# EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIPIN EDUCATION

A book of readings in honour of

AbdulRasheed NA'ALLAH

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### Chapter 19

## TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PUPILS' CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS, KWARA STATE

#### **Abstract**

The study examined the relationship between teachers' leadership styles and pupils' participation in classroom activities. Four research questions were answered in this study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Fifty teachers were randomly selected from 5 public and 5 private schools as sample for the study. Two instruments titled "Rating Scale on Teachers' Leadership Style (RSTLS)" and "Rating Scale on Pupils' Classroom Participation (RSPCP)" were used. Data collected were analysed using Descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation as well as inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation, T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Findings from the study revealed that democratic leadership style is the most adopted by primary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis. Also, it was revealed that that there is significant relationship between democratic leadership style and pupils' participation in classroom activities (r = 0.52; p < 0.05). Although, teachers' gender and educational qualification has no significant influence on pupils' participation in classroom activities; (t=0.20; df=47; p>0.05) and  $(F_{(4.5)} = 1.42; P>0.05)$ respectively. It was recommended that teachers of young children should

embrace the democratic style of leading their classrooms for maximum participation on the part of the pupils.

**Keywords**: Classroom activities, Pupils' participation, Teachers' leadership styles

#### Introduction

Investment in education is been advocated for by significant members of the world population especially in developing and under developed countries. This course is justified because education in any form unfolds the innate potentials of any individual and also produces functional persons that will contribute to the societal growth and cope with the advancement and ever-changing world system. For any act of education to be effective, the key actors, that is, teachers play significant roles. They are strong pillars for realization of educational goals and objectives.

The interaction between the teachers and pupils is one of the most important aspects of education but most neglected (Okoroji, Anyanwu&Ukpere, 2014). Mahmood (2007) reveals through direct observation of teachers and pupils inside classroom that a significant level of autonomy enables each teacher to manage and organize his or her own classroom the way he or she prefers to handle it. Therefore, leadership style in the classroom cannot be overemphasized in teaching and learning. It goes a long way in determining the performance of both teachers and the learners. Usually, the classroom teacher who acts as the boss, director, manager, administrator and organizer enjoys relatively higher degree of autonomy. The teacher's choice of career, professional training affects his/her skills, abilities and attitude. According to Mahmood (2007), different types of leadership styles bring about different relationship between the teacher, pupils and their participation in the classroom.

The issue of leadership style in teaching and learning has been raised in many instances, by trying to find out the causes of falling standard in the educational sector of Nigeria. It seems to be out of

the mind, that teachers' leadership style in the classroom is an outstanding determinant of pupils' academic performance (Botha, 2005). Leadership has been observed as fundamental to the success of any group or organization. Educational organisation has to use the available human and material resources effectively to achieve the desired objectives. Greenlee (2007) however expressed that the school directors or administrators cannot and/or should not be the only leaders in school system. It is important to note that, the teachers constitute the largest, the most constant and politically strong group in the school (Lambert, Kent, Reichert, Collay& Dietz, 1997). A number of studies such as Greenlee (2007); Harris and Mujis (2008) examined the leadership role of teachers for improving school outcomes.

York-Barr and Duke (2004) defined teacher leadership as the process of influencing colleagues, school administrators for improving teaching and learning methods with the aims of raising the pupils learning and achievement. Okoroji, Anyanwu and Ukpere (2014) identified different factors responsible for adoption of different leadership styles in schools. They show that gender to a high extent influences the leadership styles used in the classroom teaching and learning. It is believed by many that, male teachers are better in maintaining discipline in the classroom and allow full participation of the pupils in classroom activities. Men prefer a competitive response to conflict which is frequently seen as a win or lose approach, while women work with others to resolve conflict and seek to find a different and more satisfying solution to complex problems rather than those proposed by either side (Northhouse, 2004).

In addition, Okoroji, Anyanwu and Ukpere (2014) revealed in their study that teachers' level of academic qualification has effect on the type of leadership style he/she adopts. York-Barr and Duke (2004) also revealed that teachers of upper basic (8 – 12 grades) apply good leadership style in teaching and learning process. Participating in group discussions, asking questions, seeking help, making good use of class time. If a pupil fails to show any of these

behaviours, it shows that the leadership style used by teacher is not suitable for such pupil.

Furthermore, Okugun (2012) claimed that learners tend to achieve better results when taught by teacher with more years of experience and qualification and they are likely to under achieve when teacher's qualification and experience is low. The interaction between teacher and pupils is one of the major aspects of leadership styles bring about different relationship between the teacher and the pupils and their participation in the classroom activities.

According to Fletcher, Walls, Cook, Madison, and Bridges (2008), there are different types of leadership that influence pupils' participation in classroom activities. These are democratic, autocratic and laissez faire styles of leadership. Each of these has a way of influencing teaching and learning process particularly among primary school children. Democratic is a style of leadership whereby the pupils are fully involved in any efforts aimed at finding solution to the problems and planning the classroom of the organization. The leader in this style makes for easy flow of information to dispel rumours and also provide avenue of steady feedback mechanism. Vain (2000) emphasized that a democratic leader does not normally takes arbitrary orders and decision as he regards the pupils as partner in progress. He is always mindful and sensitive to the needs of the pupils and strives always to motivate them.

Fletcher, et al (2008) further explained that autocratic style of leadership is a type of leadership in which the teacher makes decision alone by its own authority and expects his/her pupils to carry them out without questioning. Under this type of leadership style, certain contribution originating from the pupils which enhance the growth and overall development of the system are disregarded. The teacher regards himself as the sole control in the classroom. He considers his pupils as passive receivers of the instructions, information and knowledge. The leadership in this

case is often characterized by nagging, distrust, suspension as well as lack of effective communication between the teacher and his pupils.

Laissez faire style of leadership seem to get little or no result. A laissez faire teacher may seem to be absent even when physically present in the class. He has little or no effort to affect the situation. This mode of leadership is characterized by indecision and indifference. The leader seldom has a clear vision of organizational goals and develops no policies or programmes. He allows completes freedom to pupils to do as they please. This type of leadership style lack focus and direction. And the teacher is always in a dilemma when situation demanding crucial decision crops up.

All these leadership styles invariably influence the activities carried out in the classroom. Participating in class involves several behaviours such as paying attention, being on task, responding to questions, sharing ideas, airing opinions. In addition, involvement in classroom activities makes the pupils active learners as they ask questions, participate in classroom discussions and contribute in question and answer session. It provides practice for the pupils during the lesson while concept is being developed. Effective teachers deliberately and consciously create avenues for their pupils to be involved overtly in the lesson.

To this end, it is imperative to examined relationship between teachers' leadership style and pupils' participation in classroom activities in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. Specifically, the study identified the leadership styles that is mostly adopted by teachers, examined the relationship between the most adopted leadership style and pupils' participation in classroom activities. Also, the study ascertained whether gender and educational qualification of teachers influences their leadership style in the classroom.

#### **Research Questions**

1. What is the most adopted leadership style by primary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis?

- 2. What is the relationship between the most adopted leadership style and pupils' participation in classroom activities?
- 3. To what extent does teachers' gender influence pupils' participation in classroom activities?
- 4. To what extent does teachers' educational qualification influences pupils' participation in classroom activities?

#### Methodology

The descriptive survey research design adopted for this study. All primary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis constitutes the population for the study. Ten primary schools (5 public and 5 private) were randomly selected from Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. from each school, five teachers were randomly selected and observed during their classroom activities/interaction with the pupils. Hence, a total of 50 teachers participated in the study. Two instruments titled "Rating Scale on Teachers' Leadership Style (RSTLS)" and "Rating Scale on Pupils' Classroom Participation (RSPCP)" were designed by the researcher. Both instruments were validated by experts in childhood/educational research. 0.79 and o73 were obtained as the reliability coefficient of the instrument. Through several observation RSTLS and RSPCP were personally rated by the researcher during her several visit to the selected schools and classrooms. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions 1 while inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions 2, T-test for research questions 3 and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for research questions 4.

Results
Research Question 1: What is the most adopted leadership style by primary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 1 Showing the Most Adopted Leadership Style in Primary School Teachers

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S/N	DEMOCRATIC	N	R	0	F	A	MEAN	STD.D
1	Engages pupils in	3	5	10	20	12	3.660	1.1359
	decision making for the class	(6)	(10)	(20)	(40)			
2	Feel pupils can make meaningful input in the lesson	2 (4)	4 (8)	8 (16)	22 (44)	14 (28)	3.840	1.0568
3	Does welcome suggestion from pupils	3 (6)	4 (8)	11 (22)	18 (36)	14 (28)	3.720	1.1436
4	Considers pupils ideas to be significant in some cases	5 (10)	5 (10)	11 (22)	19 (38)	10 (20)	3.480	1.2162
5	Allows pupils to express their mind about any issue in class	3 (6)	6 (12)	11 (22)	19 (38)	11 (22)	3.580	1.1445

Weighted Average = 3.66

S/N	AUTOCRATIC	N	R	0	F	A	MEAN	STD.D
6	Does not give room	13	12	6	7	12	2.860	1.5909
	for pupils to express themselves	(26)	(24)	(12)	(14)	(24)		
7	Pupils cannot	12	13	7	12	6	2.740	1.3823
	contribute to	(24)	(26)	(14)	(24)	(12)		
	knowledge when							
	the lesson is going							
	on				_			
8	Carries	15	8	9	5	13	2.860	1.5909
	him/herself as the only authority in	(30)	(16)	(18)	(10)	(26)		
	the class	7	7	14	10	12	2.420	1.017/
9	Pupils must not	(14)	(14)	(28)	(20)	(24)	3.420	1.9176
	touch anything in	(14)	(14)	(20)	(20)	(24)		
10	class Does not consider	15	8	13	7	7	3.640	7.5424
10	pupils opinion to	(30)	(16)	(26)	(14)	(14)	3.040	7.3424
	make decision for	(50)	(10)	(-0)	()	(22)		

Weig	ghted Average = 3.10							
S/N	LAISSEZ FAIRE	N	R	О	F	A	MEAN	STD.D
11	Allows pupils to talk whenever and however they feel like in the class	11 (22)	10 (20)	12 (24)	8 (16)	9 (18)	2.880	1.4090
12	Allows children to go out of the class without permission	14 (28)	10 (20)	18 (36)	4 (8)	4 (8)	2.480	1.2162
13	Does not frown at	11 (22)	14 (28)	12 (24)	5 (10)	8 (16)	2.700	1.3590
14	Don't pay attention to pupils' naughty behaviours such as fighting	20 (40)	7 (14)	8 (16)	9 (18)	6 (12)	2.480	1.4741
15	Condole unnecessary noise making in the class	20 (40)	10 (20)	8 (16)	7 (14)	5 (10)	2.340	1.3940

Table 1 shows that the most adopted leadership style by primary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis is democratic which was rated frequently (WA= 3.66). The detailed analysis is as follow: Feel pupils can make meaningful input in the lesson (mean = 3.84),

Weighted Average = 2.58

Does welcome suggestion from pupils (mean = 3.72), Engages pupils in decision making for the class (mean = 3.66), Allows pupils to express their mind about any issue in class (mean = 3.58) and considers pupils ideas to be significant in some cases (mean = 3.48). Autocratic leadership style was rated as the second most adopted leadership style (WA= 3.10): Does not consider pupils opinion to make decision for the class (mean = 3.64), Pupils must not touch anything in class (mean = 3.42), Does not give room for pupils to express themselves (mean = 2.86), Carries him/herself as the only authority in the class (mean = 2.86), Pupils cannot contribute to knowledge when the lesson is going on (mean = 2.74). Laissez leadership style was rated last (WA=2.58): Allows pupils to talk whenever and however they feel like in the class (mean = 2.88), Does not frown at pupils naughty behaviours such as fighting (mean = 2.70), Don't pay attention to pupils naughty behaviours such as fighting (mean = 2.48), Allows children to go out of the class without permission (mean = 2.48), Condole unnecessary noise making in the class (mean = 2.34).

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the most adopted leadership styles and pupils' participation in classroom activities?

Table 2: Summary of PPMC Showing the Relationship between adopted leadership style and pupils' participation

Variable	N	Mean	Std.d	r	Sig.	Remark
Democratic	50	18.280	4.8992			
				0.520	0.000	Significant
Pupils' participation	50	63.700	14.2546			

Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between the most adopted leadership style which is democratic leadership

style and pupils' participation in classroom activities (r = 0.52; p < 0.05).

**Research Question 3:** To what extent does teacher gender influences pupils participation in classroom activities?

Table 3: Summary of t-test showing the differences between pupils' participation in classroom activities based on teachers' gender

Variable	N	Mean	Std.d	df	t	Sig.	Remark
Participation							
Male	25	63.840	10.5502				Not
				47	0.204	0.839	Significant
Female	25	63.000	17.5648				

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in teachers' gender and pupils' participation in classroom activities (t = 0.20; df = 47; p>0.05).

**Research Question 4:** To what extent does teachers' educational qualification influences pupils' participation in classroom activities?

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA showing the Influences of Teachers' Educational Qualification on Pupils' Participation in classroom Activities

Qualification	N	Mean	Std.d	df	F	Sig.	Remark
NCE	7	63.429	7.1614				
BED/BSC	33	60.970	15.4099	4,45	1.422	0.242	Not
M.ED/MSC	3	71.333	5.8595				significant
PHD	6	73.000	13.1453				
OTHERS	1	77.000	_				
Total	50	63.700	14.2546				

Table 4 shows that there is no significant influence of teachers' educational qualification on pupils' participation in classroom activities ( $F_{(4.5)} = 1.42$ ; P>0.05).

#### **Discussion of Findings**

Findings of the study revealed the most adopted leadership style by primary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis is democratic leadership style. This finding is consistent with the findings made by Akerele (2007) who found that the democratic style of leadership is the commonest leadership style used by teachers of primary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding also agreed with Adeyemi (2010) who revealed through his study that learners' participation in learning activities depend largely on how teachers direct daily classroom activities.

The results also revealed that there is significant relationship between democratic leadership style and pupils' participation in classroom activities. This is seen in teachers-pupils relationship in teaching and learning process, which agrees with Hopkins (2003) and Oku (2006) that democratic leadership style encourages class participation in decision making. The pupil seems to be satisfied with it because it gives them sense of belonging and recognized their worth as people that can contribute to the success of the classroom.

The study reveals that there is no significant relationship between teachers' gender and pupils' participation in classroom activities. This result does not support Okoroji, Anyanwu and Ukpere (2014) who revealed that gender to a high extent, influences the leadership style used in classroom. Similarly, female teachers according to them demonstrate democratic leadership style than their male counterparts in daily classroom routine. It also contradicts MacGregor (2002) who expressed that men prefer a competitive response to conflict which is frequently seen as a "win or lose" approach, while female leaders work with others to resolve conflict and seek to find different and more satisfying

approach to complex problems. In addition, this finding corresponds with Karunanayake (2012) who argues that the adoption and effectiveness of teachers' leadership style is based on the leadership situation and not their gender.

This result shows that there is no significant influence of teachers' educational qualification on pupils' participation in classroom activities. It implies that the educational qualification of teachers does not influence pupils' participation in classroom activities. This result agrees with Osisioma (2002) that good paper qualification does not have positive correlation with the performance of the possessors of such certificates in their activities in the classroom. Academic qualification of teachers should not have much to do with the test of their proficiency in carrying out the teaching activities. Although, it negates Kasule (2007); Odolowu and Agarry (2014) who asserts that no education can rise above its teachers, and no nation can rise above its teachers.

#### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study which stemmed from the data collected and analyses with the result obtained, a conclusion was drawn that democratic leadership style is the most adopted leadership style in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. There is a significant relationship between the democratic leadership style and pupils' participation in classroom activities in Ilorin metropolis. The importance of teachers' leadership style in schools cannot be neglected. Teachers proffer suitable solutions to any of the causes of under achievement encounter in school environment. The influence of teachers' leadership style on pupils' participation is far beyond classroom activities, it may affect pupil's personality development such as emotional stability, confident, depressed among others which eventually affects the type of adult the children grow into.

#### Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations were made;

- Since leadership style of a teacher contribute to the achievement of educational goals and objective, democratic leadership style should be encouraged especially at the early childhood and primary school classrooms.
- Both male and female teachers should be exposed to constant and relevant seminars workshop by the school management board in order to ensure that these teachers are equipped with better understanding of leadership styles as well as a better combination of this styles.
- However, since educational qualification of teacher are not at the same level, all teachers irrespective of their academic qualification should be properly trained during professional training on how to manage and organized classroom. This will enable every teacher to maintain active classroom participation during the teaching and learning exercise.

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