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# TRANSFORMATIONAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE: A PANACEA FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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## ABSTRACT

This article is on transformational educational leadership style: a panacea for national development. It was anchored on the transformational leadership theory. It explained the concepts of transformational educational leadership and national development. It also highlighted the importance of transformational educational leadership on national development which included supplying the needed manpower for national development, social and group relationship, instilling national values and promoting culture of productivity. Some challenges which might impede the influence of transformational educational leadership on national development were highlighted which were under funding, politicization of educational leadership. The study concluded that the strategic position of transformational educational leadership is charting the course of national development Adequate funding among others were suggested.

**Keywords:** Transformational, Educational Leadership, Importance, Challenges, Panacea, National Development.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the fast-changing world, educational leadership becomes more important, and it is considered as a critical success factor for the development of any nation. A nation develops in relation to its achievement in education. This explains why contemporary world attention has focused on

education and its leadership as an instrument of launching nations into the world of science and technology and with consequential hope of human advancement in terms of living conditions and development of the environment. This is because, education, in the life of a nation, is the live wire of its industries and the foundation of moral regeneration and revival of its people. It is also the force and bulwark of any nation's defence, and it has been observed that no nation rises above the level of its education. Seeing education in this perspective calls for proper funding from federal, state and local governments to make the sector produce the desired results which will stimulate national development. In Nigeria, much is not being derived from the sector due to neglect on the part of government, corruption, policy discontinuity, among others. To make the nation derive maximum dividends from the sector, useful recommendations are made.

Transformational leadership refers to leaders who seek to create ideas and new perspectives to create a new path of growth and prosperity in front of the institution (Korejan & Shahbaz, 2016), it involves developing commitment, passion and loyalty among managers and staff. Transformational leaders mobilize institution's members to make fundamental changes on the basis of the institution in order to be prepared and to gain necessary capabilities for moving in new directions and reaching higher ideal performance peaks.

In educational institutions their leadership is critical towards achieving national development. For a state or society to achieve a sustainable national development, the quality of its education should be improved. In all nations, Nigeria inclusive, education remains the instrument for effective national development. Development is championed through education, which is often assumed to have significant influence. Education entails the enlightenment of people in their ways of pursuit in life. Development is associated with a positive change in the condition of either individual, groups, communities or even a country (Umoh, 2005 in Boyi, 2015). Education and sustainable national development are interwoven, intertwined, and interconnected. While on the one hand, development is geared towards producing or creating something new or more advanced for the society and its members. On the other hand, education is a tool which can enhance the desired sustainable development. Boyi (2014) therefore, referred to education and national development as two sides of the same coin. The fact that education and sustainable development shows glaring connectivity probably explained why scholars emphasized the need for education for the purpose of achieving the desired national development.

## **THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

The theory of transformational leadership was first proposed by Burns (1978) in Ololube (2019) to distinguish those leaders who have strong motivational relationship with their followers and subordinates and those who widely focus on exchange with transformational leadership interaction to create results.

The transformational leadership theory, according to Berkovich (2016) has been one of the most influential leadership models in education over the past several decades. Prior to being recognized as a leadership model for educational leaders, this model was designed for political and business leaders (Berkovich, 2016). The transformational leadership style is broadly viewed as the most utilized leadership style because those individuals who practice it try to change, inspire, and engage followers (Ololube, 2017). The transformational leadership theory is

leadership that cares less about positional power and more about influential power. Transformational leadership as presented in Figure 1 is a model of leadership that embraces the importance of inspiring and motivating followers to achieve a shared vision along with emphasizing the importance of relationships (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Transformational leaders are interested in converting their followers into leaders (Gardiner, 2006).

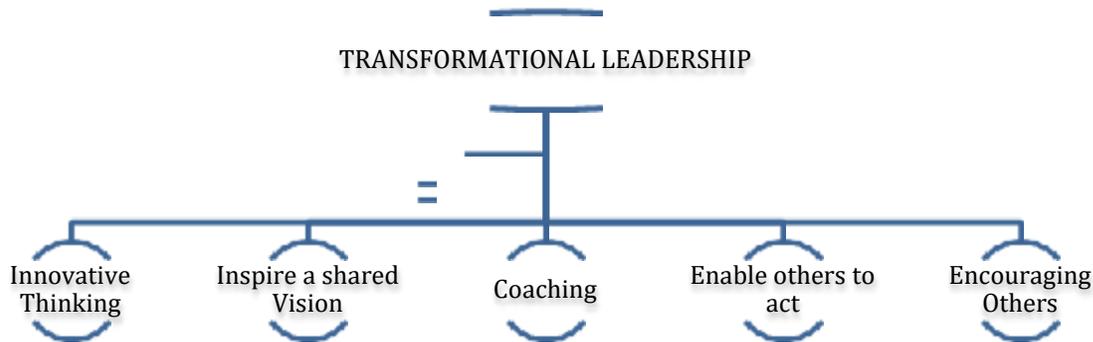


Figure 1: Key Transformational Leadership Practices.

## CONCEPTUAL ELUCIDATION

### Transformational Educational Leadership

Transformational Educational leadership is defined as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity of the institution; being a role model for followers that inspires them; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance.

Transformational leaders motivate their employees to do more than what is sited in their employment contract, and they focus on the employees' higher-level needs. These leaders act as mentors and advisors and pay attention to personal development, learning, and supplying the needs of the employees. They provide challenge, a sense of mission, broader perspectives, respect, and trust for the employees, and they act as role-models for their employees. They create an atmosphere of trust and motivate employees to work for the institution beyond their self-interests (Khorshid & Pashazadeh, 2014; Mirkamali et al., 2014)

Amanchukwu et al. (2015) defined transformational educational leadership as a process of influencing employees to achieve educational goals and excellence. Transformational educational Leadership is the ability of vision. A leader must have a clear vision of the institution including the futuristic dimension of actions, considering the achievement of the desired state in the long run that he/she would divide with all the members at the institutional level but that would also further reflect and create new programs of teaching and learning as well as politics,

priorities, plans and procedures which daily life of the institution is consisted of. Therefore, a key element of leadership in education is the ability to predict the future.

The essence of transformational educational leadership boils down to the leader's exemplary and verbal inspiration of the system, through effective influence on behaviour, thoughts and feelings of those who work within the education system and thus providing a strategic vision of creating alignment through the entire system. No matter how effective, every leader of complex institution such as academic institution is facing numerous obstacles that must be managed and "moderated" in order to succeed in his/her efforts (Dragana & Marina 2016).

## **National Development**

National, according to Longman dictionary of contemporary English, refers to a phenomenon that embraces a whole nation. National development therefore can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

Kingdom and Maekae (2013) and Ololube et al. (2013) stressed that a developed society is the one that has succeeded in providing a source of living for most of its inhabitants and that in such society, premium is attached to elimination of poverty, provision of food, shelter and clothing to its members. This argument agreed with the definition of development by Todaro and Smith (2006) from the modernization paradigm which sees development as a multidimensional process which involves the sustained elevation of the entire society and social system towards a better or humane life. They identify three basic components for understanding development. These components are sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. These represent common goals sought by all individuals and societies. According to Todaro and Smith (2006), sustenance is concerned with ability to meet basic needs, self-esteem is concerned with a sense of worth and self-respect, of not being used by others as tools for their own needs and freedom is concerned with freedom from servitude- servitude to nature, ignorance, other people, misery, institutions and dogmatic beliefs especially, that poverty is a predestination.

Therefore, the definition by this paradigm which emphasizes the basic needs of life in transforming the individual in the society to self-actualization is a true definition of development. Any development model that does not reflect these tenets needs a paradigm shift. Omoyibo and Agbonzeke (2010) in Kingdom and Maekae (2013) also stated that the former Secretary of United Nations Organisation, Boutros, B. Ghali, issued a document which categorizes development into five dimensions which are peace, economy, environment, social studies and democracy. In the Nigerian context, these components are missing as democratic processes are absent and the government in power abuses the rule of law. In Nigeria, the process does not create opportunities for opposition to strive and majority of those in power are there based on what to get and the development of their various communities is not their priority.

## **Importance of Transformational Educational Leadership to National Development**

- **Transformational Educational Leadership supplies the needed manpower for national development:** Transformational leadership influences the achievement of educational goals and one of them is to train an individual to be useful in the society. Afolabi and Loto (2012) supported this argument by stating that a developed or educated

polity is the one that has enough manpower, and each person occupies his or her rightful position to enhance the growth of the society. To support this, Ajayi and Afolabi (2009) have also remarked that education is largely perceived in Nigeria as an indispensable tool which will not only assist in meeting the nation's social, political, moral, cultural and economic aspirations but will also inculcate in the individual knowledge, skills, dexterity, character and desirable values that will foster national development and self-actualization.

- **Transformational Educational Leadership promotes social and group relationship:** In this regard, Ololube (2017) stated that transformational educational leadership trains individuals to relate to and interact meaningfully with others in the society and to appreciate the importance of effective institution for human progress.
- **Transformational Educational Leadership Education also promotes the culture of productivity:** By enabling individuals to discover the creative potentials in them and apply same the improvement of the existing skill and technique of performing specific tasks, thereby increasing the efficiency of their personal societal efforts (Olusegun, 2012; Ololube, 2017).
- **Transformational Educational Leadership instils national values:** educational leadership also develops in individuals those values which make for good citizenship, such as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard work and personal integrity, all of which provide the rich soil from which good leadership potential is groomed.

### **Challenges that are Impeding The influence of Transformational Educational Leadership on National Development**

From the above, it is clear that transformational educational leadership has a critical function in national development. But in the Nigerian context, education has not fully played its roles in the regard. This is as a result of certain inherent problems in the Nigerian education system. First among these problems is inadequate funding. Education is no doubt, directly linked with the processes of nation building and development. Education in Nigeria has not been properly funded and this leads to poor infrastructure developed in the universities, secondary and primary schools. This poor infrastructure makes the environment very hostile. This shows that products of this underfunded educational sector will be very poor, and teachers will not be adequately remunerated for them to perform their duties effectively. This calls for incessant strike actions embarked upon by Academic Staff Union of Universities. This also explains why pupils and students in the school system sit on bare floor and under mango trees to receive lessons and lectures

Another point to be considered here is unsteady political environment. From independence till date, there have been several administrations in Nigeria. The successive political leaders either military or civilian often suspend the existing educational policies and replace them with the newly fashioned ones which typify their own political agenda. By this, the educational leaders are compelled to jettison a plan still on the drawing board and take up new policies which must be geared towards meeting the current political demands. This has become a serious bottleneck to education in terms of achieving national development. There explains lack of continuity in educational policy formulation

Still in the same vein, educational leadership in Nigeria is politicized (Afolabi & Loto, 2012). Educational policy decisions in Nigeria are highly political orders, directives, and

assertions bereft of synergy. This happens when the envisaged educational plans and objectives are being politically manipulated to suit the whims and caprices of policy formulators. This explains why some political appointees are given portfolios as commissioners and ministers which they are least qualified for. This explains why Nigerian politicians would rather advocate unrealistic populist educational programmes than risk their constituency through technically derived and obviously realistic and productive educational programmes. It is sad to note that political appointments in most universities evade due process to the detriment of stakeholders

## CONCLUSION

The discussion above illustrates the strategic position of transformational educational leadership in charting the course of national development. This paper has carefully discussed national development in Nigeria. It examined the problems of national development in Nigeria, and carefully outlined the importance of transformational leadership on national development. The paper also suggested some viable strategies needed to engender sustainable development in Nigeria using transformational educational Leadership. It is the belief of this paper that if these options and models are faithfully and judiciously pursued and imbibed, Nigeria will be well positioned in the global economy by the year 2024.

## Suggestions

- The education sector should be adequately funded, this will aid transformational educational leaders to ensure that educational goals are achieved thereby developing the nation.
- Educational leadership should not be politicised. Let individuals who are fit be appointed and trained.

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