

## Stakeholders' Perception on Provosts Prevalent Leadership Styles in Colleges of Education in North West, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This study assessed "Stakeholders' Perception on Provosts Prevalent Leadership Styles in Colleges of Education in North West, Nigeria". Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was 9,410 individuals. This comprises of 12 Provosts, 12 Deputy Provosts, 12 Registrars, 12 Chief Librarians, 12 Bursars, 81 Directors, 58 Deans, 4634 Lecturers, 4517 non-teaching staff and 60 student representatives from the Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. The sample of the study was 370 respondents. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire tagged "Perceptions of Stakeholders and Provosts Leadership Style Questionnaire (PSPLSQ)" was used for data collection. Three (3) experts vet the instrument and the reliability index yielded 0.91 using Cronbach's Alpha Method. Mean score and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while One-Way-Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses formulated at the 0.05 significance level. Findings of the study revealed that coercive leadership style of provosts prevailed in the Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. The study recommended that the provosts should have confidence in their staff, and the staff should commit themselves to work and bear in mind that they are in the college to perform their duties whether the provosts are around or not and the provosts should not give order and demand total obedience without explanation and question.*

**Keywords:** Leadership Style, Coercive, Participative, Provost

### Introduction

Tertiary Education is an education given after secondary education in the universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics and other post-secondary schools including those offering correspondence and distance learning programmes. There are different higher educational institutions established to cater for the specific manpower need of a nation. College of Education (COE) is one of such educational institutions. A College of Education in Nigeria is headed by a Provost who is in charge of administrative

tasks related to instructional management, internal relations, organisation management, administration, student performance, and school community relations toward achieving the College goals and objectives (Akinyemi, Egboh, Hassan & Makinde, 2023). In the day-to-day administration of the college, the Provost is assisted by a number of functionaries which include the Deputy Provost, the Registrar, the Bursar, the College Librarians, the Directors of Academic Planning and Statistics, the Deans of Schools, the Heads of Departments, and the Heads of Units, who are charged with the general responsibility for matters relating to the administration of the college.

Today, Colleges of Education need to have leaders who are enlightened and responsive towards bringing change in the institution. Moreover, success of the Colleges of Education lies in the ability of the leader/Provost to effectively manage stress as well as address the various needs of its subordinates (Animoku, Haruna & Attah, 2016). Organizations around the world are increasingly concerned about the effective and sympathetic leadership. Every organization needs that leader who is capable of achieving organizational goals in an effective manner as well as empowering its followers. There is no doubt that adopting an effective style of leadership by Provost plays a vital role in the success of College of Education.

Leadership involves the occupation of a position in an organization such as a school where the school administrator is entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating and directing all others towards the achievement of the school goals. Fortune (2020) asserted that leadership in administration deals with the patterns of behaviour school leaders/heads adopt to plan, organize, direct, supervise and evaluate all learning activities in educational institutions in order to achieve educational goals. Leadership style, therefore, refers to the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Britwum et al; 2022). According to Aunga and Masare (2017), style of leadership is the manner in which the leader goes about communicating with those whom he or she leads. Leadership style of school head plays an important role in effective school administration and has a bearing on the achievement of organizational goals. Leadership in administration deals with the patterns of behaviour school leaders/heads adopt to plan, organize, direct, supervise and evaluate all learning activities in educational institutions in order to achieve educational goals.

There are different styles of leadership and it depends on the situations and circumstance of the organization and what type it sees fit. One of such types of leadership styles is coercive leadership style. Coercive leadership style is the style of leadership where leaders give command and subordinates comply by force without questioning. In this type of style of leadership, the provost gives directive and expects absolute and immediate compliance without questioning (Manga 2014). The leader determines the policies, techniques and function of the organization unilaterally. No consultations and subordinates have no any right to contribute or make suggestion and initiative is not welcome. All decision making, powers are centralized in the leaders, Amegayibor (2021) reported that coercive, charismatic, and visionary leadership styles influence employees' job performance. This is because it ensures error reduction when performing tasks. Adeboyega and Awolusi (2021) found that the autocratic leadership style is the most predominant and effective leadership style used in the most organizations in Nigerian and they do not entertain any suggestion or initiative from subordinates. Daniel and Josse (2017) reported that authoritative leadership style influences employee's performance more than others. The provost sees himself as the be-all and end-all and generates self-confidence of what need to be done. One characteristic of coercive leader is the manipulating subordinate's effort whether by force or otherwise.

Participative leadership style is also a style of leadership where consultation is made between the leader and his subordinates before making decision. Participative leadership is a style of leadership in which the provost involves Subordinates in goal setting, problem solving, team building but retains the final decision making authority. Locke in Gills (2016) viewed participative leadership as any power-sharing arrangement in which workplace influence is shared among individuals who are otherwise hierarchical unequal. This is seen to be the best leadership style (Jumare, 2017). In the view of Haruni and Mafwimbo (2014), participative was the most dominant in the best performing primary schools. Akparep, Jengre and Mogre (2019) reported that the participative leadership style ensured shared responsibility by leaders and their subordinates and offered support for the accomplishment of jobs. Tewari, Guajarathi and Madulety (2019) reported high productivity of staff under the guidance of leaders with a participative leadership style. Adekunle (2020) reported that the participative leadership style accounts for more difference in performance than the autocratic in most organisations.

Colleges of Education in Nigeria, like other higher institutions of learning, are laden with a myriad of challenges that are either staff-related or student-related, all or some of which could stem from the provost's characteristics, traits or leadership styles. Colleges of Education which are fundamentally expected to assist in building up people of good moral conduct are now regarded by some as the breeding ground for indiscipline. Many COEs in North-West, Nigeria are in deplorable state, facing so much difficulties and challenges, thereby affecting their management for quality outputs. Ibrahim, Iliya and Aliyu (2023) identified inadequate funding, lack of political will, deteriorated infrastructure, inadequate quality and quantity of staff, unnecessary political interferences in the selection of administrators, high students' enrolment, poor education data bank and brain-drain syndrome as some of the challenges to effective management of Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The provost rigidity in most COEs is bedeviling achievement of objectives of Colleges of Education. The provosts insist on their interest choice been them as the chief decision makers rather than inviting their staff to participate fully and give their contributions before making any decision. It was against this backdrop that this study assessed the Perception of Stakeholders on Leadership styles of Provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives were raised to guide the study:

1. assess the Perception of Stakeholders on the prevalence nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria; and
2. examine the Perception of Stakeholders on the prevalence nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the prevalent nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria?

2. What is the prevalent nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

**HO1:** There is no significant difference in the opinions of the stakeholders (Provosts, deputy Provosts, Registrars, Bursars, Chief Librarians, Directors, Deans, Lecturers, Non-academics staff and Students Representatives) on the prevalence nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

**HO2:** There is no significant difference in the opinions of stakeholders on the prevalence nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. This design, according to Charles and Aligba (2017), is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing. The population of the study was 9,410 individuals. This comprises of 12 Provosts, 12 Deputy Provosts, 12 Registrars, 12 Chief Librarians, 12 Bursars, 81 Directors, 58 Deans, 4634 Lecturers, 4517 non-teaching staff and 60 student representatives from the Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. 370 respondents were used as sample size for the study based on the recommendation of Researcher Advisors (2006) Table for selection of sample size. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study.

A self-designed questionnaire of twenty (20) items tagged “Perceptions of Stakeholders on Provosts Leadership Style Questionnaire (PSPLSQ)” was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was structured on a five (5) points Likert scale options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with the numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Three (3) experts from the Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria vet the instrument and their observations were incorporated in the final draft of the

instrument. The instrument reliability index yielded 0.90 using Cronbach's Alpha Method.

Descriptive statistics of mean was used to answer the research questions. By this, when the mean score of an item was higher than 3.00, the item was regarded as agreed by majority of the respondents. On the other hand, when the mean score of an item was lower than 3.00, the item was considered disagreed by majority of the respondents. One-Way-Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the two (2) formulated null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. By this, when the probability value was lower than 0.05 level of significance set for the study, the hypothesis was rejected, but when the probability value was equal or higher than the level of significance, the hypothesis was retained. A total of 370 copies of the questionnaire were distributed but only 323 copies were returned. The analysis of the study was therefore, based on the data gathered from the above-mentioned number of returned copies of questionnaire.

## Results

**Research Question One:** What is the prevalent nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Respondents Opinion of Stakeholders on Prevalence nature of Coercive Leadership Style of Provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

S/N	Item statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD
1.	The college provost is only concerned about the goals of the college.	54	140	19	78	32	3.328	1.278
2.	The college provost has no trust on his/her staff.	10	47	42	172	52	2.353	1.014
3.	The college provost gives order and demands total obedience without explanation or question.	21	56	38	171	37	2.545	1.102
4.	The provost makes decision based on his/her own ideas and judgment.	15	72	36	164	36	2.585	1.091
5.	The provost hides vital information to his staff from NCCE.	22	44	47	160	50	2.467	1.113
6.	The provost allows little or no input from his /her subordinates.	18	63	57	152	33	2.632	1.078
7.	The provost lacks creativity and problem solving skills in decision making process.	21	68	23	157	54	2.520	1.181

8.	The provost does not care about the needs of his staff.	24	46	24	155	74	2.353	1.191
9.	Lecturers and non-academics staff only commit themselves to work when the leader is present.	15	31	22	172	83	2.142	1.052
10.	The provost feels financial reward is the only motivation for worker.	13	47	44	163	56	2.375	1.055
<b>Grand Mean = 2.53</b>								

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviations of the prevalence nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education North-West, Nigeria. The analysis showed that the aggregate mean 2.53 is less than the bench mark of decision mean 3.000. It was observed that, the respondents disagreed with the statement that, lecturers and non-teaching staff only committed themselves to work in the presence and absence of provost, and the college provost has no trust on his/her staff with highest score of 172 responses with mean scores of 2.14 and 2.35, and standard deviation of 1.052 and 1.014. However, the respondents also disagreed with the item indicating that the college provosts would give order and demand total obedience without explanation or question had the second higher responses of 171 with mean score of 2.545 and standard deviation of 1.102. It can be implied that, there was no prevailing coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

**Research Question Two:** What is the prevalent nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria?

**Table 2:** .

**Table 2:** Mean score and Standard Deviation of Respondents Opinion of Stakeholders on Prevalence Nature of Participative Leadership Style of Provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria

S/N	Item statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	STD
1.	Decision making is the function of both the provost and the staff.	84	169	17	4	11	3.845	1.056
2.	When the provost imposed a decision on the staff the reason is explained to the group.	37	165	49	6	6	3.854	1.104
3.	The provost welcomes staff ideas.	60	160	39	5	14	3.625	1.084
4.	There is collective responsibility in the college due to the provost leadership style.	50	164	38	5	16	3.548	1.093

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5.	The staffs are encouraged to share ideas and opinion even though the leader retains the final say over decisions.	56	176	48	3	12	3.721	0.981
6.	Feeling of responsibility are developed within the college when the provost when the provost operates an open door policy.	80	155	42	3	10	3.802	1.031
7.	Criticism and praise are objectively given in a participative leadership style.	63	171	40	4	8	3.743	0.959
8.	The provost always allows us to develop a plan and then vote on the best course of action.	43	151	40	6	21	3.458	1.149
9.	The provost's democratic leadership style Can lead to higher productivity among staff in the college.	85	144	31	4	19	3.718	1.164
10.	The provost is concerned with both the needs of staff and goals of the college.	77	136	36	5	21	3.604	1.198
<b>Aggregate Mean = 3.69</b>								

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviations of the prevalence nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. The analysis showed that the aggregate mean 3.692 is greater than the bench mark decision mean 3.000. It was observed that the staffs were encouraged to share ideas and opinion even though the provost retained the final say on decisions had the highest responses of 176 with the mean score of 3.721 and standard deviation of 0.981. However, the respondents also agreed with the item indicating that criticism and praise were objectively given in a participative leadership style which had the second higher responses of 171 with the mean score of 3.743 and standard deviation of 0.959. It can be summarized that, there was prevailing participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

### Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents on the prevalence nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria

**Table 3:** Summary of One-Way ANOVA on Stakeholders' Perception on Pprevalence Nature of Coercive Leadership Style of Provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria

Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio	F-crit.	Sig.(P)
Between Groups	2.816	4	0.704	5.33	3.06	0.01
Within Groups	48.352	318	0.132			
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.168</b>	<b>322</b>				

P<0.05

Table 3 shows that the calculated Sig.(P) value of 0.01 is less than 0.05 level of significant set for the study, while the calculated F-ratio value of 5.33 is higher than 3.03 F-critical value. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents on the prevalence nature of coercive leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents on the prevalence nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria.

**Table 4:** Summary of One-Way ANOVA on Stakeholders' Perception on Prevalence Nature of Participative Leadership Style of Provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria

Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio	F-crit.	Sig.(P)
Between Groups	3.169	4	0.792	3.60	3.06	0.02
Within Groups	69.952	318	0.220			
<b>Total</b>	<b>73.121</b>	<b>322</b>				

P<0.05

Table 4 shows that the calculated Sig.(P) value of 0.02 is less than 0.05 level of significant set for the study, while the calculated F-ratio value of 3.60 is higher than 3.03 F-critical value. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents on the prevalence nature of participative leadership style of provosts of Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria is hereby rejected.

## Discussions

The findings of the first research question revealed that coercive leadership style of Provosts prevailed in the Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. This agrees with the result of first hypothesis which was rejected, meaning that there is a significant difference in the opinions of stakeholders on

the prevalence of coercive leadership style of provosts of colleges of education in North-West, Nigeria. The variable tested that p-value is 0.01 which is less than 0.05 level of significant and the grand mean score of 2.53 is less than the instrument mean of 3.00. In line with this finding, Adeboyega and Awolusi (2021) found that the autocratic leadership style is the most predominant and effective leadership style used in the most organizations in Nigerian. Amegayibor (2021) reported that coercive, charismatic, and visionary leadership styles influence employees' job performance. This is because it ensures error reduction when performing tasks. Imhangbe et al, (2018) and Daniel and Josse (2017) also found that authoritative leadership style influences employee's performance more than others. But under normal/abnormal situations, subordinates need to be forced before they could improve their performance for obtaining higher productivity. The finding of this study was contrary to the findings of Iliya (2015) that coercive leadership style did not prevail in the study due to its negative effects.

The findings of the second research question revealed that participative leadership style of Provosts prevailed in the Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. This agrees with the result of second hypothesis which was retained, meaning that there was significant difference in the opinion of stakeholders on the Provosts prevailing participative leadership style in the Colleges of Education in North-West, Nigeria. The variable tested that p-value is 0.02 which is less than 0.05 level of significant and the grand mean score of 3.69 is higher than the instrument mean of 3.00. In line with this finding, Adekunle (2020) found that the participative leadership style accounts for more difference in performance than the autocratic in most organisations. Akparep, et al (2019) reported that the participative leadership style ensured shared responsibility by leaders and their subordinates and offered support for the accomplishment of jobs. Tewari, et al (2019) reported high productivity of staff under the guidance of leaders with a participative leadership style. The findings were consisted with the findings of Kiboss and Henry (2014).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that coercive leadership style of Provosts prevailed because the provosts make decision based on his/her ideas and judgment in Colleges of Education north-west geographical zone, Nigeria. It also concluded that the participative leadership style of Provosts prevailed because staff are encouraged to share ideas and opinion

even though the provost retained the final say on decisions in Colleges of Education north-west geographical zone, Nigeria.

### Recommendations

In line with the research findings and conclusions, the study recommended that:

1. The Provosts should have confidence in their staff, and the staff should commit themselves to work and bear in mind that they are in the college to perform their duties whether the provosts are around or not and the provosts should not give order and demand total obedience without explanation and question.
2. Staff should be encouraged to share ideas and opinions and participate fully in staff meetings even though the provosts retain the final say over decisions making.

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