee commitment to the organization, a relationship between commitment and leadership style has been reported in the organizational and management works of literature. Several studies found a positive relationship between the two variables; another scholar indicated that ethical leadership behavior has a positive impact on employee organizational commitment and employee trust in leaders.

A study on the investigation of the relationship between employees' organizational commitment dimensions and leadership styles found positive correlations between a transformational leadership style and affective and normative employee commitments whereas a laissez-faire leadership style was found to be negatively associated with employees' affective commitment (Vigoda & Cohen, 2018). To sum up, as we have seen in this part there is a lot in the literature that describes leadership styles and employee commitment from a multitude of angles and views. Many articles also repeat the same topics and the author chose to include this just to show that the findings are similar but from a wide range of domains. In many types of research in the literature, it was determined that there was a strong relationship between leadership styles and employee commitment. These studies were generally conducted in business organizations, yet there have been few types of research conducted in education organizations.

Conversely, a scholar explored how the relationship between authentic leadership and employee change commitment is moderated by cynical attitudes towards change (Goss, Hayward & Tolmay, 2004). Their results demonstrated that employees' commitment to change increases with authentic leadership when cynicism is at a lower level than when it is at a higher level, which is consistent with the previous findings. In terms of other organizational factors, researchers examined the function of organizational perceptions of fairness and optimism in perceiving continuance change commitment. Their findings indicated that perceived justice is a contributing

factor to optimism, as these concepts are linked with continuance commitment to change. Meanwhile, it was established that employees' responsibility toward change is affected by internal communication. A researcher conducted further studies on employee resilience and its' mediating effect on the association between four aspects: knowledge-sharing structure, inquiry and discourse, learning culture and affective commitment to change (Avolio, 2011). Their study exhibited a strong association between the studied aspects and they discovered that the relationship is only partially mediated by employee resilience.

A study offers a new understanding of value congruence as their findings revealed that value congruence and employees' change commitment were positively and significantly related. Mansor's research, conducted on middle-level officers in Malaysia, discovered that affective commitment to change is positively influenced by variables of emotional quotient, which includes: self-emotional evaluation, others' emotional evaluation, and usage of emotion and control of emotion (Bogler, 2001). Several scholars investigated the effects of individual personality traits, which were moderated by the organizational culture, on employees' change commitment, the results established that these two variables are indeed related. While most of the studies reviewed concentrated on positive variables as antecedents of employee commitment to change, a scholar investigated the stressor factors which are linked to a commitment to change. The outcomes of the study determined that there is a far-reaching impact on change commitment from these four factors: responsibility overload, responsibility ambiguity, interpersonal conflict and organizational restrictions. Furthermore, internal communication acts as a moderator for responsibility ambiguity and change commitment.

Several scholars investigated the relationship between educational managers' thinking styles and transformational leadership styles in Sari branch of Islamic Azad University; the findings revealed that the transformational leadership style of the educational managers is an ideal-influence model. A scholar investigated the relationship between the transformational leadership style and reduced job alienation among the employees of Islamic Azad University and the findings indicated that the transformational leadership style has a strong impact on the reduction of University employees' job alienation. A researcher studied the correlations between leadership style (transformational and transactional) and job satisfaction; the results indicated that leadership style has a direct and indirect impact on job satisfaction and motivation. The concept of

transformational leadership styles of managers showed the greatest effect on job satisfaction. A researcher investigated the relationship between leadership style (transformational and pragmatic) and job involvement of employees at Islamic Azad University and found that there is a relationship between the leadership style and employees' job involvement (Bush, 2020).

Methodology

This study adopted a inferential survey research design as it attempts to study the subset of a population at a point in time and to determine the impact of leadership style on employee commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria. The research instrument (questionnaire) used was administered to a total of 74employees that was sampled from Niger State Ministry of Education. Total enumeration sampling technique was used as the sampling technique because the population is relatively small. Hence, the sample size is 74 employees. To test the hypothesis formulated, the inferential statistics through linear regression analyses. The data collected for the study were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 29. The hypothesis in the study is tested at level of 0.05 significance.

Result

Table 1: Summary of significant influence of leadership style on employee commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria.

Table 4.3.1 Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.115 ^a	.013	-.001	.399

a. Predictors: (Constant) Leadership style						
Coefficients						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.618	.198		13.208	.000
	Leadership style	-.072	.075	-.115	-.965	.338
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment						

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.148	1	.148	.932	.338 ^b
	Residual	11.132	70	.159		
	Total	11.280	71			
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership style						
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a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment						
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Source: Field Survey, 2024

The findings of the regression analysis for the impact of leadership styles on employee commitment is shown in Table 4.1. The study's model's capacity for prediction was evaluated using R. The findings in the table indicate that there is a statistically marginally significant link between leadership styles and employee commitment ($R = .115$), which is relatively favorable.

The employee commitment under consideration varied by 11.5%, and the remaining 88.5% was explained by an external variable other than leadership style, according to the coefficient of determination (R^2) of .013. This finding indicates that leadership style had a 11.5% impact on the growth of employee commitment of employees in Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria. The table also contains the findings of a regression test that used the ANOVA (overall model significance). This experiment looked at whether the leadership style affected employee commitment state significantly. The F-value (.932) and p-value (0.338), which are not statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence interval, can be used to explain this percent confidence interval, can be used to explain this. The results showed that the leadership styles present in Niger State Ministry of Education had little impact on the employee commitment of employees in Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria. The results of the regression coefficients show that a change in leadership styles will result in an increase of .115 in the employee commitment of employees in Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria. This study rejected the first null hypothesis (H_01), which claims that employee commitment of employees in Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria will not be significantly impacted by leadership style ($R^2 = .013$, $F = .932$, $p = 0.338$).

Discussion of Findings

The hypothesis showed that there was significant impact leadership style on employee commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria. This result correlates with previous study such as during a study on the investigation of the relationship between employees' organizational commitment dimensions and leadership styles found positive correlations between a transformational leadership style and affective and normative employee commitments whereas a laissez-faire leadership style was found to be negatively associated with employees' affective commitment (Vigoda & Cohen, 2018). To sum up, as we have seen in this part there is a lot in the literature that describes leadership styles and employee commitment from a multitude of angles and views. Many articles also repeat the same topics and the author chose to include this

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organizational restrictions. Furthermore, internal communication acts as a moderator for responsibility ambiguity and change commitment.

Summary of Findings

This study examined the impact of leadership style on employee commitment in Ministry of Education, Niger State, Nigeria. Result from the analyses of the data collected and the interpretation done, the findings of the study were:

- 1 Transactional leadership style was found to be a more prominent form of leadership style existing in Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria than transformational leadership style.
- 2 The commitment level of employees of Niger State Ministry of Education is very much low.
- 3 It was also found in this study that leadership style did significantly impact employee commitment of employees of Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has proven that a situation whereby transactional leadership style is a more dominant form of leadership style existing in the ministry, to a large extent the workforce of that ministry will remain less committed to the ministry they are working for. Also, when employees fail to listen to their bosses or when there is low level of trust on the part of employees, therefore, to a large extent there will also be low level commitment in the context of affective, continuance and normative form of commitment by the workforce to the ministry they are working for. The study has been able to establish that transformational leadership style is a more acceptable form of leadership style will go a long way in bringing about employee commitment.

Recommendations

1. Leaders at all levels ministry of education should adopt transformational leadership skills; which (skills) should be extended to their subordinates in order to make them (subordinates) holistically committed to the organization.
2. In order to ensure high employee commitment in the ministry, a blend of both transformational and transactional leadership styles should be integrated and practiced by management personnel of government institutions.

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