

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES-DYNAMICS AND IMPACTS ON NON-TEACHING PERSONNEL'S JOB PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIAN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between leadership strategies and non-teaching personnel job performance in Nigerian Higher institutions. It delves into the concept of leadership, various leadership styles, and strategies tailored for job performance enhancement. Factors influencing the job performance of non-teaching personnel are examined, along with the impact of leadership styles on staff morale, productivity, and overall job performance, particularly focusing on transactional and transformative leadership styles as well as collaborative and empowering leadership approaches. Furthermore, challenges hindering effective leadership strategies and job performance are identified, followed by suggestions for addressing these challenges to optimize performance outcomes.

Key Words: Leadership Strategies, Job Performance, Productivity, Non-teaching personnel

Introduction

Higher Institutions such as colleges and universities, are post-secondary educational establishments that provide chances for advanced study, including graduate and undergraduate programs, vocational training, and research activities.

Staff members that are essential to the operation of the school but aren't actively involved in classroom instruction are referred to as non-teaching personnel in educational institutions. This includes maintenance, cafeteria, and IT support personnel in addition to administrative workers like as principals, secretaries, and financial officers. Support staff members that offer vital services to instructors and students, such as counselors, librarians, and psychologists, also make a substantial contribution.

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of excellent leadership in the dynamic world of education. Organizational efficiency and job performance depends critically on the interaction between non-teaching staff members' work performance and leadership styles.

Administrative, maintenance, and support workers' motivation, job satisfaction, and general job performance are impacted by leadership types and strategies including transformational leadership, instructional leadership as well as Empowering and Collaborative Leadership. A healthy work environment and institutional goals depend on an understanding of how various leadership philosophies and strategies affect the morale, job performance and output of nonteaching staff.

This paper aims to explore the intricate relationship that exists between various leadership strategies and non-teaching personnel's job performance.

The Concept of Leadership

A key factor in an organization's success is its leadership. Any organization that lacks authentic leadership could be doomed. If an organization wants to prosper, one of its key requirements must be the capacity to persuade staff members to meet organizational objectives, and someone who does that is a leader.

Leaders are essential to the success of an organization and to the efficient use of resources. Understanding and recognizing the importance of employees in achieving objectives and inspiring them to do so are characteristics of a great leader. According to Uddin et al. in Giltinane (2013), workers should encourage their leaders to improve their performance. Furthermore, Jiang et al in Agbakwuru et al. (2021) stated that competent leadership has a beneficial impact on job performance in higher institutions.

According to Jago in Agbakwuru et al. (2021), a leader is someone who motivates a group to accomplish preset objectives. Kemal (2015) added that a person with a dominating influence or authority who is also the head of a group, organization, or institution is referred to as a leader.

He describes leadership as a position of a leader of a group, organization or institution. He further established leadership to mean an acronym for "Listen-Enthusiasm Aspiring- Decisive Empower/Encourage-Responsible Supportive-Humble-Inspire with Integrity-Plan." This description of leadership encompasses the major aspects of what leadership truly is about. And any organization which is seen to possess these qualities, *ceteris paribus*, must succeed.

Leaders are essential to the success of an organization and to the efficient use of resources. Understanding and recognizing the importance of employees in achieving objectives and inspiring them to do the same are qualities of a successful leader (Uddin et al., 2014). According to Giltinane (2013), workers should encourage their leaders to get the most out of them. Furthermore, Jiang et al. (2017) noted that job performance is positively impacted by good leadership. Succinctly, leadership is about having a good influence and motivating people to succeed and reach their goals.

Leadership Styles Explained

Different leadership styles have varying effects on the attitudes and outcomes within a workplace. Understanding these impacts is essential for leaders to cultivate environments that foster motivation, engagement, and high performance among their teams.

In managing non-teaching personnel, adopting appropriate leadership styles can foster innovation and creativity as well enhanced job performance. Leadership style significantly influences productivity in modern workplaces, as leaders drive goal attainment through their methods, communication, policies and strategies.

Various leadership styles are discussed below:

Autocratic Leadership: An autocratic leader holds absolute control over decision-making within a group or organization, following a hierarchical, top-down approach without involving or consulting subordinates. This leadership style lacks trust in subordinates, relying on veto power and authority instead. Autocratic leaders, often perceived as autocrats, typically refrain from seeking advice from their team members, prioritizing strict obedience and disregarding alternative suggestions. Al Khajeh (2018) suggests that autocratic leaders tend to be assertive and domineering by nature. While this approach may lead to decreased morale and creativity among staff, it can prove beneficial in situations requiring swift and decisive action.

Democratic Leadership: In democratic leadership, the leader engages team members in decision-making actively. Everyone is urged to join in, collaborate, and openly communicate. A democratic leader fosters a sense of ownership among team members, valuing their perspectives and ideas. This approach cultivates a positive work environment, enhances team morale, and often leads to superior decision-making outcomes. (Amanchukwu et al, 2015)

Distributed Leadership: Distributed leadership involves various stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and students, sharing leadership responsibilities and decisionmaking to foster teamwork, shared accountability, and collaborative problem-solving. (Spillane & Diamond, 2007)

Servant Leadership: This prioritizes meeting the needs of others and supporting the school community to empower educators and learners, foster inclusivity, equity, and a supportive learning environment built on mutual respect and trust. (Liden et al, 2014)

Adaptive Leadership: This involves swiftly adjusting to challenges and changes within the educational setting, encouraging experimentation, creativity, and learning from mistakes while providing guidance during uncertain times. (Heifetz, 2009)

Ethical Leadership: This emphasizes morality, honesty, and making moral decisions, promoting positive behavior, justice, and fairness within the school community.(Brown, 2005)

Charismatic Leadership: This involves motivating and influencing others through confidence, exceptional communication skills, and the ability to inspire remarkable achievements, often forming strong emotional bonds and possessing persuasive abilities. Innovative Leadership values encouraging innovation, nurturing creativity, and embracing change, inspiring original ideas and risk-taking.(Weber & Eisenhardt, 2005).

Authentic Leadership: This focuses on leaders being true to their principles and selves, acting with sincerity and openness according to their values. (Avolio et al, 2004)

Digital Leadership: This recognizes the impact of technology on leadership and leverages digital tools, data, and strategies effectively. (Shambaugh, 2018).

Humility Leadership: This centers on leaders who demonstrate humility, recognizing their limitations, prioritizing their followers' needs, and fostering a cooperative environment. (Owens, 2013)

Coach Leadership: The coach leadership style aims to maximize team members' potential through guidance, support, and motivation. Coach leaders facilitate skill development, acknowledge strengths and weaknesses, and foster growth. They employ a blend of training, mentorship, and constructive feedback to create a collaborative, learning-focused environment, particularly effective when skill enhancement is desired by the team. (Lacerenza et. al, 2018)

Pacesetter Leadership: The pacesetter leadership style entails setting ambitious performance standards and leading by personal example. Leaders in this style drive excellence by expecting their team to meet or exceed these high benchmarks. While effective in achieving results and maintaining productivity, it can also create stress and potential burnout among team members if they struggle to keep pace with the demanding expectations. (Goleman, et al, 2002)

Visionary Leadership: Visionary leaders aim to inspire and galvanize their teams by articulating a compelling future vision. They cultivate passion and commitment by effectively communicating long-term goals, encouraging innovation, creativity, and forward-thinking. This leadership style is particularly effective when providing clear direction and fostering unity toward a shared objective. (Kouzes & Posner, 2012)

Bureaucratic leadership style: This style of leadership guarantees complete adherence to protocols and regulations. Research has indicated that the bureaucratic aspect of leadership style causes operations and performance to slow down.

Khajeh (2018) asserts that bureaucratic leaders have a great commitment to their policies and procedures, but not to their employees. Processes are more important to bureaucratic executives than people. This explains why they seem to be uncaring and uninterested in their employees. The bureaucratic leadership style emphasizes strict adherence to policies, processes, and guidelines.

Al-Hussein and Elbeltagi (2012) assert that this leadership style improves individual performance and innovation inside businesses while having a favorable effect on goal-directed behavior.

Bureaucratic leadership indeed prioritizes adherence to procedures and rules over nurturing relationships with employees. While it can promote goal-directed behavior and individual performance, it may hinder innovation and agility within organizations due to its rigid nature. This style is most suitable for highly regulated environments but may not be ideal for fostering creativity and adaptability.

The Laissez-faire: The laissez-faire leadership style is one in which the leader defers to the followers' decision-making process and lets them make their own decisions. This type of leadership is referred to as "free style," where the leader accepts responsibility for their subordinates' poor performance even when they are fully aware of their authority. It is thought of as a submissive style of leadership.

The laissez-faire leadership style fosters innovation and creativity by enabling quicker decisionmaking and granting autonomy to make decisions without bureaucratic delays. Laissez-faire leaders refrain from micromanaging employees' thoughts and actions, even in challenging scenarios where leadership intervention might be necessary but is consciously avoided, allowing employees to take ownership of decisions (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Giao & Hung, 2018).

Laissez-faire leadership is a detached style of leadership that gives team members a considerable lot of independence and autonomy from the leader. Using this strategy, the leader gives followers minimal guidance and supervision, allowing them make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions. While this approach can be helpful in some situations—for example, when dealing with highly skilled and self-motivated individuals—poor management of it can lead to a lack of direction and coordination (Goodnight, 2011)).

Laissez-faire leadership, according to Khajeh (2018), gives followers the power to make decisions, fostering a free-spirited atmosphere but devoid of clear direction and accountability. This type of leadership promotes a positive work atmosphere yet opposes authoritarian control and commands. Anyone who is willing to make a decision can do so under this leadership style. Every leadership style has a unique set of benefits and drawbacks.

Transactional Leadership:

The core focus of transactional leadership is the exchange relationship between leaders and followers. The two main priorities for transactional leaders are meeting predetermined goals and maintaining stability. It emphasizes the use of rewards and punishments to influence and motivate followers' behavior.

A transactional leadership style is based on exchanging rewards for the work and performance of subordinates. A transactional leader understands the requirements of their team members and helps them negotiate in order to achieve the overall goals and objectives. According to Buchanan and Huczynski (2004), a transactional leader is prepared to meet the requirements of their subordinates provided they are successful in achieving the

objectives of the organization. Transactional leaders rely on incentive and punishment to guarantee subordinates' submission and compliance.

They establish standards for the conduct of their adherents.

Max Weber was the scholar who introduced this idea to the body of knowledge initially. Ohunakin and Akintayo (2016) use Weber's definition of transactional leadership as having stringent discipline, methodical control, and regulation. This suggests that a transactional leadership style is characterized by a rigid, formal interaction between leaders and subordinates. The discussion of best practices and the rewards for a job well done between superiors and subordinates is known as transactional leadership. This definition suggests that leaders exclusively discuss specific tasks with their subordinates and attempt to motivate them to do them by highlighting the associated rewards.

This is corroborated by Burns (2010), who described transactional leadership as a "give and take" kind of working relationship. Mengesha (2015) defines transactional leadership as an exchange process that involves goal-setting, monitoring, and regulating results. The fulfillment of contractual obligations is indicative of it.

Transactional leaders focus on accomplishing tasks through systems of rewards and penalties (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Therefore, leaders that employ the threat of payment to compel followers to perform an action are said to exhibit transactional leadership. Transactional leaders prioritize completing tasks to the highest standard rather than their subordinates' personal interests. Task-oriented rather than subordinate-oriented leadership is the hallmark of transactional leadership.

Transformational leadership style:

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to surpass their own interests through a clear vision, challenging goals, support, teamwork, and personal development promotion. They build close bonds, elevate motivation, and meet subordinates' needs, fostering potential and goal achievement. Northouse (2010) describes transformational leadership as a modern approach, emphasizing traits like idealized impact, intellectual stimulation, tailored thoughtfulness, and inspiring vision. This style cultivates respect, trust, loyalty, and appreciation among subordinates, driving them to exceed expectations. It enhances commitment to organizational goals and positive attitudes, guided by ethical principles (Bass & Steidlmeier in Rafiq, et al, 2022). In education, transformational leaders motivate staff and students, setting clear expectations, articulating a compelling vision, and fostering a cooperative climate for realizing potential. Effective leadership styles, including in non-teaching roles, encourage innovation and productivity, shaping organizational success by influencing operational methods, communication, and policies (Azhar, 2013).

Competent school administrators often integrate aspects of various leadership styles to effectively meet the diverse needs of their staff and students. Understanding different styles, such as autocratic, democratic, transformational, and laissez-faire, is essential as they can significantly impact the job performance of non-academic staff.

For instance, transformational leadership, which inspires and empowers employees, can boost job satisfaction and productivity, whereas autocratic leadership, characterized by task dictation without input, may lead to lower morale and performance. Therefore, comprehending these styles is critical for optimizing the performance of non-academic staff in an organization.

According to Johnson (2015), it's critical to select a leadership style that successfully molds personnel's behavior in line with the university's objectives.

Impacts of Leadership Styles on Non-Teaching Personnel's Productivity, Morale And Job Performance

Every leadership style has a different effect on morale, output, and job performance, and its efficacy varies based on the situation and the people in it. A blend of these approaches is frequently used by effective leaders to address the various demands of their non-teaching personnel and the institution as a whole.

The influence of leadership styles on morale, productivity, and job performance are analyzed below:

1. Autocratic Leadership:

- Productivity: While it speeds up decision-making, it might hinder creativity and innovation, potentially reducing productivity.
- Morale: Typically results in low morale due to limited employee involvement and empowerment.
- Job Performance: Employees may feel demotivated and less engaged, negatively affecting their performance.

2. Democratic Leadership:

- Productivity: Promotes collaboration and participation, which could enhance productivity by making team members feel valued and motivated.
- Morale: Cultivates a positive work environment where voices are heard and contributions are valued, leading to improved morale.
- Job Performance: Likely to result in more engaged and committed employees, thereby improving performance.

3. Laissez-Faire Leadership:

- Productivity: Can boost productivity among self-motivated individuals but may lack direction and coordination.
- Morale: Provides autonomy but may leave employees feeling unsupported or abandoned.
- Job Performance: Highly skilled individuals may excel, yet overall performance may suffer without proper guidance.

4. Instructional Leadership:

- Productivity: Focuses on optimizing work practices, potentially enhancing productivity.
- Morale: Supports and values non-teaching personnel, leading to improved morale and job satisfaction.
- Job Performance: Emphasis on effective methods can improve performance and organizational outcomes.

5. Distributed Leadership:

- Productivity: Encourages shared responsibility, potentially boosting productivity through collective problem-solving.
- Morale: Fosters ownership and empowerment, resulting in higher morale.
- Job Performance: Shared leadership can yield innovative solutions and improved performance.

6. Servant Leadership:

- Productivity: Prioritizes employee needs, potentially increasing productivity through empowerment and engagement.
- Morale: It creates a supportive environment, leading to higher morale.
- Job Performance: Focus on employee development can enhance performance and organizational outcomes.

7. Adaptive Leadership:

-Productivity: It encourages innovation and flexibility, potentially increasing productivity by facilitating effective change management.

- Morale: It provides support during hesitation, maintaining morale and fostering resilience. - Job Performance: Learning from failure can lead to improved outcomes and performance.

8. Ethical Leadership:

- Productivity: It fosters trust and cooperation, potentially increasing productivity through integrity.

- Morale: It promotes honesty and respect, resulting in higher morale.

- Job Performance: It encourages ethical decision-making, leading to improved performance.

Collaborative And Empowering Leadership:

Leaders that are collaborative and empowering include their team members in decision-making processes, respect their opinions, and promote individuality and development. This leadership approach promotes a happy workplace and has several advantages for the workforce as well as the company.

Impact on Worker Motivation:

Collaborative and empowering leadership cultivates a sense of ownership and purpose among non-teaching personnel. When individuals are involved in decision-making and have a say in how they approach their work, they feel more motivated and engaged. The sense of being valued and trusted increases their commitment to the institution.

Impact on Productivity:

This leadership style often results in higher productivity levels. Personnel are more likely to be innovative, proactive, and willing to take responsibility for their actions when they feel empowered. They are also more likely to collaborate effectively, leading to improved teamwork and problem-solving capabilities.

Impact on Job Performance:

The influence of a collaborative and empowering leadership approach on job performance is significant. By engaging team members in decision-making, valuing their contributions, and promoting independence and personal development, leaders establish an atmosphere where personnel feel appreciated, esteemed, and empowered. Consequently, personnel demonstrate greater motivation, involvement, and dedication to their tasks.

This style of leadership enhances job contentment and morale, resulting in heightened levels of effectiveness and efficiency.

When non-teaching personnel sense trust and encouragement, they are more inclined to take responsibility for their duties, seek opportunities for innovation, and contribute their utmost to accomplish institutional objectives.

Moreover, a collaborative and empowering leadership strategy cultivates transparent communication, teamwork, and cooperation among team members. Through promoting dialogue and the exchange of ideas, leaders can leverage the collective intelligence and creativity of their team, leading to enhanced problem-solving, decision-making, and overall performance.

In essence, the collaborative and empowering leadership approach triggers a positive chain reaction on job performance, yielding increased employee gratification, heightened productivity, improved teamwork, and ultimately, enhanced organizational results.

Empowering and Collaborative Leadership Strategies For Non-Teaching Personnel's Job Performance In Higher Institutions

In the context of non-teaching personnel in higher education institutions, adopting transformational leadership strategies are vital for ensuring optimal job performance. Below are transformational leadership strategies and how they apply specifically to non-teaching personnel:

1. **Vision Communication:** Non-teaching personnel, such as administrative staff or maintenance workers, benefit from understanding the overall vision and goals of the institution. Clear communication of these objectives by leadership helps align them with the organization's mission, motivating them to contribute meaningfully to its success.
2. **Recognition:** Non-teaching staff often work behind the scenes, and their contributions may sometimes go unnoticed. Recognizing their efforts, whether it's completing administrative tasks efficiently or maintaining the campus facilities, fosters a positive work environment and boosts morale among these employees.
3. **Heartfelt Communication:** Building trust and strong relationships within the organization is equally important for non-teaching personnel. Authentic communication from leadership helps them feel valued and understood, encouraging collaboration and a sense of belonging within the institution.
4. **Delegation:** While non-teaching staff may not be directly involved in academic instruction, they still have responsibilities that can be delegated by leadership. Empowering them through delegation of tasks not only allows them to develop their skills but also enhances their sense of ownership and commitment to their work.
5. **Continuous Education:** Even though non-teaching personnel may not be involved in classroom instruction, ongoing learning and development opportunities are still beneficial for their job performance. Training in areas such as administrative procedures, technology skills, or workplace safety ensures that these employees remain competent and adaptable in their roles. By implementing these leadership strategies tailored to the specific needs of non-teaching personnel, higher institution's management can effectively enhance job performance and contribute to the overall success of the institution.

Benefits of Empowering and Collaborative Leadership Strategy to Non-Teaching Personnel in Higher Institutions

For non-teaching personnel, embracing collaborative and empowering leadership offers numerous advantages as follows:

Increased Job Satisfaction: Engaging personnel in decision-making boosts their sense of value, leading to higher job satisfaction.

Enhanced Creativity and Innovation: Empowered personnel tend to offer new ideas, fostering a culture of innovation in the institution.

Improved Staff Retention: A collaborative environment fosters loyalty, reducing turnover and associated recruitment costs.

Better Collaboration: Empowering leadership promotes open communication and teamwork, enhancing workforce unity and efficiency.

Adaptability and Resilience: Empowered non-teaching personnel are more adept at handling changes and overcoming challenges, fostering resilience.

Sustained Productivity: Through motivating and engaging non-teaching personnel, collaborative leadership drives ongoing productivity growth.

Challenges of Leadership Strategies and Job Performance of Non-Teaching Personnel in Higher Institutions And Possible Solutions

Non-teaching personnel, vital for administrative and support functions, face hindrances impacting their job performance despite their crucial role in the institution's operations. The following are challenges and possible solutions:

1. Deficiency in Education:

Deficiency in education among non-teaching personnel in higher education refers to gaps in knowledge or skills necessary for their roles, hindering their effectiveness. Addressing these gaps through training and support is crucial for improving their performance and contribution to the educational environment.

According to Luthan (2007), one of the contributing factors is a lack of education in human resources management. Olukoga (2006) asserts that a lack of training chances may affect an employee's ability to do their job. Moreover, Olukoga contends that a multiskilled worker is more valuable and productive since they can adapt to different tasks and do them with ease.

2. Lack of engagement:

Regular interactions between senior management and frontline non-teaching personnel in higher education significantly affect overall performance. Ineffective management can demotivate staff, leading to negative impacts on operations and efficiency.

Bright (2009) states that in order to achieve ambitious goals, leaders in organizations must maintain high levels of staff engagement and commitment. Success hinges on positive interactions between supervisors and non-teaching staff.

3. Negative Attitude at Work:

Negative attitudes at work among non-teaching personnel in higher education, characterized by pessimism, resistance to change, and unproductivity, can hinder overall performance. These attitudes may stem from factors such as inadequate support and unclear expectations. Addressing these issues is vital for preserving operational efficiency and cultivating a positive work culture. Moreover, involving employees in decision-making processes, as suggested by Haizlip (2008), can boost their commitment and motivation.

Disciplinary actions, as outlined by Ferguson (2010) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007), are essential for promoting a positive work environment by communicating that misconduct is taken seriously and will be addressed fairly. These measures, including verbal warnings and termination, aim to rectify inappropriate behavior and improve work performance.

4. Insufficient Staff Involvement in Making Decisions:

Agarwal (2008) contends that personnel who are actively participating in decision-making and planning the implementation of changes that impact them execute changes more quickly and effectively than those who are just informed about them. Supervisors and upper management bear the task of identifying the potentials that are already present within each non-academic employee and put suitable plans in place to improve their work output.

5. Inadequate Allocation of Resources:

Smith (2013) emphasizes how important having enough resources is to enabling efficient operations in educational establishments. A lack of funds for infrastructure, technology, staff development initiatives, and equipment might make it more difficult to provide high-quality instruction and support services. To optimize the influence of resources on non-teaching personnel's job performance and overall institutional effectiveness, resources must be strategically allocated in accordance with the institution's goals and priorities.

6. Adapting to Change:

Johnson (2015) stresses the vital role of organizational adaptability amidst evolving educational landscapes. Resistance to change among faculty and staff can hinder the adoption of innovative practices essential for keeping pace with pedagogical and technological advancements. Employing transparent communication, stakeholder engagement, and professional development initiatives are crucial for overcoming resistance and cultivating a culture of continuous improvement.

7. Balancing Work and Life:

Subha (2013) defines the work-life balance as the reconciliation between workers professional work and their personal life. The challenges educators face in maintaining work-life balance are due to demanding workloads and administrative burdens. Long hours, high stress, and limited personal time can erode morale and well-being. Implementing flexible schedules, wellness programs, and nurturing a supportive culture are vital for addressing these issues, boosting retention rates, and enhancing productivity.

Conclusion

Effective leadership strategies significantly impact the job performance of non-teaching personnel in Nigerian higher institutions. Adapting these strategies to fit the organizational culture is crucial for success.

While autocratic leadership leads to negative outcomes, inclusive approaches enhance performance. Investing in leadership development and fostering collaboration are essential for maximizing personnel potential and contributing to institutional success.

Suggestions For Adoption

The following suggestions are made:

1. Enhance HR management by providing comprehensive training and encouraging employees to develop multiple skills.
2. Foster motivation by practicing strong leadership, fostering positive relationships, and setting ambitious goals.
3. Tackle negative work attitudes by implementing fair disciplinary actions and involving employees in decision-making processes.
4. Encourage participatory decision-making while honoring employee preferences.
5. Champion strategic funding that aligns with organizational objectives to secure adequate resources.
6. Address resistance to change through clear communication, assistance, and opportunities for professional growth.
7. Enhance work-life balance by introducing flexible work arrangements and prioritizing employee welfare.

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