



## COORDINATING: A KEY FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

This research studied coordination as a key for effective leadership in higher education (HE) in Rivers State. The research was a cross-sectional study. The sample population for this research was one hundred and fifty (150) respondents: 3 Vice Chancellors, 2 Rectors, 25 Deans of Faculty, 25 Associate Deans and 100 Heads of Department (HOD) with 20 from each of the 5 higher institutions in Rivers State. The study used the census sampling technique with a reliability of 0.85 Cronbach Alpha reliability index. The instrument for the study was the questionnaire. The survey instrument was administered through a web survey. The questions were designed to collect quantitative data, although there were two open-ended questions that allowed for qualitative data. The closed-form questions asked how and where current leaders began their academic careers and for their past and prospective trajectories as academic leaders. The open-form questions asked for comments on leadership identification and development in academe. Members of the designated sample population received an initial email contact describing the project and inviting them to link to a web-site to complete the survey. After three email reminders, the study was concluded with a 64% response rate. Data collected were coded and tested using regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that leaders utilized coordination to achieve effective leadership in higher institutions in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Coordinating, Effective Leadership, Higher Institution, Leadership, Collaborative, Individualistic Models, Hierarchical, Collegial Model, Collaborative Model.

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### INTRODUCTION

To achieve organizational objectives, the organogram made provision for sorting out, division of labor, departmentalization, span of control, centralization and decentralization, designation of power and association structure to ideally accomplish the leadership goals. This is plausible if divisions of the association are coordinated or brought together in a way. When the exercises of the organization are broken into little units which are arranged into offices based on their

relatedness. In the case of this study, the organization or association is the higher institution which is compartmentalized into faculties and departments based on the areas of study and coordinated by Deans, Heads of Departments, lecturers and the Vice Chancellor being the chief coordinator. The many individuals and groups that work in the departments and faculties perform several different activities. Coordination therefore, means to integrate (i.e. bring together) these activities for achieving the objectives of the organization (Gaurav, 2011).

Coordination is the way toward connecting the exercises of different divisions of the association (Tanuja, 2019). To be successful in the present progressive circumstance in this fast moving technological period in education, proper direction should be given to leaders in the little units to bring the activities of scholastic innovators together to achieve common HE goals.

The purpose of this study is to examine how coordinating can be a key for effective leadership in higher education in Nigeria. In this study, various leadership models have been identified to include: hierarchical models, individualistic models, collegial models and collaborative models all of which shall be considered in this study.

### **Hierarchical Leadership Model**

Is a model that accords power to the position and not the individual. This makes it less likely for a leader to abuse power. The leader reserves the right to assign duties to employees in their areas of specialty which helps them grow within their niches (Uhlig, 2014).

### **Individualistic leadership models**

In this type of leadership, the leader still acts as an individual contributor as was when he/she was part of a team. Varma (2016) opines that people are usually promoted to the level of leadership because of their hard work but having gotten there, they continued to do those things that got them to their new position, forgetting that leading people is different from being individual contributors.

### **Collegial leadership model**

Is the type of leadership model where an atmosphere is created for personnel to share power and work together as colleagues in a team to solve organizational problems (Wright, 2012).

### **Collaborative Leadership Models**

According to Alex (2016), is a management practice that aims to bring managers, executives and staff out of silos to work together. He states that collaboration is tapping into collective intelligence where information is shared and everyone takes responsibility for the results. And that can boost productivity and increase team engagement.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Overview**

Democracy is a term connected with government but has turned out to be inevitable to relate it to associations and organizations for appropriate lead and practicality. As Besse (1957) puts it, the theory was initiated 2,000 years prior, support in the religion which has come to overpower the World. 200 years earlier we put this major segment in our political and social structure. We are just beginning to comprehend that we should put interest in business. The theory as created by customary and neo-old style researchers like, Aristotle, Plato, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques, Rousseau, Edmund Burke, James Madison, John C. Calhoun to name a few (Baradart, 1979). We are simply starting to understand that we should place premium in business also.

The center issue about vote based system is the significance it connects to human character (Appadorai, 1975). It accepts community limitations with respect to people. These limitations include insight, restraint and intuitiveness. Its essence is the privilege of each man bound by the choice of a leadership (association) to contribute to the creation and revamping of those choices. This privilege is fundamental to vote based system since it makes conceivable free talk and the consistent investment of the individuals in the leadership. This infers the commitment to regard the other man, and give in to his perspective. It is through coordination that people (subordinates), contribute thoughts towards the arrangement of issues influencing their association and employments. Investment can make an advantage in spirit so when fundamental requests are given, individuals will react more co-operatively in light of the fact that they are partaking in the undertakings of the association.

### **Concept of Coordinating**

Management seeks to achieve objectives by co-ordination through in collaboration with its other siblings; planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. That is why co-ordination is not a separate function of management because achieving harmony between individuals, efforts towards achievement of group goals is key to success. Co-ordination is the essence of management and is implicit and inherent in all functions of management.

According to Prachi (2015), co-ordination is the unification, integration, synchronization of the efforts of group members so as to provide unity of action in the pursuit of common goals. It is a hidden force which binds all the other functions of management. Mooney and Reelay cited in Tanuja 2019 say that coordination is orderly arrangement of group efforts to provide unity of action in the pursuit of common goals. Coordination is precise plan of collective endeavors to give solidarity of activity in the quest for shared objectives. Charles Worth in Prachi (2019), states that coordination is the integration of several parts into an orderly whole to achieve the purpose of understanding.

Tanuja (2019) defined coordinating as the process of integrating the objectives and activities of the separate units (departments or functional areas) of an organization in order to achieve organizational goals efficiently. Co-ordination maintains unity of action amongst individuals and departments. Absence of co-ordination will result in sub-optimal attainment of goals. In extreme situations, it may result in losses and liquidation of companies.

Coordination, consequently, encourages smooth running of a business. Powerful coordination depends on reliance of hierarchical authority. It additionally expects relationship of

association's inner and outer condition. It is the efficient course of action of collective endeavor to give solidarity of activity in the quest for a typical reason (Mooney in Tanuja, 2019).

Joe (2019) characterized coordination as the capacity of the board which guarantees that various divisions and gatherings work in a state of harmony. Consequently, there is solidarity of activity among the representatives, gatherings, and offices. It additionally acquires agreement completing the various assignments and exercises to accomplish the association's destinations effectively. Coordination is a significant part of any collective endeavor. At the point when an individual is working, there is no requirement for coordination. Along these lines, we can say that the coordination capacity is an efficient plan of endeavors giving solidarity of activity in compatibility of a shared objective. In an association, every one of the offices must work a piece of a strong unit to streamline execution. As aptly put by Tanuja (2019), ways of organizing will include:

### **Internal and External Coordination**

Coordination between the exercises of offices and individuals working inside the association is known as inner or internal coordination. This is workings between hierarchy and faculties. Coordination between exercises of the association with units outside the association like Government, clients, service providers, contenders and in a school system the community will not be left out is known as outer or external coordination.

### **Vertical and Horizontal Coordination**

These are the types of internal coordination. Vertical coordination is accomplished among exercises of individuals working at various levels. It is the connecting of exercises at the highest point of the association with those at the center and lower levels so as to accomplish hierarchical objectives. Horizontal also known as level coordination is accomplished among exercises of various divisions working at a similar level. It is the connecting of exercises crosswise over offices at comparable levels. It connects the exercises of four essential offices - generation, fund, faculty and deals.

The requirement for level coordination emerges when divisions rely on one another for data or items. At the point when data is executed crosswise over offices, departmental pioneers share their perspectives on a similar issue and land at inventive thoughts and considerations to manage the circumstance. As indicated by Jay R. Galbraith, the more associations need to process data over the span of delivering their item or administration, the more strategies for level coordination they should utilize.

Various strategies for accomplishing level coordination are slack assets, data frameworks and parallel relations:

- Slack assets means keeping up a pad of assets like cradle time, cash, material, stock, individuals and so on by every division;
- Information frameworks encourage trade of data among units of the association. PCs have facilitated crafted by transmitting data to various divisions. Data frameworks encourage compelling coordination among divisions; and
- Lateral relations allude to relations between companion gatherings of various offices whose communication (through direct contact or contact official or work

gatherings/groups) help in landing at answer for the issue. Sidelong relations enable the data to be traded over the scalar chain as opposed to individuals put at more significant levels in the hierarchical pecking order. These relations are coordination of endeavors through conveying and critical thinking with peers in different divisions or units; as opposed to eluding most issues up the chain of importance for goals.

### **Advantages of Coordination**

- **Non-routine employments:** Non-routine occupations need consistent progression of data, both vertical and level. Except if there is appropriate coordination among these employments, they can't be performed proficiently. Coordination, subsequently, helps in successfully completing non-routine employments.
- **Dynamic exercises:** Organizations work in the dynamic condition. Ecological changes must be embraced by associations for their endurance and development. Coordination helps in incorporating exercises which continually change as indicated by changes in nature.
- **Principles of execution:** When models of execution against which genuine execution is to be estimated are excessively high, pioneers facilitate the different business exercises to guarantee that elite benchmarks are accomplished.
- **Association of exercises:** When various units of the association are subject to one another for assets or data, there is incredible requirement for coordination among them. More noteworthy, the relationship is the requirement for coordination. As indicated by Thompson, there are three sorts of relationship: pooled, consecutive and proportional reliance.

In pooled relationship, authoritative execution relies on pooled or consolidated execution of the considerable number of divisions. This happens when various divisions make various items not reliant on one another (Tanuja (2019)). The requirement for coordination is, in this way, least. In a differentiated market, if an organization fabricates materials and electronic things (for example, Reliance Industries), the presentation of material advanced education establishment in Nigeria doesn't rely on the exhibition of hardware advanced education foundation in Nigeria and nor does the exhibition of gadgets advanced education organization in Nigeria rely on that of material advanced education organization in Nigeria, however, the general composed presentation of both the businesses influence the presentation of Reliance Industries.

In the event that the need emerges, money related and HR can be moved from one unit/division to the next in the event that it influences the general execution of the advanced education organization in Nigeria. Misfortunes in one advanced education foundation in Nigeria can be remunerated by moving assets from the benefit making advanced education establishment in Nigeria to the misfortune making advanced education organization in Nigeria. In consecutive association, execution of one unit relies on that or another (promoting division relies on generation office to make deals). This requires coordination among creation and deals divisions. In the event that there is absence of coordination in the speed at which the trucks move, there will be colossal wastage of time which may even bring about loss of requests in outrageous

circumstances. With increment in level of relationship from pooled to corresponding, the requirement for coordination likewise increments.

- **Specialization:** Specialization prompts focus on thin zones of occupation movement. People will in general neglect by and large viewpoint of the activity. This expects coordination to coordinate every one of the exercises towards a shared objective.
- **Developing association:** In developing associations, number of individuals and divisions become so enormous that it becomes hard for top pioneers to facilitate the exercises performed by every one of them. Different methods of coordination (rules, strategies, plans, objectives, slack assets and so forth.) help in bringing together assorted and numerous authoritative/departmental exercises towards the shared objective.

Huge associations have enormous number of individuals with differing points of view. In contemporary associations, there is workforce assorted variety. Individuals originate from various countries, societies, instructive foundation, needs, propensities and so forth. In the main case, individuals work so they fulfill their individual objectives.

Coordination means to incorporate individual objectives with authoritative objectives so both are fulfilled. Coordination incorporates singular objectives with further hazard in that in following a lot of skills, a pioneer will concentrate on ‘doing authority’ instead of guaranteeing that viable work is complete (Seddon, 2003). This implies a rundown of viable authority practices must itself center the pioneer on the suitable motivation behind their job. Kouzes and Posner's (2007) system entices this by bringing the significance of shared vision, standards and clear objectives to the cutting edge. Notwithstanding, it is emphatically contended by numerous authority reporters that an attention on hierarchical object is the essential trial of good initiative (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Bennis, 1999; Scholtes, 1998; Hamel, 2009).

An emphasis intentionally is the establishment of Systems Thinking which is once in a while experienced in HE authority yet which is broadly examined in the board writing (Deming 1982; Senge, 1990; Womack & Jones, 1996; Seddon, 2003). Understanding the association as a framework is significant since a reasonable authority approach is probably not going to rise in the common request of things. For instance, in the event that joint effort is required, at that point the establishment must be believed to esteem that action (Astin & Astin, 2000); at exactly that point will pioneers be slanted to seek after cooperative work. In the event that the general framework (rules, proportions of execution, advancement criteria, objectives, techniques) proposes an alternate arrangement of needs, at that point an alternate result will rise (Seddon, 2003). Put a decent entertainer in a terrible framework and the framework wins unfailingly (Rummler & Bache, 1995).

## Research Questions

- How does coordinating relate with the hierarchical model of leadership in Higher Education (HE) in Nigeria?
- How does coordinating relate with the individualistic model of leadership in Higher Education (HE) in Nigeria?
- How does coordinating relate with the collegial model of leadership in Higher Education (HE) in Nigeria?

- How does coordinating relate with the Collaborative model of leadership in Higher Education (HE) in Nigeria?

## Hypotheses

- **H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the hierarchical model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria
- **H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the individualistic model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria
- **H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the Collegial model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria
- **H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the collaborative model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria.

## METHODS

This research adopted the cross-sectional research design in order to ascertain the impact of coordinating as a key factor for effective leadership in higher education in Nigeria. The sample population for this research was One Hundred and Fifty (150) respondents consisting of 3 vice chancellors, 2 Rectors, 25 Deans of Faculty, 25 Associate Deans with 5 from each higher institution, and 100 Heads of Department (HOD) with 20 from each of the 5 higher institutions in Rivers State. The sampling technique of the study was the census sampling technique. The instrument for the study was the questionnaire. The survey instrument was administered through a web survey. The questions were designed to collect quantitative data, although there were two open-ended questions that allowed for qualitative data. The closed-form questions asked how and where current leaders began their academic careers and for their past and prospective trajectories as academic leaders. The open-form questions asked for comments on leadership identification and development in academe. Members of the designated sample population received an initial email contact describing the project and inviting them to link to a web- site to complete the survey. After three email reminders, the study was concluded with a 64% response rate. The reliability of the study was 0.85 Cronbach Alpha reliability index. Data collected were coded and tested using regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

### Analysis of Study Variables – Univariate Analysis

Table 1: Mean ratings Analysis of Variable of the Study - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimu	Maximum	Mean	SD		Skewness
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statisti	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Collaborative Model	96	1	4	2.66	.484	.378	.176
Hierarchical Model	96	1	4	2.71	.583	.733	.176
Individualistic Model	96	1	4	2.56	.484	-.378	.176
Collegial Model	96	1	4	3.87	.636	.062	.176
Valid N (list wise)	96						

Table 1 above showed that data was collected from the 96 respondents. The descriptive statistics often used to examine the N, minimum, maximum, mean std. deviation and Skewness shows the degree of symmetry in collected data. The collected data indicates two different minimum values which are 1 and 2; and the maximum values are 5, 4 and 3 whereas, the negative values of the Skewness shows that the distribution is negatively skewed and Skewness is  $< 0$  vice versa with the positive values. From the table, the items have mean score of over 2.50, which means that they were accepted.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordination on the hierarchical model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria

Table 2: ANOVA Result for H<sub>01</sub>

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.214	3.006		-.082	-.082
	Coordinating	-.107	.531	-.082	-.082	-.082

a. Dependent Variable: Individualistic Model of Leadership

Table 2 coefficient entails the value of B, Beta which is known as rate of change. The significance in value is denoted as 0.847. This indicates 84.7% effect, which means there is a significant effect of coordination on Hierarchical model of leadership. In accordance with the above data the linear equation results as follows:

$$\text{Coordinating} = -.107 + \text{Hierarchical Model} = 6.214$$

Where:

Y = Coordinating (independent variable)

m = slope

x = Hierarchical Model of Leadership (dependent variable)

c = constant

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the individualistic model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria

Table 3: ANOVA table for H<sub>02</sub>

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.263	3.283		1.299	.242
	Coordinating	.242	.570	.171	.424	.686

a. Dependent Variable: Individualistic Model of Leadership

Table 3 showed the anova result for H<sub>02</sub>. The significant effect between variables is established by the value of .686. This indicates a 68.6% effect. It is therefore concluded that, coordinating has a significant effect on individualistic model of leadership.

In accordance with the above data the linear equation would result as follows:

$$\text{Coordinating} = .242 + \text{Individualistic Model of Leadership} = 4.263$$

Where:

Y = coordinating (independent variable)

m = slope

x = Individualistic Model of Leadership (dependent variable)

c = constant

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the Collegial model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria

Table 4: Coefficient for H<sub>03</sub>

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.213	3.297		.974	.368
	Coordinating	.426	.606	.276	.702	.509

a. Dependent Variable: Individualistic Model of Leadership

From the table 4, the significant p-value of .509. This indicates a 50.9% effect. which indicates a low significant effect of coordinating on collegial model of leadership in higher education in Nigeria.

In accordance with the above data the linear equation would result as follows:

$$\text{Coordinating} = .426 + \text{Collegial Model} = 3.213$$

Where:

Y = coordinating (independent variable)

m = slope

x = collegial model (dependent variable)

c = constant

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant effect of coordinating on the Collaborative model of leadership in Higher Education in Nigeria

Table 4: Coefficient for H<sub>04</sub>

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.632	2.391		3.192	.019
	Coordinating	-.779	.415	-.749	-.912	.797

a. Dependent Variable: Collaborative Model

From table 5, the standardized coefficient of Beta is .797. This indicates a 79.7% effect. The effect between the variables is shown to be .797, which further confirms the substantial significant effect of coordinating on Collaborative model of leadership in higher education institution in Nigeria.

In accordance with the above data the linear equation would results as follows:

$$\text{Coordinating} = 779 + \text{collaborative model} = 7.632$$

Where:

Y = coordinating (independent variable)

m = slope

x = collaborative (dependent variable)

c = constant

## DISCUSSION

The result of the study revealed that following information: For hypothesis 1 as shown on table 2 above, the significance in value is indicated as 0.847. This indicates 84.7% effect, which means there is a significant effect of coordinating on Hierarchical model of leadership. The null hypothesis which stated no significant effect was therefore rejected and the alternate accepted at 0.05 level of significance. For hypothesis 2 as shown on table 3 above, the significant effect between variables is established by the value of .686. This indicates 68.6% effect. It is therefore concluded that, coordinating has a significant effect on individualistic model of leadership. The null hypothesis which stated no significant relationship was therefore rejected and the alternate accepted at 0.05 level of significance. For hypothesis 3 as shown on table 4 above, the significance of p-value is .509., which indicates a 50.9% effect. This indicates a low significant effect of coordinating on collegial model of leadership in higher education in Nigeria. The null hypothesis which stated no significant relationship was therefore rejected and the alternate accepted at 0.05 level of significance.

Finally, for hypothesis 4 as shown on table 5 above, the standardized coefficient of Beta .797 indicates a 79.7% effect. The effect between the variables is shown to be .797, which further confirms the substantial significant effect of Coordination on Collaborative model of leadership in higher education institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated no significant effect was therefore rejected and the alternate accepted at 0.05 level of significance.

These results are supported by the assertion of Prachi (2015) who stated that leaders can be compared to an orchestra conductor since both of them have to create rhythm and unity in the activities of group members; and co-ordination is an integral element or ingredient of all the managerial functions across units and subunits in an organization.

## **CONCLUSION**

Current frameworks of leadership style for the higher education sector do not encompass all of the behaviors expressed in established leadership literature. Higher education leaders need a combination of some of the leadership models, and a good coordination skill in order to address the challenges faced in the sector. Separation of these aspects is counterproductive and will not address the negative impact of “managerialism” perceived within institutions (Deem, 1998). Within a changing world, an effective leader must be able to coordinate both staff and students to always be hungry to learn more about how to enthuse, engage and empower those who follow. Therefore, coordinating should be viewed as a key for effective leadership by leaders in higher education in Nigeria.

## **Recommendations**

The study therefore makes the following recommendations that:

- Coordinating as a key element for effective leadership in higher education should be adopted by those in leadership positions in all higher education institutions.
- A combination of appropriate models of leadership be adopted in conjunction with coordination for effective achievement of educational goals in Nigeria.
- Leaders of higher education in Nigeria should see themselves as lubricants in the wheel of higher education institutions in Nigeria, and should therefore relate with every unit and sub-unit in their organization effectively to achieve set goals and objectives.
- Students, who are upcoming leaders, should be engaged in coordinative activities to grow in the art and utilize it in their leadership positions in their time.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION**

As discussed in this study, leadership is showing direction and pulling all relevant segments together to achieve organizational goals. It will also be necessary to study how leaders will synergize and draw strength from one another for effective growth of their various organizations. Hence, this study recommends a study on ‘university leadership conferences: an ingredient for effective achievement of educational goals in Nigeria’.

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