

Influence of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on Motivation of Academic Staff in Nigerian Universities

Obadara E. Olabanji¹ and Alaka A. Abayomi²

¹Department of Educational Management, Tai Solarin University of Education

²Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Islamic University in Uganda

¹doctorobadara@yahoo.co.uk, ²yomibunmi1972@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The study drew the sample of 10 universities in the south west Nigeria, five state owned and five federal owned, 100 lecturers from each university, which amounted to 1000 lecturers using simple random sampling technique. The study developed and used two sets of questionnaires tagged “Transformational and Transactional Leadership Questionnaire (TTLQ)” and “Motivation of Workers Questionnaire (MWQ)” with reliability coefficient (r) of 0.75 and 0.72 respectively. The study used multiple regression analysis for the data analysis. While the null hypotheses developed for the study were tested at .05 level of significance. The findings revealed that both transformational and transactional leadership contributed significantly to the motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. It is therefore recommended among others that Nigerian universities need transformational leaders who possess high degree of integrity and are motivated to lead people to higher levels of performance towards achievement of educational goals.

Keywords: Leadership; Performance; Universities; Motivation; Lecturers.

Introduction

Since human beings are invested into the organization for the purpose of achieving its goals and objectives, all efforts should be made to see that they put in their best towards this achievement. It is a fact that an employee needs a little extra push to keep him working with interest, vigour and pride. An organization or establishment should use a variety of techniques to inspire its employees with the view to making them more productive (Obadara, 2012).

Over the last century, two specific leadership theories have evolved: transactional leaders who clarify the roles and task requirements of followers towards established goals, and transformational leaders who inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of organizations. Transactional leadership, concisely put, seeks to maintain stability rather than promoting change within an organization through regular economic and social exchanges that achieve specific goals for both the leaders and their followers (Lussier & Achua, 2004). Transactional leaders aspire to encourage consistent performance from followers that allows them to meet agreed-upon goals (Bryant, 2003). They use rewards and punishments to promote performance, thereby making the leader-follower relationship an economic exchange transaction (Barnett, 2003; Gellis, 2001; Jung & Avolio, 1999). Followers may be rewarded for achieving agreed-upon objectives (known as contingent reward leadership). Leaders might also choose to engage in management by exception (active/passive) where they engage in transactions that, for example, focus on mistakes or delay decisions (Barbuto, 2005; Barnett, McCormick & Conners, 2001).

Following Bryant (2003), transactional leaders have three characteristics. First, they work with team members to determine unequivocal goals and make certain workers get promised rewards for achieving those goals. Second, they exchange rewards (and promises of rewards) for workers' effort. Third, they respond to the immediate self-interests of followers if those interests can be met while the job is being done. So, transactional leadership involves specified exchanges of effort for reward and a close relationship between goals and rewards.

Compared with transactional leadership, transformational leadership tends to be associated with a more enduring leader-follower relationship. It is based more on trust and commitment than contractual agreements (Jung & Avolio, 1999) and it centres on organizational change through emphasis on new values

and alternative visions of the future that surpass the status quo (Gellis, 2001). Whereas transactional leaders manage organizations by satisfying followers' self-interest, transformational leaders inspire and stimulate followers to set aside those interests (to some degree), replacing them with the collective or team purpose. By nurturing followers' personal capacities and abilities, transformational leaders are held to have strong positive influences on followers' motivation and their ability to achieve or even surpass goals (Barbuto, 2005; Feinberg, Ostroff & Burke, 2005; Spreitzer, Perttula & Xin, 2005).

Transformational leadership comprises four interdependent components – known commonly as the four 'Is' – which, when combined, have an additive effect that yields performance beyond expectations – a key distinction from transactional leadership (Gellis, 2001; Hall, Johnson, Wysocki & Kepner, 2002; Kelly, 2003). They are: Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence (charisma) is based on attributes and behaviours that build confidence and trust and provide a role model that followers seek to emulate (Simic, 2008; Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2003). Transformational leaders are "admired, respected, and trusted" (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003, p. 208). The focus is the leader in person, rather than her/his contextual authority. Thus, transformational leadership may be demonstrated by anyone in an organization in any type of position.

Inspirational motivation sees transformational leaders express an appealing conception of the future, offer followers the opportunity to see meaning in their work, and challenge them with high standards. Through motivational speeches and conversations and other public displays of optimism and enthusiasm, highlighting positive outcomes, and stimulating teamwork (Simic, 2008). Transformational leaders encourage followers to become part of the overall organizational culture and environment (Kelly, 2003; Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2003). Though organizational objectives and individual ambitions are satisfied through transactional leadership, the same sense of mutual pursuit of a common purpose is not characteristic of that form of leadership.

Intellectual stimulation involves arousing and changing followers' awareness of problems and their capacity to solve those problems (Kelly, 2003). Transformational leaders empower followers by persuading them to propose new and controversial ideas without fear of punishment or ridicule (Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2003). Individualized consideration involves treating people individually and differently on the basis of their talents and knowledge (Shin & Zhou, 2003) and with the intention of allowing them to reach higher levels of achievement than might otherwise have been achieved (Chekwa, 2001; Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2003). While consideration of individual needs may also be characteristic of transactional leadership, that consideration tends to focus on lower order material requirements.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities. It is therefore intended that the findings of this study would provide the government and the stakeholders in education with the useful recommendations for the improvement of workers' motivation towards achievement of educational goals.

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between transactional leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Research Procedure

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The study drew the sample of 10 universities in the south west Nigeria, five state owned and five federal owned, 100 lecturers from each university, which amounted to 1000 lecturers. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The study developed and used two sets of questionnaires tagged "Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Questionnaire (TTLQ)” and “Motivation of Workers Questionnaire (MWQ)” with reliability coefficient (r) of 0.75 and 0.72 respectively. Multiple regression analysis was employed to analyse the data. While the null hypotheses developed for the study were tested at .05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

The results of the study are presented according to the hypotheses developed for the study.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Table 1: Regression Analysis of Transformational Leadership on Motivation of Academic Staff

R	R Square	Adjusted R	Standard
Error of			the
Estimate		Square	
.524	.431	.318	7.123
F _(4,995) = 12.486 (p<0.05)			

Table 1 shows a coefficient of multiple regression (R) of .524 transformational leadership on motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. It shows the multiple regression square (R²) of .431 and multiple regression square (R²) of .318 (adjusted). It means that about 43.1% of the variance in the motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities is explained by management transformational leadership style (overall). The model is observed to be statistically significantly (F=12.486) =0.0000. Due to this result, the null hypothesis, which states that, “there is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities” is rejected. This significant F-value is an indication that the combination of all the transformational leadership constructs/subscales in contributing to motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities could not have occurred by chance.

Table 2: Parameter Estimate of Transformational Leadership subscales on Motivation of Academic Staff

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta	t	
Idealized Influence	.604	.144	.186	4.423	.000*
Inspirational Motivation	.389	.193	.114	2.940	.004*
Intellectual Stimulation	.685	.160	.155	5.024	.000*
Individualized Consideration	.369	.172	.106	2.870	.002*
(Constant)	7.460	3.241		2.068	.004

* Significant at p<0.05

Table 2 shows the relative contribution of each transformational leadership subscale to the prediction of academic staff motivation. From the table 2 above, the standardized regression weight associated with the subscales reveals that all the transformational leadership constructs: idealized influence (β= .186), inspirational motivation (β= .114), intellectual stimulation (β= .155), and individualized consideration (β= .106) each contributed significantly to academic staff motivation. The values of the standardized regression weights associated with these constructs indicate that, idealized influence is the most potent contributor to

the motivation of academic staff in the Nigerian universities followed by intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration in that order.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between transactional leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Transactional Leadership on Motivation of Academic Staff

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
.581	.331	.298	4.112

$F_{(2,997)} = 9.916 (p < 0.05)$

Table 3 shows a multiple correlation (R) of .581 of transactional leadership on motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities. It reveals a multiple regression square (R²) of .331 and multiple regression square (R²) of .298 (adjusted). It means that about 33.1% of the variance in the motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities is explained by management transactional leadership style (overall). The observed F-ratio is 9.916 (significant at the 0.05 level). Due to this result, the null hypothesis, which states that, “there is no significant relationship between transactional leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities” is rejected. This significant F-value is an indication that the combination of all the transactional leadership constructs/subscales in contributing to motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities could not have occurred by chance.

Table 4: Parameter Estimate of Transactional Leadership Subscales on Motivation of Academic Staff

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta	t	
Contingent Reward	1.820	.182	.152	8.324	.000*
Management-by-Exception	1.329	.198	.114	6.128	.000*
(Constant)	3.643	2.533		1.353	.132

* Significant at p<0.05

Table 4 shows the relative contribution of each factor of the transactional leadership style to motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities. As shown in the table 4 above, the standardized regression weights associated with the subscales indicate that the two constructs of transactional leadership: contingent reward ($\beta = .152$), and management-by-exception (active and passive) ($\beta = .114$) each contributed significantly to motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities. The values of the standardized regression weights associated with these subscales indicate that contingent reward is the most potent contributor to the motivation of academic staff followed by management-by-exception.

Discussion of Findings

The result of this study found that there is significant relationship between transformational leadership and motivation of academic staff; and significant relationship between transactional leadership and motivation of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. This finding is supported by Brown & Moshavi (2002), who observed that both transformational and transactional leadership have significant influence on the motivation of workers. This present finding shows that about 43.1% and 33.1% of the variance in the motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities is explained by transformational leadership and transactional leadership respectively.

Transformational leadership has been described as behaviour that transcends the need for rewards and appeals to the followers' higher order needs, inspiring them to act in the best interest of the organization rather than their own self-interest (Bass, 1998). Tracey and Hinkin (1998) observed that transformational leadership is a process that motivates people by appealing to higher ideals and moral values, defining and articulating a vision of the future, and forming a base of credibility. Conversely, transactional leadership is based on bureaucracy and organizational standards. The difference between transformational and transactional leadership styles can be defined by denoting the transformational style as a leader of innovation and the transactional style as a manager of planning and policy (King, 1994).

The result of this present study also shows that each of the four constructs of transformational leadership contributed significantly to motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities. The construct namely: idealized influence (the attribute in a leader, which inspires followers to possess high moral standards, vision, and sense of purpose. It is a leadership attribute, which makes followers report that their leader is charismatic); inspirational motivation (the leadership attribute, which influences followers to commit themselves to the shared vision of school organization); intellectual stimulation (the leadership quality, which supports the innovations and creativity of followers and challenges them to be actively involved in improving school organization); and individualized consideration (the leadership characteristic of listening, coaching, advising, and encouraging followers to grow). This finding is corroborated by Turan and Sny (1996), who argued that transformational leadership is vision-driven planning for the future and linked innovation, inclusion, and conflict management to transformational leadership behaviours. Also, Berg and Slegers (1996) found that transformational leadership plays a "particularly crucial" role in the development of the innovative capacities of organizations.

It is also established by the present study that each of the two constructs of transactional leadership: contingent reward (the leadership behaviour that provides rewards for contracts completed) and management-by-exception (active and passive) a leadership characteristic that provides little or no contact between the leader and the followers contributed significantly to motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities.

Transactional behaviour focuses on the accomplishment of tasks and good worker relationships in exchange for desirable rewards. Transactional leadership may encourage the leader to adapt their style and behaviour to meet the perceived expectations of the followers.

Conclusions

Both transformational and transactional leadership are the leadership influences that contribute positively to the motivation of academic staff in Nigerian universities but in different degrees. Transactional leadership seeks to motivate followers by appealing to their own self-interest. Its principles are to motivate by the exchange process. It can place too much emphasis on bargain or transaction and by its very nature is short-term oriented with the goal of simply maximizing efficiency and profits. Transactional leadership seeks to influence others by exchanging work for wages, but it does not build on the worker's need for meaningful work or tap into their creativity. If utilized as the primary behaviour by a leader it can lead to an environment permeated by position, power, perks and politics. The most effective and beneficial leadership behaviour to motivate workers, achieve long-term success and improved performance is transformational leadership.

Recommendations

Leaders must evaluate the needs and capabilities of their subordinates and then modify their own behaviour to meet those needs and abilities. This means that leaders would need to treat differently individual within their groups in the sub tasks they assign to them. In other words, the leader must direct his responses towards subordinates' capabilities and limitation. This is the provision of individualized consideration, which is one of the transformational leadership subscales.

Another transformational leadership subscale 'Intellectual Stimulation' is the leadership attribute that arouses followers on new ways of problem solving through proactive thinking. Therefore, the use of innovative teaching methodology and lecturers' discretion in selecting the appropriate one for their lessons should be encouraged in Nigerian universities. Finally, Nigerian universities need transformational leaders who possess a high degree of integrity and are motivated to lead people to higher levels of performance towards achievement of educational goals.

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