Analysis of Principals' Leadership Styles in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State: Implications for Counselling

Destiny Ebimie Anomietei
Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Port Harcourt, Rivers State
destinyanomietei@gmail.com

Abstract
This study sought to determine if there is any difference in the leadership styles practiced by principals of private and public schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. A survey research design was adopted. One research question was raised and three research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant level. Fifty principals and two hundred teachers were selected through the use of simple random sampling technique. Data was collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire and were analyzed with simple percentage and t - statistics. The findings revealed that the leadership style practiced by public and private secondary school principals were very similar. The study also revealed that there was significant similarity in the leadership styles of public and private school principals; significant similarity in male and female principals' leadership behaviour as perceived by their teachers; as well as that of leadership behaviour exhibited by both public and private secondary school principals. Based on the findings of the study, some implications for counselling were highlighted. It was recommended, among others, that school principals should be democratic and flexible in the adoption of leadership styles to suit different situations and the school climate.
Keywords: principal, administration, private, public, schools

Introduction
Leadership is a complex phenomenon. It is a subject of concern among scholars, managers and administrators. One reason for their concern is that the best way to bring about change in an organization is to change the behaviour of the organization's leader (Chen, 1990). In secondary schools, the principals are the leaders and each has his/her characteristic attitudes, values and behaviour. These attributes combined, spell the leadership style, which has been described as "the behaviour pattern that a person exhibits when attempting to influence the activities of others as perceived by others" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

One of the unique and complex organizations in the world of education is schools. Schools are called complex, because in these institutions there are a variety of resources that are inter-related (Pauzi et al., 2013). School principals are under increasing pressure to ensure that each and every student in their charge receives a high quality education and graduate not only at the right time but ready to transit to college and the work place (Riddle, 2010). This is different from the ways schools operated in the 20th century when a school was successful as long as the majority of its students succeeded. Today's 21st century schools are asked to ensure that all students succeed. The change in focus from some students to all students succeeding comes at the same time schools are facing tightening budgets,

declining revenues, and scarce resources, and at a time when student's needs are becoming more complex.

In today's school, the principal is no longer just a manager. He or she is also the instructional leader of the school. Today, school leaders must redesign their school to align instruction, school initiatives and scarce resources in order to prepare students for success. School leaders must create schools that make it easy for students, teachers and counsellors to succeed (Riddle, 2010). Leaders are expected to lead schools through the challenges posed by an increasing complex environment, curriculum standards, achievement benchmarks, programmatic requirements, and other policy directives that may generate complicated and unpredictable requirements for schools (Marshall, 2014). Akomolafe (2005) demonstrated that school leadership has both direct and indirect implications leading to the student's achievement. Similarly, Oyetunji (2006) hypothesizes that in an organization like a school, the importance of leadership is reflected in every aspect of the school like instructional practice, academic achievement, student's discipline, counselling, and school climate, to mention but a few. If the principal is a man of principles, hardworking and honest, then one will demand the same from one's teachers; and if the head himself is idle and shirk–worker, then his team-mates will also be like him (Gobir, 2005).

Guidance and counselling in Nigerian secondary schools setting is gaining a new dawn as the educational mission in Nigeria has expanded to include guidance and counselling services in elementary, secondary and higher institutions. The school system is in a mobile state of transition. This is an upward mobility from one class to another and one programme to another. Points of transition are always points of conflict. These conflicts usually arise due to change in environment. Every school administrator must brace up for the challenges at these critical periods. It is at this juncture that guidance and counselling comes in handy in the school. The school counsellor will in no small way help the school administrator, the teachers and the students to overcome these difficulties and challenges, thereby leading to the smooth administration of the school (Anomietei, 2016).

It is an established fact that the leadership style practiced in an organization is a critical factor to success. The basic cause of inefficiency of an institution is lack in administration or leadership and incompetency in its head (Akomolafe, 2005; Oyetunji, 2006; Mehdinezhad & Sardarzah, 2016). In Bayelsa State, especially Yenagoa, school principal leadership style has been a serious problem, with shortage of qualified managers. School principal's recruitment takes place randomly from school teachers. However, leading the school with poor skills may lead to low school achievement which would affect all aspects of the school activities, including counselling. It has been observed that private schools tend to perform better than public schools. Even among the private schools, some still do better than others. This scenario also plays out in the public schools. As pointed out by Tony and Gorge (2006), principals in Africa face serious challenges because they are often appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with an implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership.

Numerous studies have been carried out on leadership in schools and other organizations with varied results. For instance, Alam (2012) and Duze (2012) noted that the leadership styles practiced in the various public and private schools were quite similar. Rajbhandari

(2006) carried out studies in which they identified the major leadership styles as democratic, laissez faire, translational, autocratic and transactional. Goleman (2000) observed that the autocratic leadership style has a lot of advantages attached to it, especially when a goal is to be met at the shortest possible time. Herrara (2010) carried out a study which reported that teachers perceived that their principals had a high level of engagement in intellectual stimulation and input, and low level engagement in culture, order, discipline, resource and focus.

Findings by Naeemollah et al. (2010) showed that female managers exhibit or show managerial behaviour better than men. Pingle (2006) stated that from the perspective of teachers, principals displaying a higher level of leadership behaviour are more successful. Manning (2004) showed that female principals pay more attention to the activities of teachers and understand their expectations better than male principals. Abwalla (2014) found out that the democratic leadership style was the most practiced leadership style in general secondary schools.

Furthermore, Tandoh (2011) highlighted that whenever managers employed very strict leadership behaviour, there was a decrease in the performance of employees. He recommended that leaders should have a balanced leadership style to equally reflect much interest in people to enhance employee performance for a competitive advantage. Day et al. (2001) concluded that good leaders have clear sets of personal and educational values which represent their moral purposes for the school. Abdulghani (2016) found out that principals leadership style is strongly related to teachers' job satisfaction. This study therefore aimed to identify leadership styles practiced by principals in both public and private secondary schools and to establish if there is any significant difference between public and private schools in the practice of leadership styles in school administration; and its implications for counselling.

Research question
    1. What are the leadership styles practiced by public and private secondary school principals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state?

Hypotheses
    Ho1: There is no significant difference in leadership styles of private and public secondary school principals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.
    Ho2: There is no significant difference in leadership behaviour of male and female principals in private and public secondary schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.
    Ho3: There is no significant difference in principal's leadership behaviour as observed by teachers of public and private schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Methodology
This study was conducted in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital. With an estimated population of about 352,285 persons, the local government has the largest population in Bayelsa State (2006 population census). The predominant ethnic groups in the local government area are Ijaw, Epie and Atissa. This study adopted the survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it collects data from a wide area by selecting a representative sample of a large population. The target population includes all male and female principals and teachers in public and private (government approved)

secondary schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. There are twelve public secondary schools and eighty four government approved private secondary schools in Yenagoa local government area. The sample size for this study was fifty (50) principals and two hundred (200) teachers, giving a total sample size of two hundred and fifty (250) respondents. The simple random sampling technique was adopted for this study.

Ethical wise, participants were informed of the purpose of the study and what was required of them. Respondents who obliged participated voluntarily without any form of incentives. Participants were told not to give their names in order to keep their responses anonymous.

The instrument for data collection for this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was titled "Principals Leadership Style in School Administration Questionnaire (PLSSAQ)". The questionnaire had two sections, A and B. Section A focused on the background information of the respondents such as name of school, school type, sex, gender of school principal, age, highest educational attainment, years of teaching, as well as if trained in school leadership. Section B measured variables of the three objectives in three parts – I, II and III. Part I had six items, Part II had twenty-eight items, while Part III had thirteen items. It was calibrated on a four point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The validity of the instrument was verified by the use of face, content and construct validation techniques by two lecturers of the Department of Educational Foundation, Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa state. The experts made some corrections and suggestions which were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument used for the survey. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained after development by using Product Moment Correlation Coefficient from Split–half method. The reliability coefficient was 0.78. The instrument for data collection was administered by the researcher and a trained assistant to the targeted sample. All the administered copies of the questionnaire were retrieved the same day thus ensuring 100% rate of return.

To answer the research question, the columns for Strongly Agree and Agree were merged together to form a single column for Agree (SA + A) while Disagree and Strongly Disagree were also merged together to form a single column for Disagree (SD + D). All options, 50% and above agreeing, was accepted. This applied to both public and private schools data. To test the research hypotheses, t-test was used at a significant level of 0.05. If the computed t - values are less than the critical table values, the null hypothesis would be accepted and the alternative hypothesis rejected.

Presentation of results

Research question one (principals only): What are the leadership styles practiced by public and private secondary school principals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state?

Table 1: Leadership styles practiced by public and private school principals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state (n=50).

S/N	Leadership Styles	Public schools				Private schools			
		Agree		Disagree		Agree		Disagree	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Democratic	16	100	-	-	34	100	-	-
2	Autocratic	-	-	16	100	28	82.4	06	17.6
3	Laissez Faire	-	-	16	100	17	50	17	50
4	Transactional	16	100	-	-	34	100	-	-
5	Transformational	16	100	-	-	34	100	-	-
6	Others (if any)	05	33.3	11	66.7	11	32.3	23	67.7

Public = 16;   **Private** = 34

From the results in table 1, it is revealed that item 1(100%), item 4 (100%) and item 5 (100%) scored 50% and above agreeing in public secondary schools; while all items scored 50% and above agreeing in private secondary schools, and are accepted as the leadership styles practiced by public and private secondary school principals in Bayelsa State.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in leadership styles of private and public secondary school principals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Table 2: t - test analysis showing differences in leadership styles by public and private secondary school principals (n = 50).

School principal	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t - cal. value	T - crit. value	Level of significance	Remark
Public	16	100	5.77					Not
Private	34	88.9	9.27	48	0.84	2.01	0.05	Significant
Total	50							

As shown in table 2, the decision is that their leadership styles have no significant difference, as the calculated t -value is 0.84, which is less than the critical table value of 2.01. The hypothesis of no difference in leadership styles is hereby accepted. This confirms that there are similarities in the leadership styles practiced by principals in public and private schools.

Ho2:   There is no significant difference in leadership behaviour of male and female principals in private and public secondary schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Table 3: Summary table of t - test analysis showing differences in leadership behaviour of male and female principals in public and private secondary schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state (n = 50).

Gender of principal	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t - cal. value	T - crit. value	Level of significance	Remark
Male	37	88.23	5.33					Not Significant
Female	13	88.70	4.05	48	0.99	2.01	0.05	
Total	50							

As shown in table 3, the decision is that their leadership behaviour have no significant difference, as the calculated t -value is 0.99, which is less than the critical table value of 2.01. The hypothesis of no significant difference in leadership behaviour is hereby accepted. This shows that there are similarities in the leadership styles practiced by male and female principals.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in principal's leadership behaviour as observed by teachers of public and private schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Table 4: Summary table of t - test analysis showing differences in leadership behaviour of public and private secondary school principals as observed by teachers (n = 200).

School teachers	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t - cal. value	T - crit. value	Level of significance	Remark
Public	79	73.5	4.47					Not Significant
Private	121	65.0	3.83	198	0.71	1.96	0.05	
Total	200							

As shown in table 4, the decision is that their leadership behaviour are similar, as the calculated t -value is 0.71, which is lower than the critical table value of 1.96. The hypothesis of no difference in leadership behaviour is hereby accepted. This shows that there are similarities in leadership behaviour by principals in public and private schools, as perceived by the teachers.

Discussion of the findings
It can be inferred from the study that there is no difference in the leadership styles adopted by public and private secondary school principals. It was observed that democratic, transactional and transformational leadership styles are more practiced regularly by both public and private secondary school principals. This is in line with previous studies by Alam (2012), Duze (2012), Rajbhandari (2006) in which they noted that public schools leaders tend to be more democratic when discharging their duties.

The testing of research hypotheses one, two and three showed that there was significant similarity in the leadership styles of public and private school principals; significant similarity in male and female principals' behaviour as perceived by their teachers; as well as that of leadership behaviour exhibited by both public and private secondary school

principals. The findings confirmed that of Tandoh (2011), whose study specifically identified the leadership behaviours exhibited by managers. It was recommended to have a balanced leadership style to equally reflect much interest in people to enhance employee performance for a competitive advantage.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the study that public and private school principals' leadership styles are quite similar. Although, they may vary from one another in few aspects. The study revealed that leadership styles of public and private secondary school principals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state are encouraging, and depicts transformational and transactionary leadership. It can also be inferred from the study that teachers in public and private schools have a good understanding and appraisal of the leadership qualities and behaviour of their principals.

Implications for counselling

The findings of the study has the following implications for the school counsellor:

1. The school counsellor should endeavour to involve all members of the school, academic, non-academic, management and students alike, when planning any counselling activity in the school. This simply means being democratic in one's approach to counselling related activities.

2. An indifferent attitude to counselling activities by the school counsellor would not yield much positive outcomes since it would be carried out lackadaisically, and without enthusiasm.

3. The counsellor should make it a point of duty to always liaise with management and teachers on critical issues involving the nature of his work. They should be initiated on the modalities of the school, taking into consideration the school culture and environment.

4. The counsellor should encourage the school principal and his management team to cultivate a democratic approach to school administration by having dialogues with teachers and other school staff before implementation of new policies to avoid disputes.

5. An "open - door" policy should be adopted by the counsellor. This implies being receptive to advice, criticism and new ideas. This also includes being friendly, accommodating and ready to attend to prospective clients at all times.

6. Teachers tend to flow better with democratically minded principals, and as such the counsellors should bear this in mind when discharging their professional duties.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School principals should employ the democratic leadership style more if they intend to carry the academic and non-academic staff along in the day to day administration of the school.

2.   The autocratic leadership style, which is often dictatorial and a one-man show, should be seldom used by principals, except in emergency situations in which targets need to be met urgently.

3. Principals should endeavour to interact more with their academic and non-academic personnel in order to build rapport, trust and unity between them. This would go a long way in promoting administrative effectiveness and productivity.

4. School principals should adapt their leadership styles to suit the school climate and environment in which they find themselves. A leadership style that may work in such situation is flexibility in approach which is the master key.

5. It is also recommended to have a balanced leadership style to equally reflect much interest in people to enhance employee performance for a competitive advantage. Leaders who show interest in their workers are deemed more effective.

6. Finally, all present and prospective secondary school principals should undergo an intensive course on leadership styles, in order to help them manage and adapt to varying situations that may arise in the course of discharging their administrative duties.

References

Abdulghani, N. K. (2016). A correlational analysis of principal's leadership styles on teacher's job satisfaction in girls private elementary schools in Saudi Arabia. A doctoral dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University.

Abwalla, J. (2014). The principal's leadership style and teacher's performance in secondary schools of Gambella regional state. Master's thesis, Jimma University.

Akomolafe, C. O. (2005). A comparative study of resource situations and teaching job performance in public/private secondary schools in Ekiti state. *Journal of Education, Administration and Planning,* 5(2), 46 – 51.

Alam, S. (2012). Crafting leadership for educational change: head teacher's perspective about a tailor-made professional development programme. *International Journal of Social Science and Education,* 2(1), 1 – 18.

Anomietei, D. E. (2016). Guidance and counselling in school administration in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state. An unpublished seminar paper presented to the Post Graduate School, National Open University of Nigeria. December, 2016.

Chen, M. T. (1990). Relationship between principal's leadership styles and school climate in senior industrial high schools in Taiwan, the Republic of China. An unpublished PhD thesis, Iowa State University. Retrieved from http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd.

Day, C., Harris, A., & Hadfield, M. (2001). Challenging the orthodoxy of effective school leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 4(1), 39 – 56.

Duze, C. O. (2012). Comparative analysis of principal's management strategies in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities (AFRREV IJAH),* 1(1), 239 – 256.

Gobir, B. G. (2005). Public – private schools, debate lessons to learn. *Nigerian Journal of Education, Administration and Planning,* 5(2), 118 - 124.

Goleman, D. (2000). *Leadership that gets Results*. UK: Harvard Business Review Press.

Herrara, R. (2010). Principal's leadership and school effectiveness: Perspective from principals and teachers. *Unpublished Doctor of Education* dissertation, Western Michigan University.

Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. (1982). *Management of Organizational Behaviour: Utilizing Human Resources*. Englewood cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall Inc.

Manning, R. L. (2004). A comparative analysis of leadership skills; military, corporate, and educational as a basis for diagnostic principal assessment. A doctoral dissertation, Drextel University, Philadelphia, USA.

Marshall, I. A. (2014). Principal's leadership styles and teacher satisfaction among a sample of secondary school teachers in Barbados. *Caribbean Educational Research Journal,* 2(2), 105 – 116.

Mehdinezhad, V., & Sardarzahi, Z. (2016). Leadership behaviour and its relation with principal's management experience. *New Approach in Educational Research,* 5(1), 11 – 16.

Naeemollah, K., Mohammad, I. H., Muhammad, S., Uddin, M. N., & Shafqat, H. (2010). The managerial behaviour of secondary school heads in Punjab, Pakistan. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 5(4), 189 – 192.

Oyetunji, C. O. (2006). The relationship between leadership style and school climate in Botswana secondary schools. Unpublished doctorate dissertation, University of South Africa.

Pauzi, M., Apadi, S., & Rahmat, M. (2013). The analysis of school principal's leadership style and supervision model in improving of teacher performance in Madrasah Aliyah at Jambi city. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR),* 5(9), 1220 – 1225.

Pingle, T. (2006). Leadership practices of elementary school principals. *Academic leadership: The Online Journal*, 4(2), Article 4. DOI:10.58809/XVGH3692.

Rajbhandari, M. S. (2006). Dominant leadership styles in schools. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net.

Riddle, M. (2010). *Addressing the Challenges of 21st Century Schools through Principal – Counsellors' Collaboration*. McGraw-Hill publishers.

Tandoh, V. C. (2011). Effect of leadership behaviours on employee performance in Guinness Ghana Breweries limited. Unpublished Master's thesis, Kwame Nkurumah University of Science and Technology.

Tony, B., & Gorge, K. (2006). New principals in Africa: Preparation, induction and practice. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 44(4), 359 – 375.