

Principals' Participative And Achievement Oriented Ethical Leadership Behaviour As Correlates Of Teachers' Job Related Stress In Secondary Schools In Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study investigated the correlation between teachers' perceptions of principals' participative and achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviours and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested. The study utilized the correlation research design. The population of the study was 9764 teachers from the 330 public secondary schools in the State. A sample size of 1,380 teachers was drawn for the study from 66 secondary schools sampled from the six education zones in the State. This was done using the multi stage sampling procedure where simple random sampling technique was applied. Data were collected using two questionnaires titled "Principals' Participative and Achievement Oriented Ethical Leadership Behaviour Questionnaire (PPAOELBQ)" and "Teachers' Stress Inventory – Revised (TSI)." While PPAOELBQ was developed by the researchers, TSI was adapted from Schutz and Long (1988). The instruments were validated by three experts. The internal consistencies of the instruments were ascertained using Crombach Alpha. This yielded reliability coefficients of 0.81 and 0.86 for the two instruments respectively. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that there is a moderate negative relationship between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress. It was also revealed that there is a low negative relationship between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress. Based on these findings, it was recommended that school principals should continue to offer the needed supportive services and considerate working environment for teachers to function well in schools. It was also recommended that Principals should continue to involve the teachers in their decision making on issues that concern the school.*

Keywords: *Principal, Ethics, Leadership Behaviour and Job Stress*

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance and sustainability of sound education system at all levels in any nation is inevitable for nation building and transformation of the society, such that no nation can do without it. This is why it is globally accepted that education is a process which facilitates the development of human beings, physically, intellectually, morally, politically, socially and technologically so as to equip them to function effectively in any environment they find themselves

(Ikediugwu, 2016). Education in Nigeria is offered at three levels namely; the primary, the secondary and the tertiary levels. The focus of this study is on secondary education which is the middle level of the education system in the nation and a link between primary and tertiary levels of education.

The general aim of the secondary level of education according to Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) (2013) is to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and transition to tertiary education. It is offered to children between the ages of 11 and 17. Since education, the secondary

level inclusive, is an instrument the Nigerian nation relies on to bring about rapid social and economic development, the position of the principals and teachers in secondary schools, who as major contributors to the achievement of these educational goals, play major roles, should be adequately looked into. There is need for a good relationship between principals and teachers as in order to achieve the expected goals and objectives of the system.

For Ikediugwu (2016), students' performance, teachers' achievement and schools' effectiveness all depend on the quality of the principal of the school. This is to say, that, the teacher and the principal are important to one another and cannot work in isolation. There is no doubt that teachers will experience greater satisfaction and higher morale when they are viewed by their principals as core professionals. It is therefore reasonable to posit that leadership is an important and influential factor to teachers' work stress. Thus, there is the need for good leaders and ethical leaders as principals in secondary schools.

Ethics according to Agbim (2018) refers to accepted principles of right and or wrong that govern the conduct of a person, the members of a profession or the actions of organisations. Thus, ethical leadership is defined as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct in followers through a two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making (Brown & Harrison in Hao, Maozhu & Qian, 2015). Looking at this definition, three qualities of an ethical leader present themselves namely; communication, reinforcement, and decision making. Ethical leadership therefore, involves establishing two-way communication characterized by trust and openness, exhibition of traits such as honesty and integrity, treating employees fairly, showing concern and respect for employees, encouraging employees to participate in decision-making, giving employees sufficient job autonomy, and adhering to achievement-oriented principles (Kalshoven, Hartog, & Hough (2011). This means that the way the principal behaves in the school could affect the teachers positively or negatively.

There are different ethical leadership behaviours as there are different principals or educational leaders. Oshagbemi (2003) classified these behaviours into: transformational, transactional, directive, consultative, and delegative behaviours. For Moffitt (2007), ethical leadership behaviours include directing, coaching, supporting and delegating. Contributing, Anastasiou & Papakonstantinou (2014), in line with the Path Goal theory by House and Mitchell (1974) posited a four fold classification of leader behaviours as directive, supportive, participative and achievement oriented. For the purpose of this study, two of these dimensions namely; participative and achievement oriented leadership behaviours were adopted because of their importance in enhancing good working environment. These ethical behaviours are examined in relation to teacher job related stress.

The principals' behaviour should be perceived to be participative. According to Tandin (2015) participative leadership behaviour is where individuals who would typically be considered unequal by hierarchal standards have shared power in making decisions. Participative leadership behaviour

is reported to have outcomes such as collective and quality decisions, job satisfaction, enhanced employee commitment and productivity and reduction in resistance to change and absenteeism. Mulder (2018) is of the view that a participative leader deems it very important to work with his employees and include their ideas and opinions in decisions. This means that he is open to consultation and discussion, and includes suggestions from his employees in his decision-making process.

The principal as an ethical leader is also expected to put up behaviours that are achievement oriented. According to Mulder (2018), leaders who are achievement-oriented set challenging goals. Such a leader expects achievements of the highest level from his employees and trusts their ability to handle this. In relation to the school, this is to say that the principal should set challenging goals and show confidence in the capability of the followers. This behaviour helps teachers to believe in themselves as being able to carry out whatever duties that are assigned to them by the principal. Thus, in an educational institution where this type of leadership behaviour prevails, high commitment, harmony, mutual trust, job satisfaction, reduced stress, and high quality of production may be experienced.

However, the situation in secondary schools in Nigeria and indeed Enugu state shows that most principals appear to be characterised by various forms of unethical behaviours and practices. Studies in Nigeria have shown that attitudes of principals to teachers make the teachers to experience high levels of stress while doing their job (Ikegbusi (2016), Oluremi (2013) & Okwaraji and Aguwa 2015). The Principals in some cases fail to motivate teachers to contribute and encourage them to accept responsibilities. Thus, one of the significant challenges for principals today is to identify what contributes to teachers' job stress and the type of leadership behaviour principals should employ to reduce stress experienced by teachers on their jobs.

Job or occupational stress refers to a mental and physical condition which affects an individual's productivity at the workplace, as well as the individual's effectiveness, personal health and quality of work. Mary (2017) posits that teacher stress is at all-times high and these may be seen in the teachers' in the form of absenteeism, low morale, and an attitude of "don't ask me to do a single extra thing." Ian (2015) suggested that the relationship between a principal's leadership behaviour and the level of teacher stress and satisfaction indicates that teachers' performances are influenced by their perceptions of principals' behaviour.

It seems that by virtue of their profession, teachers, those in secondary schools in Enugu State inclusive, are constantly under stress. This ultimately may affect their performance with the attendant desire to quit the job. Studies by scholars Carla, (2015); Ian, (2015); Manabete, John, Makinde, and Duwa, (2016); Nwimo, and Onwunaka (2015) and Oforjindu (2012) on stress at the workplace showed that there has been a growing disaffection among school workers (teachers inclusive) which has contributed substantially to stress in the workers. This necessitated this study which sought to empirically ascertain the relationship between teachers' perception of principals' participative and achievement

oriented ethical leadership behaviours and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Two research questions guided the study, namely;
- ✓ What is the correlation between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State?
- ✓ What is the correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State.

HYPOTHESES

Two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance, namely;

- ✓ There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in public secondary schools in Enugu state.
- ✓ There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in public secondary schools in Enugu state.

II. METHOD

The study was carried out in secondary schools in Enugu state, Nigeria using the correlation research design. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. From a population of 9764 teachers in the 330 public secondary schools in Enugu State, a sample of 1,380 teachers which is 14.13% of the population was involved in the study. This was drawn from 66 secondary schools using multi stage sampling procedure. Two instruments namely Principals' Participative and Achievement Oriented Ethical Leadership Behaviour Questionnaire (PPAOELBQ) and Teachers Stress Inventory (TSI), validated by three experts were used for data collection. While the PPAOELBQ was developed by the researchers, TSI was adapted from Schutz and Long (1988) revised. The internal consistency of the instruments were ascertained using Cronbach Alpha and this yielded reliability coefficients of 0.81 and 0.86 for PPAOELBQ and TSI respectively. In line with Nworgu (2015) who stated that if the correlation coefficient obtained for an instrument is up to 0.70 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study, the instruments were deemed reliable. Direct administration method was used for data collection. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses. The correlation coefficients for the research questions were interpreted using Best and Khan (2016), such that co-efficient of .00 to .20, .20 to .40, .40 to .60, .60 to .80, and .80 to 1.00 were regarded as negligible, low, moderate, substantial, and very high relationship while decisions relating to the test of

hypotheses, were interpreted using the P- value. In doing this, when the P- value is less than the level of significance, in this case 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, otherwise it was not rejected.

III. RESULTS

Source of Variation N	Participative ethical behaviour	Teachers' job related stress	Remark	
Participative ethical leadership behaviour	1352	1.00	-0.42	Moderate Negative Relationship
Teachers' job related stress	1352	-0.42	1.00	

Table 1: Pearson's r on the correlation between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress

The data analysis shown in Table 1 indicates that there is a moderate negative correlation (r = 0.42) between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State. The implication of this is that the more Principals are perceived to exhibit participative leadership behaviours, the less the job related stress teachers will experience.

Source of Variation N	Achievement Oriented ethical behaviour	Teachers' job related stress	Remark	
Achievement Oriented ethical leadership behaviour	1352	1.00	-0.33	Low Negative Relationship
Teachers' job related stress	1352	-0.33	1.00	

Table 2: Pearson's r on the correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress

Table 2 shows that there is a low negative correlation (r = 0.33) between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State. The implication of this is that the more Principals are perceived to exhibit achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviours, the less the job related stress teachers will experience.

Source of Variation N	Participative ethical behaviour	Teachers' job related stress	p- value	Remark
Participative ethical leadership behaviour	1352	1.00	-0.42	.000 Sig

Teachers' job related stress	1352	-0.42	1.00
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Table 3: Test of significance of Pearson's correlation between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress

As shown in Table 3, there is a significant correlation between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical behaviour and teachers' job related stress in public secondary schools in Enugu state. $r, (1352) = -0.42, P\text{-value } 0.00 < 0.05$. The first null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Source of Variation	Achievement oriented ethical behaviour	Teachers' job related stress	p-value	Remark
Achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour	1352	1.00	-0.33	.000 Sig
Teachers' job related stress	1352	-0.33	1.00	

Table 4: Test of significance of Pearson's correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical behaviour and teachers' job related stress

Table 4 shows that there is a significant correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in public secondary schools in Enugu state. $r, (1352) = -0.33, P\text{-value } 0.00 < 0.05$. The second null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that there is a moderate negative correlation of -0.42 between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. It was also found out that there was a significant correlation between teachers' perception of principals' participative ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

This finding is natural because when teachers perceive the principal as possessing participative behaviour, it means that the principal consults the teachers, obtains their ideas and opinions, and considers and integrates these into decision making. This finding is in agreement with Omeke and Onah (2012) who found out that teachers are happy and experience less stress under participative and democratic leaders. The findings of this study also supports Nicholas and Maryrose (2016) who stated that participative leadership style enhances schools, improves teachers' job performance and reduces stress. The finding is also in line with Obiekwe and Ezeugbor (2019) who found out that there is a very high positive correlation existing between teachers' perception of principals' ethics in decision making and teachers'

commitment. This means that the more principals display participative ethical leadership behaviours such as making morally right decisions, being systematic and open minded in decision making and allowing teachers to participate in decision making, the more teachers will want to remain as members of the school.

The findings of this study further indicate that there is a low negative correlation between principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The findings further show that there is a significant correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in public secondary schools in Enugu state.

This finding of low negative correlation between teachers' perception of principals' achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria is not far from expectation because employees who work with achievement oriented leaders have a sense of belonging since they perceive that the leader has faith in them and believe that they can be trusted in achieving set goals. Such employees will therefore experience less stress in their job. The findings of this study agree with Malik (2013) who revealed that achievement-oriented leadership behaviours have significant relationship with supervision and job performance of employees in general and also significantly related with the co-worker and work. Furthermore, the findings of this study disagrees with Ian (2015) who found out that principals' delegating leadership behaviour was significantly negatively correlated with teacher job stress. In line with the findings is Wachira, Gitumu and Mbugua (2017) who found out that there was a strong positive correlation between schools where the principal had confidence with staff members accomplishing the challenging goals and teachers' performance and a negative relationship with teachers' job stress. That is to say that there is a negative correlation between achievements oriented ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' job related stress.

V. CONCLUSION

It was therefore concluded that principals' participative and achievement oriented ethical leadership behaviours as perceived by teachers yielded negative relationships with teachers' job related stress. In view of this, if principals are made to exhibit participative and achievement oriented ethical behaviours, teachers' job related stress will not only be reduced but could be eliminated in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the following recommendations are made:

- ✓ Principals of secondary schools should continue to involve the teachers in decision making on issues that concern the school. This will create a spirit of

belongingness amongst the teachers in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

- ✓ Principals should go ahead to adopt and apply achievement oriented principles by going the extra mile to create working reward systems with clear benefits for the teachers who effectively attain the set goals. This is because reward is an agent of motivation and reduction of stress among the workers in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- ✓ The ministry of education should organise regular seminars and workshops for principals in secondary schools on the importance of ethical leadership and its resultant effect on teachers' job related stress.

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