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PRINCIPALS' POLITICAL LEADERSHIP FRAMES AND THE CHALLENGES OF QUALITY OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA: A CASE OF IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated principals' political leadership frames and the challenges of quality of public senior secondary schools in Nigeria: a case of Imo State. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised of all the principals of public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Therefore, the target population of the study was the one hundred and ninety-six (196) principals from the 196 public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Sample size, the study took the census of all the one hundred and ninety-six (196) public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The research instrument that was used for data collection for this study was self-structured questionnaire design titled; Principals' Leadership Frames and Quality Questionnaire (PLFQQ). The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor and two other experts in the field of measurement and evaluation while the reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha coefficient with .853 index obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the various research questions while independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Findings from the study revealed that structural, human resources, political and symbolic frame influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The study concluded that principals' leadership frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The study and recommended that principals should consider adopting the various leadership frames such as human resources frames, structural frames, symbolic frames and political frames favorable to their school.

Keywords: Institutional, Leadership, Frames, Quality, Public, Senior Secondary, Schools, Imo State, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership frames can be used to evaluate managerial and leadership effectiveness. According to Bolman and Deal (2003), research conducted on Florida and Singapore school principals indicates all four frames were associated with effectiveness as a leader or manager. In both groups of administrators, the structural frame was the strongest predictor of managerial effectiveness whereas the symbolic frame was the strongest predictor of leadership effectiveness. Women were rated slightly higher in each frame than men, but the differences were not statistically significant (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Thompson undertook a similar study examining gender and use of leadership frames among lower, middle, and upper managers (Thompson, 2000). Thompson found leaders who use three or four frames regardless of the leadership dimension were more effective in their leadership roles. Gender was found to have no impact on leadership effectiveness. Perceived effectiveness as a leader is a function of multiframe leadership behavior. Balanced leadership, defined as use of three or more frames, was found to yield both effective managers and leaders (Thompson, 2000).

The principal of a school is a planner, director controller, coordinator, organizer, adviser and a problem solver (Maduabuchi, 2012). Ugochi (2011) posited that the principal identifies and set goals and objectives of the school, which of course must be in line with the national objectives, analyzes tasks and share responsibilities to the staff according to specialization and expertise. The status of Secondary school principal is not gender discriminating. This means that a male or a female can be a principal. Therefore, a good principal should champion the course of quality in his or her school to ensure a better school administration and academic efficiency. The personality of principal leadership is seen as the fulcrum around which the totality of Secondary School image involves (Osueke, 2009). Oku et al. (2013) regarded leadership as a common characteristic of animal kingdom. It implies that whenever any of the species are in group, a leader emerges. Canavesi and Minelli (2022) defined leadership as a function of the leadership between the leader, the followers and the task-situational characteristics. Leadership means inspiring people to do their best to achieve desired result. It involves developing and communicating a vision for the future, motivating people and securing their engagement (Ololube 2018).

Okoroma (2000) opined that leadership is the force needed to translate human and material resources into effective utilization. Lawson in Ololube (2018) saw leadership as process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal setting and goal achievement. Koko in Nwiyi (2020) defined leadership as the act of leading someone or a group of people to achieve a predetermined set goal and objectives of an organization. The major educational goal and objective of Nigeria is quality in education. Quality practice is an effort put forward which strives to maintain quality in Nigerian Secondary schools' education through approaches such as inspection, evaluation and audit. These approaches are widely practiced to measured quality and ensure whether these practices conform to standards. Quality in secondary schools in Nigeria engages number of major internal and external educational stakeholders and other government agencies in the process of achieving quality education. These include staff of higher education institutions, internal quality assurance units, government agencies (ministerial and administrative officers), local education authority, regional state supervisory bodies, and quality agencies (autonomous or semiautonomous). Professional associations, faculty, students, alumni, employers of labour and funding organization (Hilliges & Kettis, 2013).

The mentioned processes are searched for, because the ultimate goal of education administration at all level is to develop an all-inclusive and quality education that is accessible and relevant for self-reliance. This is guided by the understanding that good education contributes significantly to economic growth, improvement of employment prospect and income generating opportunities for sustainable development. Ayeni (2012) opened that quality is the efficient management, monitoring, evaluation and reviews of the resource's inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce a quality output (students) that meets set standards and expectations of the society. Quality in education aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the educational system conform to the expected standards. Thus, the quality of education is the degree of excellence of the output (students) which can be achieved through principals' effective leadership frames or approaches. Principals' leadership frames believed to be approaches and strategies maintained by a principal in the school to bring about changes needed to improve educational product. No educational program is worth its onions if the quality of its products is not assured. School principals are saddled with the responsibilities of ensuring that quality of the educational program they run is in line with the national goals and objectives so that their products can contribute meaningful to the larger society.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to:

- Examine how principals' leadership political frame enhances quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- Investigate the challenges associated with principals' leadership frame practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- Assess the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were as follows:

- How does principals' leadership Political Frame influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State?
- What are the challenges associated with principals' leadership frame practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State?
- What are the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses for the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals regarding their leadership political frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

System Theory

The first call for a general systems theory came from Ludwig von Bertalanffy's research in Igwe (2015). He published "General System Theory: Foundations, Development, and Applications. The goal of this book was to outline certain basic laws that can be applied to virtually every scientific field. The system was seen as a series of interrelated and interdependent parts in such a way that the interaction of any part of the system affects the whole system. Systems theory seeks to explain and develop hypotheses around characteristics that arise within complex systems that seemingly could not arise in any single system within the whole. This is referred to as emergent behavior. If a complex system expresses emergent behavior that means it has characteristics its properties do not display on their own. That is, one part of the system must interact and depend on the other parts around it to function effectively. From his perspective, the way individual components within a complex system cyclically are both affected by and causing an effect on the system can be applied and reveal crucial information in multiple settings. Following this thought process, Bertalanffy reasoned there ought to be universal guidelines or principles that are applied across the sciences and within educational settings to further unify certain fields specifically the natural and social sciences and relate them to one another, rather than looking at them individually.

The main assumption of systems theory is that a complex system is made up of multiple smaller systems, and it is the interactions between these smaller systems that create a complex system as it's known. Systems theory assumes certain underlying concepts and principles can be applied universally in different fields, even if these fields evolved separately. This assumption is a crucial factor in systems theory because it is this reasoning that enables people like social workers and psychologists to employ systems theory in a way that benefits those they're assisting. Following that assumption, a general systems theory that provides universal guidelines for scientific research and education will enable further integration and unification of the natural and social sciences. This will yield a better understanding of how these sciences are interrelated and affect our daily lives.

The schools are looked at in terms of social system – as complex interactive body, structurally and operationally. The system theory is of immense help to this project work as the principals will reflect in the objectives, functions and the ultimate goal of the education system in which they operate. The principal as the administrator represents a crucial component of the social system. This implies that the principal as the chief Executive of the school deals with people at all times and is bound to get along with them. For the principal to perform his

administrative role very well, he is expected to ensure that he exhibits the qualities required of him so as to achieve secondary school objectives and goals as stipulated in the National Policy.

The system theory is relevant to education system because education system (school) is a system and the concept of interaction and interdependence of parts with the education system like all other social system has identical properties with the system. A holistic approach to an individual's personality, choices and hardships is important when it comes to successful school quality. Like the other fields mentioned, a social worker must look at all factors that come together in a unique way to shape their experiences and who they are. Systems theory plays a key role in the advancement of society. Only by looking at all the moving parts can we have a greater understanding of the whole and how it works a principle that holds true in physical sciences and social sciences alike. By applying these broad truths across disciplines, we can further integrate our understanding of separate phenomena. As it applies to social science, systems theory is crucial because it looks holistically at the individual to draw insights and use them to take steps forward.

Principalship

Principals are school leaders responsible for facilitating their school's interactions with government, parents and others in the school community. This responsibility includes working with parents when disciplinary issues arise, when students are not succeeding academically, and when parents have concerns. Principals also interact with parents who serve on school advisory boards, parent/teacher organizations, and booster clubs. Principals report that they spent a significant part of their time working with parents of students who have been identified as needing special services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA).

Principals continue to be responsible for the management of their schools even though their primary responsibility has shifted. One major management responsibility is school safety. This responsibility includes ensuring that facilities and equipment are safe and in good working order, the development of overall school discipline policies and the enforcement of those policies, and the assignment of supervisory responsibilities among school personnel. At the elementary level, principals are cognizant of their responsibility to ensure constant supervision of the very young children in the school. As students advance into the higher grades, the needs for supervision changes as students mature. The responsibility for supervision remains high for older students who are handicapped; who are in areas where the potential for injury is greater such as labs, shops, and athletic facilities; and who are in situations (field trips, athletic events, etc.) where additional caution is required.

The role of the principal is that of implementation and management of the school facilities and materials and he must enlist the cooperation of his staff and all school personnel. Due to the nature of his job, he is more knowledgeable about the day –to-day activities and programs of the school than any other person in the school. The principal deals with teaching and non- teaching staff, students and members of the public. He is concerned with the quality of instruction as well as students' welfare, the moral and spiritual tone of the school and maintain of discipline. He must be an effective organizer, coordinator and supervisor of various activities facing him (Achunine & Irondi, 2019). Babayemi (2016) noted that since education has been universally recognized as a weapon to banish ignorance, poverty and diseases, the role of the principal as a manager, leader and executive head cannot be overlooked. In an attempt to answer

the question- What do educational leaders do? Resser (2017) had suggested that they perform the roles, which include:

- Setting objectives for using available resources;
- Formulation of plans for achieving these objectives;
- Defining the tasks to be done;
- Grouping that task into jobs;
- Staffing the job with people;
- Initiating work activities;
- Stimulating productivity.

Griffiths et al. (2016) in a state wide study of administration and several studies of their local school units in the United States of America (USA) categorized the job of principal under four areas:

- Improving the educational program;
- Selecting and developing personnel;
- Working with the community;
- Managing the school.

The principal of a school exercise various supervisory roles in three major domains: instructional, curriculum and staff development. The principal as instructional leaders involves one or more individuals to engage in activities. He works continuously as they seek to improve instructions, the curriculum or themselves. He should have knowledge about different aspects of the instructional program and skill in introducing change in that program, direct key elements in the experts, the principal will need to function as an effective instructional leader. The principal as a curriculum improver, according to McDowell in Anuna (2014) indicated that the dynamic nature of the society requires that curriculum should be continuously improved to be relevant. Among the specific responsibilities of the principal in curriculum improvement as follows:

- Identifying needed improvement and to develop a program of action;
- Providing leadership in the development of short term and long – term plans for curriculum;
- Providing leadership in the selection, preparation, interpretation and disseminating of appropriate curriculum materials as well as evaluate the effectiveness of such materials; and
- To plan facilities including identification of resource materials, supplies equipment, textbooks and audio- visual aids.

The principal as curriculum evaluator is to help the teachers master the fundamental techniques and procedures in evaluating students' performance. The principal guides the teacher through practice in the preparation and use of teacher made test, test item development, test administration, scoring and interpretation of test scores. Oku et al. (2018) identified functional task of secondary school principal as follows:

- Administration of instructional program and curriculum;

- Staff personnel administration;
- Students/pupils personal administration;
- Finance management / school;
- School community relationship; and
- Administration of instructional program and curriculum.

Educational experts accepted that instructional program and curriculum are the first and most important role of the principal. Principals indicate worthwhile values, attitudes, skills and competencies to students to produce required quality products. This explained why the principals performance assessment rest on his ability in the area of instructional and curriculum which manifest in academic performance and instructional delivery. The two dimensions of the components of instructional program include maintenance activities and improvement of instructional program (Mgbodile in Oku et al., 2018).

Activities of the principal relating to the instructional program includes; determining the educational needs, stating the educational objectives, planning and implementing instructional change, assessing the community context for education and evaluating program outcomes. The implementation program involves careful attention to motivating staff for increase in productivity; through the reduction of broad goals and objectives into measurable behavioral outcomes. The principal direct attentions to human material inputs and processes needed to change and improve the educational program and the assessment of the products with adequate evaluation techniques and procedures. On this note, the principal provides efficient schedules, reasonable workloads for the employees, and the best utilization of available professional and material resources. He works with teachers in allocating children among classes to form the best learning groups, and endeavour to minimize unnecessary interruptions and inconveniences which interfere with the teaching – learning process. The principal arranges for periodic self – evaluation of the school program through classroom visitation, checking of stationary records.

Furthermore, the principal helps to develop the curriculum. He does this by considering the following:

- That curriculum should be developed from the grassroots level and include parents and community contributions;
- That curriculum satisfies the philosophy and educational purpose of the school and the nation;
- That curriculum should provide practical educational experiences; and
- Take into consideration the culture, customs and traditions of both the country and the region.

With the above illustrations, it should be noted that a curriculum is not the same as the curriculum prepared by the government, but it has to do with the principals planning and managing to ensure a full and balanced curriculum in their schools.

Leadership

The word leadership does not have a single definition because the meaning could often be affected by what it intends to cover. Taffinder (2006) gave the following as definitions of leadership: “a simple meaning: leadership is getting people to do things they have never thought

of doing, do not believe are possible or that they do not want to do”. With reference to an organization, he defined leadership as “the action of committing employees to contribute their best to the purpose of the organization. While on a complex and more accurate view, he explains that you only know leadership by its consequences from the fact that individuals or a group of people start to behave in a particular way as a result of the actions of someone else. Leadership is one of those concepts, which have as many definitions as there are people who have defined it. This means that there is no single and satisfying definition of leadership because the phenomenon is too complex and too variable to be captured by any one definition. Leadership does not function in vacuum, it obviously operates within and derives its contextual meaning from an organization.

Ogunu (2016) described leadership as a dynamic process in a group whereby one individual influence the others to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of group task or goal in a given situation. Oku et al. (2018) identified leadership as a common characteristic of the animal kingdom, which implies that wherever any of the species are in a group, a leader emerges. Ololube (2019) defined leadership as the capacity of someone to lead others, having or occupying the position as a leader of a group, institution, or organization, etc.

Ezeocha (2012) explained leadership as the art of coordinating and motivating individual and groups to achieve desired goals. He went further to define leadership as an authority injunction given to an individual or group of individuals to exercise a definite measure of power within a specified organizational context. Okojie (2000) in Anukam et al (2018) viewed leadership as “an important human component in an organized system which is developed through training and exhibited through interaction with members of the group who voluntarily accept the responsibility and who work for the achievement of common goals. Nwankwo (2002) in Achunine and Irondi (2019) talk of leadership as concerning with the initiation organization and direction of the actions of the members of a group in a specific situation towards the achievement of the objectives of the group. Ololube (2019) stated that leadership involves a type of responsibility aimed at achieving particular ends by applying the available resources (human and material) and ensuring a cohesive and coherent organization in the process. Hollander (2017) viewed leadership as a social exchange process that involves three basic elements. These elements include: The Leadership, The Follower and The Situation.

This implies that leadership process is a function of the leader, the follower and the situation. Therefore, leadership is a dynamic process and comprises a combination of factors. Nwachukwu (2007) cited leadership as “a socially influencing process for the attainment of goals. A leader is the most influential person in an organization such as the education sector. The leader provides directions; guides group activities and ensure that group activities are attained. A good leader, therefore, is one who is capable of persuading others to move enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals. Leaders characteristically “induce and inspire” others to achieve (Osueke, 2009). Leaders set strategy, they motivate, they create a mission, and they build organization culture. Despite all that have been written about leadership there has been no consensus concerning the primary role or function of leadership. Ezeocha (2012) concluded that the qualification for leadership requirement must include a measure of superior, intelligence, relevant training, or experience, a capability for initiative in interpersonal relations, the ability to direct attention and to advance acceptable solutions.

The Political Frame

This frame assumes that organizations are coalitions composed of individuals and interest groups competing for scarce resources. There are enduring differences in the values and beliefs of groups and individuals and these differences leads to conflict. Conflict is seen as a normal by – product of collective action. This is why political leaders spend much time in networking, creating coalitions, building a power base, bargaining and negotiating compromises (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Within school system, interactions between people are mediated by power, status, positioning, and political coalitions. Power differences may arise in a number of different ways. Issues of Power can affect the processes of change as well. A change effort requires sanction from the appropriate power holders to succeed. Individuals may hold such power due to formal positions in a department or because they are highly respected thought leaders (Wei et al., 2009). The Political Frame describes an organization that competes within their group for limited resources and time. It is made up of assorted individuals with several different and opposing beliefs, interests, and perceptions of the group and its current standing. These varied views and needs create a desire for power in order to satisfy conflicts. People begin working behind others' backs and negotiating with competing interests to get what they want. It utilizes networking and building coalitions and usually creates a group of individuals with hidden agendas. This Frame emphasizes the need for power to reach goals and, “puts politics at the heart of decision making.”

The Political Frame is important for its unique understanding of authority and the necessary order of power that is used to make conflicting decisions. It shows us what tends to become of conflicts in an organization and how the issues are solved in a group with opposing interests. It shows us what to expect in situations where the person with control is the only person that matters. In an organization it is common that the group goal may not be the primary agenda for every member. There are several times when an individual goal or interest takes precedence, especially when given a position of power. It is believed, there is value in understanding these circumstances because there is almost certainly a time when power is the only way to reach your individual goal. It may even be a simple misunderstanding of the most effective way to reach the group goal. The person with the most power is going to be the one who ultimately decides.

This is why America has a check and balances system for the government. This makes certain, that our president does not have all the power and this prevents him from becoming a dictator. This balance of power is healthy in all organizations.. This Frame explains the power of control and it is important to have that power present in leadership, when given to the right people. It also describes the benefit of negotiation and working with others.

A conflict of power can be a dangerous thing, but when organized and balanced, it can work well to reach the group's goal (Daniel & Naneh, 2018). Principals believed this frame is understood best by the leaders in a group. It is often that a few people at the top of an organization will not agree on a certain goal or how to reach their goals. This is when politics kicks in and independent interests begin to take precedence. However, with a proper understanding of each other's' beliefs and agendas, and a well-structured and agreed upon hierarchy of authority, a beneficial solution can be found. There are so many polarizing ideas that need someone in power to take charge, delegate, and make final decisions.

In principals' leadership efforts, the principals utilize the strong negotiation and probably slight manipulation techniques of the Political Frame in order to reach desired goals. He would like to incorporate everyone's needs and desired gains to set an agreeable goal for the entire

group to minimize conflicting interests. Principals would utilize healthy negotiation but, in the end, become stubborn until they receive what they believe to be best for their institution. He would not seek power at first, but instead gain understanding of the groups and its motives and get to know the people involved in the group before finding his own voice to desire authority.

The Political Frame has great things to offer us and teach us about the people and our tendencies. It is great to keep these things in mind when leading a group and when forming goals and making decisions for the whole. Politically, getting things done requires finessing the various factions within an organization, because there are always factions, and there are always more needs than there are resources. With political frame, principals develop the voices of the staff that can influence the teams, they consciously engage supporter and build cohorts who will handle tough situation through new initiatives. They know who to contact before presenting a plan to a large group. By political frame the principals keep in touch with the influential members of the community.

Political frame is mostly associated with the realistic process of making decisions in an environment with divergent interest and limited resources (Bolman & Deal, 2008). According to Daniel and Naneh (2018), political frame has five basic assumptions:

- Organizations are coalitions of assorted individual and interest groups;
- Coalition members have enduring differences in values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions of reality;
- Most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources;
- Scarce resources and enduring differences put conflict at the center of day-to-day dynamics and make power the most important asset; and
- Goals and decisions emerge from bargaining and negotiation among competing stakeholders jockeying for their own interests.

During period of prosperity the political frame, and the power associated with allocating resources, allows for decision making with little difficulty or conflict. In periods of deprivation, when resources are limited, there is often an increase in conflict and power struggles. Bolman and Deal (2008), posited that the concept of scarce resources suggests that politics will be more salient and intense during difficult times than in prospers times. Two important aspects of the political frame are power and conflict that occur during the decision-making process. Power is an important concept when discussing leadership since it is the capacity or potential to influence the behavior of others. The concept has both a constructive and destructive connotation depending on how power is used (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Concept of Quality

The word quality is often use indiscriminately for many different meanings. The word quality represents the properties of products and services that are valued by the consumer. Quality can be defined as ‘fitness for use’. Customer satisfaction” “doing things right the first time” or “Zero defects” These definitions are acceptable because quality can refer to degree of excellence. White (2006) defined quality as an inherent character, property or attribute. Quality can be defined as a characteristic of a product or process that can be measured. Quality is the ongoing process of building and sustaining relationship by assessing, anticipating and fulfilling stated and implied needs. Quality is a momentary perception that occurs when something in our

environment interacts with us, in the pre-intellectual awareness that comes before rational thought takes over and begins establishing order. Judgment of the resulting order is then reported as good or bad quality value.

Quality is doing the right thing and is uniquely defined by each individual (Abdulrahman, 2014). Quality is meeting the customer's needs in a way that exceeds the customer's needs in a way that exceeds the customer's expectation (Anuna, 2014). Quality is nothing more or less than the perception the customer has of someone, his products, and his services. Quality is the extent to which products, services, processes, and relationships are free from defects, constraints, and items which do not add value for customers. Quality is a perceived degree of excellence with a minimum, usually set forth by the customer (Tama, 2006). Quality is the degree of compliance of a process or its outcome with a predetermined set of criteria, which are presumed essential to the ultimate value it provides. Quality is the level of perceived value reported by the person who benefits from a process or its outcome (Nkwoh, 2011). Quality may subsume various intermediate quality measures, both objective and subjective.

Quality in Education

What does quality mean in the context of education? Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. The term efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used synonymously. Jairus (2014:72) proclaimed that Quality education includes—learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities, environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender — sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities, content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace, processes through which trained teachers use child- centered teaching approaches in well—managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities, Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in the society.

The definition allows for an understanding of education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. It is important to keep in mind education's systemic nature; however, these dimensions are interdependent, influencing each other in ways that are sometimes unforeseeable. This definition also takes into account the global and international influences that propel the discussion of educational quality (Motala, 2010). The quality of any educational system, most time is assessed by the performance of the products of that system.

In today's fast changing and volatile world, quality education has become a universal goal and striving for quality education has become critical for any nation that would not be content to be a dependent nation, a nation that just takes what is learnt or produced elsewhere and adapts it, if it can, for its own use. The economist Paul Romer demonstrated that economic growth is determined not so much by the growth of physical capital and labour as by the stock of knowledge and its rate of growth. The nineties of last century can be described as a "decade of heightened interest in quality in higher education. There are more people involved in investigating, researching, auditing, applying, analyzing, controlling, assessing and writing about the subject than ever before. This has inevitably led to greater knowledge and a deeper understanding of policies and practice of quality in the sector. The notions of quality originated from the business practices. Many of the concepts are borrowed directly from business e.g.

Continuous Improvement, Total Quality Management, etc., but whereas the organizational processes in business are, by and large, amenable to measurement and control, and are predictable in behavior, in education this is far from being the case.

Much of the processes in education, particularly at the university level, take place deep within the intellects of the people involved, and are not in most cases easy to comprehend, let alone be amenable for measurement and/or control (Ololube, 2006, 2017). Deming's philosophy of quality management is based on the premise that an organization's productivity and quality consistently rise with increasing empowerment of employees. But the reality of the work place also dictates that there has to be accountability, in order to economize the resource utilization and also to give a direction to the organizations' response to market conditions (Ololube, 2006, 2017). Because of the perceived inefficiencies of universities, pressure is sometimes applied on the universities to institute strong managerial modes of operation.

Unfortunately, this has the effect of treating the academic staff more like employees of a corporate enterprise, rather than independent thinkers of future vision. Be that as it may, the goal of improving teaching and student learning should be pursued vigorously. It is no longer a luxury, even for so-called third world universities, to aspire to higher standards of educational quality. The means at disposal of such universities may not be much to speak of, and the difficulties they have to face may not be easy to overcome or few in number, but to ignore quality altogether and to neglect self-evaluation procedures may lead sooner or later to stagnation or worse. Even renowned old establishments need to be wary of trusting too much to their traditional ways and past glories. Towards a generally-accepted definition of quality, a number of recognized higher education organizations have formulated quality standards and guidelines. In general, quality in education may be defined as specifying a mission and worthwhile learning objectives and enabling students to achieve them. Specifying worthwhile learning objectives involve articulating academic standards to meet (1) society's expectations and the demands of government, business and industry; (2) students' aspirations; and (3) the requirements of professional institutions. Enabling the students to achieve these objectives would require good course design, an effective teaching/learning strategy, competent teachers and a suitable learning environment.

Quality in education aims at devising means of training individuals who would solve societal problem and meet her needs and also fashion out ways of development in order to meet up with global challenges. This implies that when an educated system is able to train individuals who can help or contribute meaningfully to the achievement of the national goals and objectives, it is said to be high quality.

As quality implies grade, degree or level of excellence, when applied to education, there are a number of criteria and levels from which it can be measured in any concept as seen by school inspectors, which embraces such measurable skills as ability in the 3Rs Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Reconciliation and the acquisition of a given body of knowledge and range of facts in any academic subjects such as, Economics, History, Geography, etc. (Osueke, 2009). The next level of measuring quality in education is in terms of level of participation in schooling among children of the age bracket; say of a primary school age 6–11 years; the quality of teachers who operates the school system, the scope of the curriculum, pupil/teachers performance at external examination, quality of school equipment and facilities and the like. The third level of measuring quality in education is in relation to its productivity. In any case, the economist is interested in the relationship between the “inputs” and the “output” of the school system as a measure of its immediate productivity and efficiency. Quality in education may also

measure in terms of relevance to the needs of the community concerned. Relevance in this context refers to functionality, fitness and appropriateness to the needs for daily life, the hope and expectation for tomorrow and preparation for the uncertainties and challenges of the unknown future. This relevance implies that every student in every part of the country and in every school must be taken the type of education suited for his needs and environment. The fifth level of measuring quality in education is where everybody becomes an expert in the subject. The individuals that make up the society judge the quality of the school system in terms of the final goals they have set for themselves, their children, and zone as a whole (Osueke, 2009). On account of the above five levels of interpretation it is often difficult to understand what people precisely mean when they talk of quality of falling standard in education (Nwachukwu, 2007).

Observation made so far indicates that every educational institution in Nigeria faces the challenges of improving quality of education. Some the challenges include:

- Raising student achievements;
- Improving the quality of teaching;
- Providing adequate resource and using them effectively;
- Ensuring that management and leadership of education at national and local levels are strong and effective;
- Ensuring that the curriculum and assessment methods are relevant and inclusive. Quality in education therefore is expression of standard or the means by which a certain set of standards in education can be achieved (Maduabuchi, 2012).

RESULTS

Respondents Demographic Data

Table 1: Respondents Demographic Variables

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male Principal	143	80.8	80.8	80.8
	Female Principal	34	19.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	177	100.0	100.0	
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	54	30.5	30.5	30.5
	Married	97	54.8	54.8	85.3
	Divorced	26	14.7	14.7	100.0
	Total	177	100.0	100.0	
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	31-40 years	57	32.2	32.2	32.2
	41-50 years	82	46.3	46.3	78.5
	51 years and Above	38	21.5	21.5	100.0
	Total	177	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BS.c/BED/HND Degree	88	49.7	49.7	49.7
	M.ED/M.Sc. Degree	63	35.6	35.6	85.3
	Others	26	14.7	14.7	100.0
	Total	177	100.0	100.0	

		Frequenc y	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-10 years	26	14.7	14.7	14.7
	11-20 years	74	41.8	41.8	56.5
	21-30 years	49	27.7	27.7	84.2
	31 years and Above	28	15.8	15.8	100.0
	Total	177	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 showed the response rate and distribution category of respondents gender in the study, out of the returned copies, 143(80.8%) of the respondents were male principals while 34(19.2%) of the respondents were female principals in public senior secondary schools in Imo State under study.

The table further showed the response rate and distribution of respondents' marital status in the public senior secondary schools in Imo State under study. Out of the copies retrieved, 54(30.5%) of the respondents were singled, 97(54.8%) of the respondents are married while 26(14.7%) of the respondents are divorced. This shows that majority of the respondents are married.

Also, the table showed the response rate and distribution of respondents' age bracket in the public senior secondary schools in Imo State under study. Out of the copies retrieved, 57(32.2%) of the respondents were 31-40 years of age, 82(46.3%) of the respondents were within the age bracket of 41-50 years while 38(21.5%) of the respondents are 51 years and above in the public senior secondary schools in Imo State under study.

Additionally, the table indicates the respondents' educational category in the public senior secondary schools in Imo State under study, out of the number retrieved, 88(49.7%) of the respondents are BSc/BED/HND Degree holders, 63(35.6%) of the respondents are Master's degree holders while 26(14.7%) of the respondents are holders of other certificate. From the respond category it indicates that the respondents are qualify to answer the research questions in the study.

Finally, the table revealed the response rate and distribution of respondents' years of working experience with the public senior secondary schools in Imo State under study. Out of the retrieved copies of questionnaire, 26(14.7%) of the principals indicates that they have work experience for a period of 1-10 years, 74(41.8%) of the respondents had for a period of 11-20 years, 49(27.7%) had work for a period of 21-30 years while 28(15.8%) had work for a period of 31 years and above in the public senior schools under study.

Answer to the Research Questions

Research Questions One: How does principals' leadership political frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

Table 2: Showing mean and standard deviation on how principals' leadership Political Frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Political leadership has its unique understanding of the necessary order of power that is used to make conflicting decisions that will influence quality	3.0847	.89102	Agree
2. It shows leaders what tends to become of conflicts in an organization and how the issues are solved in a group with opposing interests	3.1186	.89984	Agree
3. It focuses on unveiling the issues in management and leadership that affect quality performance at program level.	3.1864	.89458	Agree
4. Leaders within the political frame function as advocates and negotiators	3.1469	.93596	Agree
Grand Mean	3.1341	0.9053	Agree

The first research question states “How does principals' leadership political frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State? The purpose of this research question is to determine principals' leadership political frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. To answer this question, the responses on item 1-4 of section “B” of the questionnaire were computed using mean and standard deviation in table 2. The result of the analysis revealed a grand mean of 3.1341 and a cumulative standard deviation of 0.9053. The descriptive statistics of responses to these items agree that principals' leadership Political Frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. This means that majority of the respondents agree to the manifest indicator of the study variable that principals' leadership Political Frames influence quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Questions Two: What are the challenges associated with principals' leadership frames practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 3: Showing mean and standard deviation table on the challenges associated with principals' leadership frames practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

	Mean	SD.	Remark
5. Teachers and students behavioral differences (habit) negatively affect principals leadership frames.	2.9944	.95642	Agree
6. Difficulty getting excellent teachers.	2.9774	.98255	Agree
7. Hostility and interferences from community pressure groups poses great challenges to principals' leadership frames.	3.0734	.95360	Agree
8. School stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, community leaders, government functionaries and agencies) try to influence decision makings process which hindrances principals' leadership frames.	2.9379	.92416	Agree
Grand Mean	2.9957	.95417	Agree

The second research question states “What are the challenges associated with principals' leadership frames practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State? The purpose of this research question is to determine the challenges associated with principals' leadership frames practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. To answer this question, the responses on item 4-8 of section “B” of the questionnaire were computed using mean and standard deviation in table 3. The result of the analysis revealed a

grand mean of 2.9957 and a cumulative standard deviation of .95417. The descriptive statistics of responses to these items agree to the challenges associated with principals' leadership frames practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. This means that majority of the respondents agree to the manifest indicator of the challenges associated with principals' leadership frames practices for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Questions Three: What are the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 4: Showing Mean and standard deviation on the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

	Mean	SD.	Remark
9. School leaders need to play a more active role in instructional leadership	3.3616	.77187	Agree
10. Monitoring and evaluating teacher performance	3.4294	.67994	Agree
11. Conducting and arranging for mentoring and coaching	3.4802	.65791	Agree
12. Planning teacher professional development	3.3842	.77561	Agree
Grand Mean	3.413	.72132	Agree

The third research question states “What are the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State? The purpose of this research question is to determine the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. To answer this question, the responses on item 9-12 of section “B” of the questionnaire were computed using mean and standard deviation in table 4. The result of the analysis revealed a grand mean of 3.413 and a cumulative standard deviation of .72132. The descriptive statistics of responses to these items agree to the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. This means that majority of the respondents agree to the manifest indicator of What are the measures in tackling the challenges of principals' leadership frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

Test of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals regarding their leadership political frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 5: Summary of independent t-test analysis on the difference between the opinion of male and female principals regarding their leadership political frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

Respondents	n	\bar{x}	SD	Df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Sig.	Decision
Male Principal	143	12.97	1.66	175	1.176	1.96	0.210	Not Significant
Female Principal	34	10.71	4.29					

Table 5 indicates that $t_{cal} = 1.176$, $df = 175$, and $t_{tab} = 1.96$. Therefore, since $t_{cal} < t_{tab}$ and $P = 0.210 > 0.05$, hence, there is no significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals responses regarding their political leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Therefore, the null hypothesis five is retained at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 6: Summary of independent t-test analysis on the difference between the opinion of male and female principals on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

Respondents	n	\bar{x}	SD	Df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Sig.	Decision
Male Principal	143	12.87	1.38	175	11.00	1.96	0.000	Significant
Female Principal	34	8.124	4.19					

Table 6 indicates that $t_{cal} = 11.00$, $df = 175$, and $t_{tab} = 1.96$. Therefore, since $t_{cal} > t_{tab}$ and $P = 0.000 < 0.05$, hence, there is significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals responses on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Therefore, the null hypothesis six is rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 7: Summary of independent t-test analysis on the difference between the opinion of male and female principals on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

Respondents	n	\bar{x}	SD	Df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Sig.	Decision
Male Principal	143	13.53	1.61	175	1.116	1.96	0.436	Not Significant
Female Principal	34	14.18	1.53					

Table 7 indicates that $t_{cal} = 1.116$, $df = 175$, and $t_{tab} = 1.96$. Therefore, since $t_{cal} < t_{tab}$ and $P = 0.436 > 0.05$, hence, there is no significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals responses on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

DISCUSSION

Leadership Political Frames for Quality Public Senior Secondary Schools

Hypothesis one which states, “There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals regarding their leadership political frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State” was retained because there was no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals regarding their leadership political frames for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State as revealed in table 5. This finding is corroborated with Sasnett and Ross (2007) on political leadership frames and perceptions of effectiveness among health information management program directors. Research data were collected by surveying the program directors of two- and four-year health information management programs across the United States. Data from 64 respondents were used in statistical computations; 33 surveys were not used due to errors in the completion of the survey or failure to complete the entire survey. Given the lack of statistical significance, the chi-square test was computed using the rule of 32 or better to determine frame mastery. The study shows that program directors are confident of their human resource and structural skills and less sure of the political and symbolic skills required of leaders. These skills in turn are correlated with their self-perceived effectiveness as managers and leaders. Findings from the study may assist program directors in their career development and expansion of health information management programs as a discipline within the health science field.

The political frame assumes that organizations are coalitions composed of individuals and interest groups competing for scarce resources. There are enduring differences in the values and beliefs of groups and individuals and these differences leads to conflict. Conflict is seen as a normal by – product of collective action. This is why political leaders spend much time in networking, creating coalitions, building a power base, bargaining and negotiating compromises (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Within school system, interactions between people are mediated by power, status, positioning, and political coalitions. Power differences may arise in a number of different ways. Issues of Power can affect the processes of change as well. A change effort requires sanction from the appropriate power holders to succeed. Individuals may hold such power due to formal positions in a department or because they are highly respected thought leaders (Wei et al., 2009).

Challenges of Leadership Frame for Quality Public Senior Secondary Schools

Hypothesis two which states that “There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State” was rejected because there was significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State as revealed in table 6. This finding is in line with the conclusion of Elliff (2012) in a study examining staying power: the relationship of public schools superintendent tenure to leadership frames. The types of leadership frames (human resource, structural, political, and symbolic) (Bolman & Deal, 2008) most often used by public school superintendents in Texas, the relationship of leadership frames to the length of superintendent tenure in a single school district, and the influence of school district size on the relationship of leadership frames to tenure.

Results revealed that the human resource frame was used most often by superintendents. The only frame statistically correlated to tenure in one district, however, was the political frame ($r=.17$, $p<.05$), and this relationship remained statistically significant when controlling for school district size, as measured by student population ($r=.17$, $p<.05$). Qualitative data were gathered from two open-response questions asking superintendents to identify factors related to 1) successful leadership of major change in a district and 2) ability to persist in the superintendent position. In response to the question regarding factors enabling leadership of major change in a district, theme analysis revealed overlapping associations to each of the four frames, with an emphasis on the human resource frame. Analysis of responses to the question regarding factors enabling superintendents to persist in their tenure in a school district revealed an emphasis on the human resource frame.

Measures to Solve the Challenges of Quality in Public Senior Secondary Schools

Hypothesis three which states that “There is no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State” was retained because there was no significant difference between the mean response rating of male and female principals on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality in public senior secondary schools in Imo State as revealed in table 7. This finding is in line with the conclusion of Miller (2018) study on the leadership styles of directors of occupational therapy programs whereas the Turley study examined the leadership within radiation therapy programs. Findings from the Miller study indicated program directors self-reported their human resource skills the highest (83.7 percent), followed by the symbolic (76.5 percent), political (74.8 percent), and structural (72.5 percent) frames. 41.4 percent of the sample reported using three or more frames while 17.6 percent were not using any frame. Miller's study deviates from other studies in the high scores reported for the political frames.

CONCLUSION

The study examined principals' leadership frames influence quality assurance in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Consequently, based on the findings of the study, it was revealed that quality assurance in public senior secondary schools in Imo State can be achieved when the principals adopt different leadership frames as a strategic tool to bring about committed teachers towards their job. This stems from the fact that the principals are responsible for the development and production of high-level manpower within the context of the needs of the schools. In view of these assertions and the accompanying empirical evidence as seen from the various mean scores, the following conclusions were reached:

- There was no significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals responses regarding their political leadership frame for quality assurance in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- There was significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals responses on the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality assurance in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

- There was no significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals responses on the measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality assurance in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Recommendations

Considering the findings, discussion and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Principal of public secondary schools in Imo State should have knowledge of Political frame as it is associated with the realistic process of making decisions in an organisation. Quality assurance will emerge in schools where there are coalitions and composed of individuals and interest groups competing for scarce resource.
- For quality assurance to be achieved in public senior secondary schools in Imo State principals should be known and avoid the various challenges associated with each of the leadership frames.
- Principals in conjunction with the Ministry of Education should network and collaborate with all major stakeholders in the education sector to develop measures to solve the challenges associated with leadership frame for quality assurance in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. In any case, it is obvious that the leadership frame adopted by a principal defines its attitude and a principal's attitude determines the commitment of its teachers.

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