PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AND STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

Amaefule, Marcella M. C. & Amaechi, Anderson Iheanyi
Department of Educational Founadations
Veritas University, Abuja
E-mail: marcefule@yahoo.com & andypriestph961@gmail.com

Abstract
This study investigated the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Four research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. The study used a self-developed questionnaire titled 'Principals Leadership Style on Students Discipline (PLSD)' as the instrument for data collection. The total population of the study was 41,790 made up of teachers, principals and SSII students. A stratified random sampling technique with the help of Taro Yamen was employed to select the sample size of 492 students, 153 teachers and 18 principals. Test-retest method was adopted to test the reliability of the instrument and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 and 0.81were obtained for the students and school authorities instruments respectively. Simple linear regression was used to answer the research questions. The result revealed an R^2 of 0.57, 0.45, 0.53, and 0.79 for autocratic, democratic, transactional and translational leadership styles respectively. This showed that principal's autocratic leadership style to a very moderate extent influences student discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. It also revealed that principal's democratic leadership style has low influence on students discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Furthermore, the result also revealed that principal transactional leadership style to a very moderate extent influences students discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State while Principals transformational leadership style to a very high extent influences students discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Therefore, it was recommended among others that training and development programmes should be given to

principals and vice principals to update them with current global leadership style that achieve results.

Keywords: *Principal, Leadership style, Discipline, Public Secondary School Students, Rivers State*

Introduction
In recent times, the increasing spate of indiscipline (the breakdown of law and order) is manifested in many secondary schools across the country. This malaise requires necessary attention. This is because everywhere you go to one is bound to notice acts of indiscipline, in schools, universities, government offices, hospitals, on our roads, at workplaces, in the market, in some homes and in churches and mosques. Asiyai (2012) opined that an undisciplined child is an uncontrollable child and can do any damage in school when he does not get what he wants. Indiscipline is a problem in our schools and it is also an issue of national concern. This menace has received much attention and has always been an utmost matter for teachers, policy makers and the public in general. Indiscipline takes many forms including the general behaviour of students not wanting to obey even simple procedures, aggressiveness among students, violence against teachers as well as vandalization of school properties by students in schools. These acts make the school environment dangerous and educational attainment of the learners may be disrupted. One of the significant issues of concern is that violence and indiscipline in schools have resulted in teachers having less time to deliver lessons in order to effectively manage classroom disruption, as well as facing many other problems.

In Nigeria, secondary school students perpetrate acts of indiscipline which is contrary to the school rules and regulations. They leave school premises without permission (Adegbesan, 2011).

It is extremely very difficult for any school to achieve its goals and objectives without discipline. Discipline in school is an essential part of learning because it is a very vital element in all schools, and in real terms, it is the epicenter of success of a school as it ensures attainment of educational goals. In line with this, Umezinwa and Elendu (2012) opined that discipline is a role of administration and therefore the school principals should offer good management skills in order to

have students with acceptable behaviour. Based on this, schools are meant to teach morals that are needed within the school and outside the school which are necessary as students grow up to be responsible members of the society (Ouma, Simatwa, and Serem, 2013).

According to Squelch (2010), discipline is guidance and instruction that is meant to teach and enhance a social order where the rights and responsibilities of students in the school are balanced. This assertion is supported by Kiprop (2012) who pointed out that discipline in school is a function of the administration, and therefore the principal as a leader must have a clear discipline policy of what is required for the successful management of school discipline. Furthermore, student discipline in a school can be accessed from the degree of academic achievement or from students' behaviour.

Discipline according to Ogunsanwo (2011) is the action by management to enforce organizational standards. In a school situation, discipline means order and system in doing things, regularity and obedience to commands. It is thus self-control attained through mental and moral training of high order, formation of good habits and obedience to socially approved standard behaviour. Therefore, a school is said to have good discipline if its students are obedient to the school norms and this can be judged within classrooms, dormitories or play-grounds or on the street, in the market, in the home as well as the behaviour of the individuals when they start playing the role of productive citizens (Pandya, 2011).

Discipline is a rudimentary ingredient that plays a crucial role in school system which insists on upholding the moral values of students (Schon, 2010). This view was supported by Blandford (2012) who asserted that discipline is essential if any organization including school has to succeed in the attainment of its goals. The quality of student discipline is an important factor in determining the intellectual outcome of students and schools (Algar, 2014). This is because, discipline provides a sense of direction among learners and hence commitment to school values. Moreover, a disciplined student body has a likelihood of increasing teachers' job satisfaction, which is a critical correlate of commitment to institutional goals (Imber and Neidt, 2010). Besides, Gibbs (2014) opined that the success of any teaching process is determined upon the quality of students' discipline.

However, it may be difficult to adequately install discipline in school without good principals' leadership styles. Hence, school principals are the most influential persons in the secondary educational institution. At the grass root level, the management available resources rest solely upon the school principal. Inclusive in principals' roles is the provision of effective administrative skills which cannot be separated from their leadership styles. Every school principal is in a unique position as the manager or administrator of the `resources in their schools. The school administrator is a leader of the staff and the students of the school. He is expected to be knowledgeable in the area of administration and able to address difficult issues or problems at different points in time. Leadership is concerned with human experience and energy in an organized group and the concept is also of prime importance to administration. The leadership style of the principal is demonstrated in his abilities which make him to be recognized as leader of a group. Many people strongly believe even when there is an educational plan, good school programmers, adequate staff and facilities, what is more important is good administrative leadership to coordinate all these for the progress and success of the school. In a situation where the leadership style of the principal is ineffective, even the best school programme, the most adequate resources and the most motivational staff and students will be rendered unproductive. Therefore, the importance of good leadership style in an organization cannot be overemphasized. The key for an effective leader is the ability to lead effectively, coordinate a complex situation and show concern through the effective leadership style for students' discipline. To ensure the possibility, principals too must provide conductive atmosphere in the school. The type of leadership style being operated in the school could make students to achieve their objectives.

Therefore, leadership style is a leader's style of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. According to Megha (2014), leadership styles are the behavioural patterns that a leader adopts to influence the behaviour of his followers, i.e. the way he gives directions to his subordinates and motivates them to accomplish the given objectives. Further, leadership style is a particular behaviour applied by a leader to motivate subordinates to achieve the objectives of the organization. Myron (2010) opined that leadership

styles influence how the organizational human, physical and financial resources are utilized and further clarifies that leadership style affects how people relate in the organization as it influences the type of communication that develops between the leadership and the staff. Leadership also influences the school climate and students discipline. This is to say that the leadership styles adopted by school principal must significantly determine the students' discipline in the school (Bear, 2010). Most importantly, schools must come up with strategies to prevent and stop students' indiscipline acts. Principals and educational managers thus must apply appropriate disciplinary action to maintain the organizational standards necessary for optimum achievement of goals. Furthermore, the principal's administrative behaviour has a lot of impact on the students' discipline whose effect spills over to the overall performance of the school (Kibaka, 2010). This is because leadership focuses on specific purposes and seeks to meet the needs of the member/group by performing the desired functions and involves creating change, not maintaining the status quo (D'Souza, 2016). Therefore, the leadership style adopted by the principal should be properly and carefully used to guide and motivate subordinates. Hence, the leadership style is the determining factor to whether the school will thrive or not. In this case, the study considers the following leadership styles, list the stylesin this paragraph and discuss them one after the other in subsequent paragraphs without highlighting them:

Autocratic leadership style is a leadership style whereby the leader makes decisions without consulting his team members, even if their input would be useful. An autocratic leader works best when there is no need for team input on the decision. Hence, this style can be demoralizing, and it can lead to high levels of absenteeism and staff turnover. The use of autocratic leadership style by the principals can affect students 'discipline. If the principals closely monitor students, communicate changes to students in advance and explains his actions to teachers (Kimaru, 2010).

Democratic leadership style consists of leader sharing the decision-making abilities with group members by promoting the interests of the group members and by practicing social equality (Woods, 2010). Decisions about the organization are arrived at after consultations and communication with various people in the organization. The leader tries as much as possible to make each

individual feel that he is important in the organization. Communication is multi-directional while ideas are exchanged between employees and the leader. The leader delegates responsibility to those with appropriate qualification, experience and time. In this style a high degree of staff morale is enhanced. The use of democratic leadership has a positive impact on students' discipline whereby there is an open door policy as students are free to see the head of the institution to explain their problems. The school principal tries to make every student feel essential part of the school by involving them before making any decision concerning them. In this, students can give their views to the principal and the principal responses to their views making it a two way communication channel. This type of leadership style motivates all stakeholders since they are involved in all decision making (Mba, 2014). Eyal and Roth (2011) find out that democratic style of leadership is however not appropriate during crisis and when urgent action needs to be taken. Researchers have found that democratic leadership styles consume a lot of time before a decision is made.

Transactional leadership style focuses on results, conforms to the existing structure of an organization and measures success according to that organization's system of rewards and penalties. Transactional leaders have formal authority and positions of responsibility in an organization. This type of leader is responsible for maintaining routine by managing individual performance and facilitating group performance. This type of leader sets the criteria for their workers according to previously defined requirements. Performance reviews are the most common way to judge employee performance. Transactional or managerial, leaders work best with employees who know their jobs and are motivated by the reward-penalty system. The status quo of an organization is maintained through transactional leadership. Transactional leadership style in the schools involves punishments and rewards used to reinforce discipline. This style is used to influence the discipline of students positively especially where the students are encouraged to follow and adhere to school rules and regulations (Wood, 2010).

Transformational leadership is a type of leadership not limited by followers' perception. The main objective is to work to change or transform their followers' needs and redirect their thinking. Leaders who follow the transformation style of leading, challenge and inspire

their followers with a sense of purpose and excitement. Transformational leaders also create a vision of what they aspire to be and communicate this idea to others (their followers).Transformational leadership style such as charisma, idealized influence, inspirational motivation and individual consideration when practiced by the principals, has a positive bearing on the discipline of the students, especially the application of guidance and counselling (Gibbs, 2012).

The problem of this study is that indiscipline among secondary school students leads to various negative consequences, such as; destruction of school property, assault, indecent behaviour such as rape and in extreme cases death of students, poor academic achievement, and sexual assault, sneaking out of school, theft, fighting, vandalism, absenteeism, drug abuse, lateness, bullying and truancy among others. In fact, the acts of students' indiscipline is becoming alarming and posing a great challenge to everybody, educational administrators, teachers, students, parents and the society at large. To a great extent, the culture of students' indiscipline is rampant in the State. In as much as the Nigerian Association of Educational Administrators and planners (NAEAP), the government and stakeholders have been making efforts to instill discipline in schools such as strengthening of board of management to deal decisively with this problem and training of administrators and teachers through workshops, organization of seminars and instituting strategies for guidance and counseling department in schools. The problem of indiscipline has continued to increase. However, as the search for discipline in Nigerian secondary schools continues, this study is an attempt to provide a solution to the problems that constrained the realization of discipline in Nigerian secondary schools.

Research Questions
The following research questions guided the study:
1. To what extent does principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does principals' democratic leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

3. To what extent does principals' transactional leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
4. To what extent does principals' transformational leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Methodology

The design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey design. The population of this study comprised of all the public SS11 secondary school students, teachers and principals in Rivers State. There are total of 276 public secondary schools in the state. The principals and teachers (school authorities) are 7895 (7619 for teachers and 276 principals), while 33,753 are SS11 students (Rivers State Schools Board, 2019). This brings the total population to 41,790. The sample was drawn through multi stage sampling procedure. The sample size of 681 was used for the study. The number is made up of 171 school authorities (153 teachers and 18 principals) and 492 SS11 students all from Rivers State. The research instrument used for the collection of data was a structured questionnaire titled "Principals Leadership Style on Students Discipline (PLSD). The instrument had a total of 32 items. The instrument was subjected to a construct validity using Cronbach Alpha and a validity index of 0.91 was obtained. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the test-retest method was adopted. The responses were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 and 0.81 were obtained for the students and school authorities instruments respectively. These values therefore showed that the instruments were reliable. In this study, the researcher answered the research questions using simple linear regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings and Discussion

Research Question one: To what extent does principals' autocratic leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Simple Linear Regression of The Extent to Which Principals' Autocratic Leadership Style Influence Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

R	R^2	Adj.R^2	Std. Error	β
0.76	0.57	0.17	2.25	0.42

The results on Table 1 showed regression coefficient R= 0.76, R^2 =0.57, adjusted R^2 = 0.17, standard error = 2.25 while β=0.42, From the R^2 value, it is seen that principals autocratic leadership accounted for about 57% of the variance in students discipline in public secondary schools. The β also reveals that as the values of principals' autocratic leadership increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.42 increase in the values of students discipline in public secondary school. The value of R^2 shows that to a very moderate extent, principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does principals' democratic leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Simple linear regression of the extent to which principals' democratic leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

R	R^2	Adj.R^2	Std. Erro	β
0.67	0.45	0.21	2.12	0.42

The results on table 2 showed regression coefficient R= 0.67, R^2 =0.45, adjusted R^2 = 0.21, standard error = 2.12 while β=0.42, From the R^2 value, it is seen that principals' democratic leadership style accounted for about 45% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary schools. The β also reveals that as the values of principals' democratic leadership style increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.42 increase in the values of students' discipline in public secondary school. The value of R^2 shows that to a very moderate extent, principals'

democratic leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does principals' transactional leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression of the extent to which Principals' 'Transactional Leadership Style Influence Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

.73	0.53	0.41	0.43	0.28

The results on table 3 showed regression coefficient R= 0.73; R^2 =0.53; adjusted R^2 = 0.41; standard error = 0.43 and beta value β = 0.28. From the R^2 value, it is seen that Principals Transactional Leadership Style accounted for about 53% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary schools. The β also reveals that as the values of Principals' Transactional Leadership Style increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.28 increase in the values of Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools. The value of R^2 shows that to a very moderate extent Principals Transactional Leadership Style Influences Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Four: To what extent does principals' transformational leadership style influence students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 4: Simple Linear Regression of the extent to which Principals Transformational Leadership Style Influence Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

R	R^2	Adj.R^2	Std. Error	β
0.89	0.79	0.21	0.39	0.10

The results on table 4 showed regression coefficient R= 0.89, R^2 =0.79, adjusted R^2 = 0.21, standard error = 0.39 while β=0.10, From the R^2 value, it is seen that principals' transformational leadership style accounted for about 79% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary school. The β also reveals that as the values of principals' transformational leadership style increases by a unit, there is a

corresponding 0.10 increases in the values of students' discipline in public secondary school. The value of R^2 shows that to a very high extent principals' transformational leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion

Table 1 showed regression coefficient R= 0.76, R^2 =0.57, adjusted R^2 = 0.17, standard error = 2.25 while β=0.42, From the R^2 value, it is seen that principal's autocratic leadership accounted for about 57% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary schools. The β also revealed that as the values of principals autocratic leadership increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.42 increase in the values of students discipline in public secondary school. The value of R^2 shows that to a very moderate extent, principals' autocratic leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Thus, the result of this finding is in line with that of Kimaru (2010) who opined that autocratic leadership style instils fear on the subordinates and that the fear instilled by this leadership style could lead to student indiscipline as a mechanism to overcome the fear or evade any disciplinary action from the school principals.

Table 2 had 8 items and when subjected to a simple linear regression it showed regression coefficient R= 0.67, R^2 =0.45, adjusted R^2 = 0.21, standard error = 2.12 while β=0.42, From the R^2 value, it is seen that principals' democratic leadership style accounted for about 45% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary schools. The β also reveals that as the values of principals' democratic leadership style increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.42 increase in the values of students' discipline in public secondary school. The value of R^2 shows that to a very moderate extent principals' democratic leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This study is in accordance with that of, D'Souza (2016) who said that, democratic principles play major roles in promoting teachers' development and improves school discipline. This was also supported by Okumbe (2012) who stated that democratic leadership style brings about enhanced affection and positive sentiments among the teachers and the students.

Table 3 had 8 items and it was subjected to a simple linear regression analysis which showed regression coefficient R= 0.73; R^2

=0.53; adjusted R^2 = 0.41; standard error = 0.43 and beta value β = 0.28. From the R^2 value, it is seen that Principals' Transactional Leadership Style accounted for about 53% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary schools. The β also reveals that as the values of Principals' Transactional Leadership Style increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.28 increase in the values of Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools. The value of R^2 shows that to a very moderate extent Principals Transactional Leadership Style Influences Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State. This study is in line with that of Ali et al., (2014) who opined that as a method to control indiscipline, it can be aligned with the behaviourist philosophy which emphasizes shaping behaviour through the use of rewards and punishment.

Table 4 has 8 items and when it was subjected into a simple linear regression it showed regression coefficient R= 0.89, R^2 =0.79, adjusted R^2 = 0.21, standard error = 0.39 while β=0.10, From the R^2 value, it is seen that principals' transformational leadership style accounted for about 79% of the variance in students' discipline in public secondary school. The β also reveals that as the values of principals' transformational leadership style increases by a unit, there is a corresponding 0.10 increases in the values of students' discipline in public secondary school. The value of R^2 shows that to a very high extent principals' transformational leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding is in line with that of Kibet, Kindiki, Kitiliand Sang (2012) who opined that transformational leaders motivate staff and students to work hard for the common good of the school and whereby discipline is enhanced in an objective way. They also said that transformational leaders on the other hand emphasize that leaders and subordinates unite together to pursue higher order common goals such that both leaders and followers are able to raise each other to higher levels of motivation.

Conclusion
Conclusively, this study revealed that Autocratic Principal Leadership Style has a moderate influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Democratic leadership style has a low influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State. It further revealed that transactional has moderate influence on

students discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State while transformational leadership style has high influence on students discipline in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:
The principals' should alternate autocratic, democratic, transactional and transformational leadership styles when the need arises.

Also training and development programme should be given to principals and vice principals to update them with current global leadership styles that achieve results.

Since there is no single best leadership style for any situation, the Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB) should ensure that the leadership style utilized by principals is one that improves students' discipline.

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